The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)

BEDS Code	441600010001
School Name	Balmville School
School Address	5144 Route 9W, Newburgh, NY 12550
District Name	Newburgh Enlarged City School District
School Leader	Danny B. Dottin
Dates of Review	May 10-12, 2017
School Accountability Status	☒Focus School
Type of Review	District Led Review

School Information Sheet for Balmville Elementary School

School Configuration (2016-17 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-5	**Total Enrollment**	411	**SIG Recipient**	No

Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes *(2016-17)*					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	**# Dual Language**	0	**# Self-Contained English as a Second Language**	0

Types and Number of Special Education Classes *(2016-17)*					
# Special Classes	2	**# SETSS**	1	**# Integrated Collaborative Teaching**	6

Types and Number of Special Classes *(2016-17)*					
# Visual Arts	1	**# Music**	1	**# Drama**	0
# Foreign Language	0	**# Dance**	0	**# CTE**	0

School Composition *(2015-16)*			
% Title I Population	74	**% Attendance Rate**	93
% Free Lunch	64	**% Reduced Lunch**	6
% Limited English Proficient	10	**% Students with Disabilities**	10

Racial/Ethnic Origin *(2015-16)*			
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0	**% Black or African American**	24
% Hispanic or Latino	41	**% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**	3
% White	26	**% Multi-Racial**	5

Personnel *(2016-17)*			
Years Principal Assigned to School	1	**# of Assistant Principals**	1
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	**% Teaching Out of Certification**	0%
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	5%	**% Teacher Absences**	93%

Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools *(2015-16)*			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	26%	**Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4**	17%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	85%	**Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)**	NA

Overall NYSED Accountability Status			
Priority School		**Local Assistance Plan**	
Focus School (indicate subgroups identified below)	X	**In Good Standing**	

Focus School Identified Subgroups		
Black or African American	Economically Disadvantaged	

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

- A Tenet Vertical Team will create a list of component for teachers to possibly include their guided reading lessons plans. This list will be shared with the school leader to pass on to teachers.
- school leader will strengthen Guided Reading instruction and data analysis by creating a master schedule, a budget for materials and planbook.com, and a schedule of professional development in the field of Guided Reading.
- Peer observations on higher order thinking questioning will take place.
- The Tenet 5 Vertical team will plan with the school psychologist to create a mentor program for fifth graders.
- Hold two parent education sessions, grade band specific for math.

Purpose of the visit

Due to its accountability status as a focus school, Vails Gate Steam Academy was required to participate in a District-led Review.

The purpose of this review is to provide the school with feedback regarding the practices across the school and to provide a number of actionable recommendations to direct the school's work in the immediate future.

This report is being provided as a feedback tool to assist the school and to help identify areas for improvement. These areas can address the subgroups identified or they may be broader and cover additional subgroups or the entire school. NYSED recognizes that there are dedicated staff members at the school committed to the success of the students. The report below provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by two NYSED certified lead reviewers. The team also included a district representative from the Division of Exceptional Learners.
- The review team visited a total of 23 classrooms during the two-day review.
- The principal participated in classrooms visits throughout the review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, school wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- NYS assessment and teacher observation data was also examined.
- Survey data from 50 parents, 45 instructional staff and 150 students was reviewed.

The Review Team concluded that the school's current systems and practices most closely align with Stage 2 on the DTSDE Rubric.

SUCCESSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BUILD UPON:
 - Initiatives to support positive behavior schoolwide have been very successful. The student support services team should maintain the positive bus behavior program and explore new programs for the cafeteria during the 2017-2018 school year - Maintain the collaboration with families and the community.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

Recommendation for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions:

During the summer of 2017, the school leader should meet with central office administration to formalize a proactive system of support that will afford an opportunity to discuss the issues and barriers school leaders are confronted with that deter from improved student learning and then creating an agreed upon system of support.

Also, while developing the master schedule for the 2017 - 2018 school year, math and reading specialists' caseloads must be developed with a strong emphasis on the use of iReady and other sources of student data.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Through document review and conversations held with stakeholders, it was determined that supports from district level administrators are underutilized. Continued assistance is needed with the implementation of iRead and iReady programs, both with incorporating regular and systematic usage into practice as well as school-wide utilization of data to inform planning. Access to internet and computers continues to be problematic and assistance with incorporating technology into instruction was requested. Building leadership stated that meetings with district level directors was sporadic.

- As a result of analyzing the master schedule it was determined that there was insufficient supervision during transitions to lunch, during lunch and after lunch. This was verified by an onsite observation of the lunch periods.

- Analysis of staff and faculty attendance revealed that a school leader assigned to the building was absent for a prolonged period of time. As a result, calibration opportunities to analyze teacher observation and classroom walkthroughs were unable to be completed.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

Recommendation for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support:

By June 30, 2017, the school leader will work with the faculty to define the grade level exit outcomes, aligned to the grade level standards tied to the scope and sequence document provided by the district.

School leaders will recruit the support from Central Office Curriculum and Instruction to provide embedded coaching on how to develop lessons and units aligned to the scope and sequence documents.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- While the district provided scope and sequence documents earlier in the 2016-17 school year for core subject areas, no formalized protocol or plan exists on the school level to align district provided guidance documents to school based and grade level scope and sequence documents. A protocol that guides grade level and special area teachers to adapt the curriculum to meet the data determined needs of all students continues to be lacking, resulting in uneven practices of fully incorporating grade level standards into the curriculum being taught. The use of data to inform instruction, grouping of students, and differentiating approaches to the curriculum continues to be employed unevenly as well.

- Although there is evidence that district endorsed and provided curriculum materials are in use in many classrooms, the practice has not been fully established throughout the building.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Recommendation for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions:

By September 10, 2017, the school leader will work with teachers to design a matrix for each class that incorporates data relating to Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Rigor and Relevance Framework and Achievement data, that will be used to inform individual student goals for reading and math and student grouping for instruction.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- During grade and vertical team meetings, it was determined that the school has embraced a commitment to understanding the impact poverty has on student learning. The staff participated in professional development and believe that further training is required.

- Faculty express a desire to learn more about the learning styles and social needs of the students enrolled in the school. The faculty interviewed expressed an eagerness to see the connection between the demographics of the student and the implication for lesson design.

- Classroom observations provided examples of a range of instructional groupings. On one end, students were grouped based on ability and educated in small group instruction with differentiated tasks based on their unique needs. While on the other end, it was observed that data was not used to inform groupings; a variety of students' needs were present in each of the groups in the classroom and the same tasks for reading and math were assigned to each individual group. Guided reading was observed in fifty percent of the K-3 classrooms observed.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Recommendation for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:

By June 30, 2017, the school leader should engage the leadership team and the student support team in conversations regarding educating students coming from poverty, resulting in a modified vision/mission that accurately reflects the demographics of the school. The leadership team should then survey the faculty to determine their need for professional development to best meet the needs of students coming from economically disadvantaged environments.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Concerns regarding bullying, interest in students' home lives, and teacher engagement were raised after a review of survey data and conversations with stakeholders. The building leader expressed the need for supports in regards to respectful communications between home and school. A formal assessment of the social emotional needs of students and their barriers to learning has yet to be completed. There is also no formalized system established for student referrals to the schools two psychologists. Attendance and discipline data are utilized by the building leadership and members of the school's student support team, resulting in an informal mentoring program utilizing adult males in the school.

- The school leader raised concerns regarding the increasing poverty rate of the school. Through conversations from staff meetings and after a presentation of Teaching with Poverty in Mind, it was reported by the school leader that there was an interest in perusing the topic, which was confirmed by select staff members. To date, however, no formalized plans to move forward with this initiative have been made.

- The purpose of the Social Emotional Learning team of the school was unclear, as reported by staff. The role of the classroom teacher with issues related to students' social emotional development was also reported as unclear and varied between staff members. The Response to Intervention process is used predominately for academic concerns, resulting in a variety of approaches and interventions used to deal with non-academic issues.

- There is no formalized plan or structure related to students' social emotional development. Approaches used throughout the school vary between school developed programs, aspects of the PBIS program and pieces of The Leader in Me program. No conformity to specific values or expectations was evident.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

Recommendation for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement:

The school leader should maintain the current family engagement strategy in the school as all data reflects positive growth.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Communications between building leadership and families was reported as positive and proactive. Positive sentiments were also expressed in regards to the use of Class Dojo and the use of email to communicate with families. Recent events held by the school were well received and reported as engaging and helpful. The building leader noted that data on parent participation has increased. Teacher led math events were noted as the most beneficial of events.

ADDITIONAL AREAS TO ADDRESS

- A system or structure should be put in place by the building leadership to ensure that deadlines for internal and external requests are met on a consistent basis.
- A protocol needs to be created and adhered to regarding consistent walkthroughs with a provision for timely feedback.
- The student support team should expand the concept of the bus safety