

# **Wyandanch Union Free School District: Final Report**

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**Submitted to  
Wyandanch Union Free School District**

**Submitted by  
Professional Services Group  
Learning Point Associates**



1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200  
Naperville, IL 60563-1486  
800-356-2735 • 630-649-6500  
[www.learningpt.org](http://www.learningpt.org)

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## **Introduction**

This interim report is the result of an audit of the written, taught, and tested curriculum of the Wyandanch Union Free School District by Learning Point Associates. In mid-2005, eight school districts and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) commissioned this audit to fulfill an accountability requirement of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act for local education agencies (LEAs) identified as districts in need of corrective action. These LEAs agreed, with the consent of NYSED, to collaborate on the implementation of this audit, which was intended to identify areas of concern and make recommendations to assist districts in their improvement efforts.

The focus of the audit was on the English language arts curriculum for all students, including students with disabilities and English as a second language (ESL) students. The audit examined curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, management, and compliance through multiple lenses of data collection and analysis. These findings acted as a starting point to facilitate conversations in the district to identify areas for improvement, probable causes, and ways to generate plans for improvement.

This report contains an outline of the process, data, and methods used as well as the key findings from the data collection and the associated problem statements generated through the cointerpretation process for Wyandanch Union Free School District. The report also includes a section on Recommendations for Action Planning, which provides advice for the district in planning actions for each critical problem area.

Learning Point Associates provides recommendations, as well as more specific advice, to consider in the action-planning process. While the recommendations may be considered binding, the specific advice under each area should not be considered binding. Through the remaining cointerpretation and action-planning steps, the specific steps for action will be outlined with the district and, upon completion, can be considered a binding plan.

# District Background

## Overview

Wyandanch Union Free School District is a suburban school district located in Suffolk County, one of the two counties in Long Island, New York. The current population is approximately 10,546 with a year 2000 median household income of \$40,664. The district currently serves approximately 2,300 students in four schools: LaFrancis Hardiman (Grades PK–2), Martin Luther King Elementary (Grades 3–5), Milton L. Olive Middle (Grades 6–8), and Wyandanch Memorial High (Grades 9–12). It is largely a minority district (81 percent black and 19 percent Hispanic) with 72 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program. Wyandanch received a total of \$6.6 million in Title I and II program funds during a federal audit period of July 1, 1999, through June 30, 2004. Annually, 70 to 120 Wyandanch students are rendered homeless with many in foster care.

Wyandanch is described in its NYSED profile as an “economically, socially, and educationally isolated” district.<sup>1</sup>

## Student Academic Performance

On October 14, 2005, the state of New York designated the accountability status of Wyandanch as a “district in need of improvement, year 3” for English language arts. Overall, Wyandanch fourth-grade 2003–04 students made annual measurable objective (AMO)/adequate yearly progress (AYP) for English language arts and mathematics; however, the students with disabilities subgroup did not make AMO/AYP for English language arts. Overall, eighth-grade 2003–04 students did not make AMO/AYP for English language arts, including the subgroups: students with disabilities, black students, and economically disadvantaged students. While overall, eighth grade students made AMO/AYP for mathematics, students with disabilities and black student subgroups did not. Overall, 12th-grade 2003–04 students did not make AMO/AYP for English language arts or mathematics, including the subgroups of black and economically disadvantaged students.<sup>2</sup>

During 2002, 2003, and 2004, an increasing percentage of fourth-grade students either met or exceeded standards for both English language arts (33 percent, 52 percent, and 60 percent) and mathematics (60 percent, 61 percent, and 79 percent); conversely, the percentage of eighth-grade students who either met or exceeded standards during 2002, 2003, and 2004 remained low for

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<sup>1</sup> The data from this section came from the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations*, provided to Learning Point Associates, and from City-Data.Com, retrieved November 3, 2005, from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Wyandanch-New-York.html>.

<sup>2</sup> This data from this section came from the New York State Department of Education 2005 District Accountability Status report, retrieved November 3, 2005 from [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/school-accountability/2005/district-accountability-masterlist10-14-05\\_alpha.pdf](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/school-accountability/2005/district-accountability-masterlist10-14-05_alpha.pdf), and from the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations* provided to Learning Point Associates.

both English language arts (13 percent, 20 percent, and 14 percent) and mathematics (7 percent, 6 percent, and 18 percent). For high school students, 1998, 1999, and 2000 cohort data indicated a downward trend. During these years, 61 percent, 47 percent, and 50 percent of students, respectively, achieved a 65 percent passing score or higher in the Regents examination area of Comprehensive English, while 68 percent, 55 percent, and 59 percent of students, respectively, achieved a 65 percent passing score or higher in the area of mathematics<sup>3</sup>. These three high school cohorts had graduation rates of 73 percent, 68 percent, and 63 percent, respectively. In 2002–03, the dropout rate was 6.1 percent and suspension rates were about 30 percent.<sup>4</sup>

## School Redesign and Restructuring

In the Request for Proposals, the district did not indicate that the LaFrancis Hardiman and Martin Luther King elementary schools are involved in redesign or restructuring. However, the Milton L. Olive Middle School was identified as a “school under registration review” in 2001 due to student English language arts and mathematics performance. In 2004, this school was designated as “in redesign” with a plan implemented during the 2004–05 school year. Intended changes included improved preparation of students for middle school; hiring of certified and competent staff, including more English and mathematics teachers; continuance of afterschool English language arts and mathematics acceleration programs; use of higher-order thinking skills mathematics lab; use of family literacy and mathematics nights; professional development for literacy, integrated mathematics, science, and technology; and improved classroom management, differentiated instruction and instructional support specialists, use of assessment rubrics, new teacher mentoring, and push-in/pull-out English language learner (ELL) services.

According to the Request for Proposals, Wyandanch Memorial High School is presently in restructuring status due to consistently poor student English language arts performance and low graduation rate. The restructuring plan occurring from 2003 to 2007 places underperforming, at-risk students of each incoming ninth-grade class into “small learning communities” intended to maintain a focus on inquiry-based instruction, teacher teams, student advisories, and career

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<sup>3</sup> The data reported in this sentence differ from that provided to Learning Point Associates in the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations*. The data presented reflect performance on the Regents Examination in Comprehensive English and the Regents Examination in Mathematics for all Wyandanch District high school students of the 1998, 1999, and 2000 cohorts who took the exam. The data were taken from the February 2005 report *Overview of District Performance in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Analysis of Student Subgroup Performance for Wyandanch Union Free District*, prepared by the University of the State of New York, the State Education Department. Retrieved November 3, 2005, from <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/reprcd2004/overview-analysis/580109020000.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> The data from this section came from *New York State District Report Card Comprehensive Information Report and Overview of District Performance in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Analysis of Student Subgroup Performance for Wyandanch Union Free District*. Both were prepared by the University of the State of New York, the State Education Department. Retrieved November 3, 2005 from <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/reprcd2004/cir/580109020000.pdf> and <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/reprcd2004/overview-analysis/580109020000.pdf>, respectively. Data also came from the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations* provided to Learning Point Associates.

planning. Other high school initiatives include the Academic Intervention Services literacy program; English language arts across the curriculum and block scheduling; STAR program teachers aiding regular education teachers with mathematics classes; peer mediation program for appropriate school behavior; a 10th-grade summer science program with St. John's University; and a Cold Spring Harbor science research partnership. Other initiatives address special needs, including general equivalency diploma (GED) options; special education transition-to-work program; college course preparation, credits, and tuition opportunities; job internships, job corps partnerships and technical trades training; and pregnancy prevention and drug and alcohol counseling programs.<sup>5</sup>

## **District Resources**

For 2003–04, Wyandanch had 16 administrative and supervisory staff, 188 teachers, and 22 civil service employees; in 2004–05, there were 18 administrative and supervisory staff members, 202 teachers, and 26 civil service staff. In 2003–04, the district received \$24,963,117 in categorical aid, with total district revenue of \$40,056,633. In 2004–05, total categorical aid was \$26,050,740 and the total district revenue was \$41,960,415. On September 14, 2005, after a five-year audit, the U.S. Department of Education reported that \$6,600,000 in Title I and II federal aid earmarked for student tutoring and teacher training was “unauditable” or not fully accounted for. Much of the aid was difficult to audit due to the fact that the district had three different treasurers between 2000 and 2005 with a high level of turnover in other positions. In addition, the report indicated that school board trustees pressured the district into hiring unqualified staff and the district did not complete background checks of new workers. Wyandanch disagreed with the unauditable Title I and II monies after two separate Certified Public Accountant audits. Wyandanch did agree that the district needed better recordkeeping; it will return \$165,326 in duplicate expenditures and will establish stronger internal control, including the provision of necessary management accountability training to all school board members and the hiring of experienced candidates.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Data from this section came from the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations* provided to Learning Point Associates.

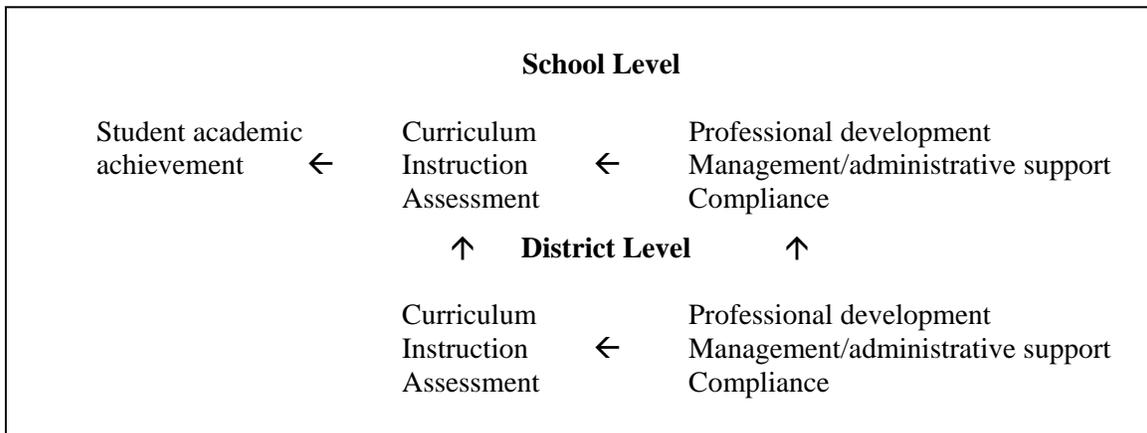
<sup>6</sup> Data from this section came from the document *Request for Proposals Application to Implement the New York State Education Department Sanctioned Audit of the Written, Taught, and Tested Curriculum as Required by No Child Left Behind Regulations* provided to Learning Point Associates and from the U.S. Department of Education Final Audit Report, September 14, 2005, concerning Wyandanch's ESEA Title I and Title II nonsalary expenditures. Retrieved November 3, 2005, from <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/auditreports/a02e0031.pdf#search='final%20audit%20report%20Wyandanch%202005'>.

## Theory of Action

The theory of action starts from student academic achievement in relation to the New York Learning Standards of the audited districts and their schools. Specifically, student academic achievement outcomes are related directly to curriculum, instruction, and assessment activities within the classroom of each study school. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment at the school level are supported and influenced by professional development, management and administrative support, and compliance at the school level; and by curriculum, instruction, and assessment at the district level. Finally, school-level professional development, management and administrative support, and compliance are supported and influenced by their district-level counterparts.

The theory of action reviewed in the cointerpretation meeting identified that change (i.e., actions needed to improve student achievement) occurs at both the school and the district levels. Therefore, the audit gathered information at both levels. A graphic representation of the theory of action dynamic is shown in Figure 1. A more detailed explanation is provided in the Preliminary Report in the *Wyandanch Supportive Documents*.

**Figure 1. Theory of Action**



## **Guiding Questions for the Audit**

To address both the needs of individual districts and the requirements of the audit, Learning Point Associates identified seven essential questions for the focus of the audit.

1. Are the written, taught, and tested curriculum aligned with one another and with state standards?
2. What supports exist for struggling students, and what evidence is there of the success of these opportunities?
3. Are assessment data used to determine program effectiveness and drive instruction?
4. Does classroom instruction maximize the use of research-based strategies?
5. Is the district professional development focused on the appropriate content areas, and are there strategies in place to translate it into effective classroom practice?
6. Do management and administrative structures and processes support student achievement?
7. Is the district in compliance with local, state, and federal mandates and requirements?

## **Audit Process Overview**

The audit process follows four phases, as outlined in the Learning Point Associates proposal application: covisioning, data collection and analysis, cointerpretation of findings, and action planning. This report comes at or near the end of the cointerpretation phase. A description of each phase follows.

### **Phase 1: Covisioning**

The purpose of covisioning is to develop a shared understanding of the theory of action and guiding questions for the audit. Outcomes included agreement on the theory of action and guiding questions, which were included in the Preliminary Report to the district. This phase also included the planning and delivering of communications about the audit to the district's key stakeholders.

### **Phase 2: Data Collection and Analysis**

To conduct this audit, Learning Point Associates examined district issues from multiple angles, gathering a wide range of data and using the guiding questions to focus on factors that affect curriculum, instruction, assessment, management, and compliance. (A separate evaluation of professional development was performed by Education Resource Strategies.) Like the lens of a microscope clicking into place, all of these data sources work together to bring focus and clarity to the main factors contributing to the districts' corrective-action status. Broadly categorized, information sources include student achievement data, the *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* (SEC), observations of instruction, semistructured individual interviews and focus groups, and analysis of key district documents.

#### **Student Achievement Data**

To provide a broad overview of district performance, student achievement data from the New York State Testing Program assessments were analyzed for Grades 4, 8, and 12 for the past three years. This analysis shows aggregate trends in performance and with NCLB subgroups.

#### **SEC**

To examine whether instruction was aligned to the New York state standards and assessments, teachers in the district completed the SEC. Based on two decades of research funded by the National Science Foundation, the SEC are designed to facilitate the comparison of enacted (taught) curriculum to standards (intended) and assessed curriculum (state tests), using teachers' self-assessments. The data for each content area for each teacher consist of more than 500 responses. The disciplinary topic by cognitive-level matrix is presented in graphic form, which creates a common language for comparison and a common metric to maintain comparison objectivity.

## **Observations of Instruction**

A sample of classrooms in the district was observed using a structured observation system. This observation system was not designed to serve as an evaluation of instruction in the classroom or a comparison of instruction within and across classrooms but to record exactly what occurs in the classroom. Observations lasted approximately 45–60 minutes in each classroom, during which the observer collected data in 10-minute segments. Observations focused on both student and teacher behaviors as well as particular instructional components.

The data then were analyzed using descriptive statistics in several areas, including classroom demographics, environment, instructional materials, lesson content, purpose, and activities conducted.

## **Semistructured Individual Interviews and Focus Groups**

People who are involved integrally in a district (e.g., students, teachers, district staff) have unique insights into a school system, including its strengths and operational challenges. While data of this type are necessarily subjective—representing the views of the speakers—they are nonetheless highly informative. Rigorously analyzed, these data provide various viewpoints. When this information aligns with more objective information, it can provide rich insights into issues and possible solutions. When this information does not align with more objective information, it can lead to fruitful discussions to identify the cause of the discrepancy.

To tap into stakeholders' perceptions of issues concerning curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, management, and compliance, the views of teachers, students, principals, district administrators, service providers, and community leaders were gathered through semistructured interviews and focus groups.

In the data interpretation and reporting process (interview and focus-group data sets in the *Wyandanch Supporting Documents*), the emphasis is on common themes and divergent cases to exemplify commonly reported characteristics and challenges occurring in the sampled schools. This process encourages sensitivity to emergent patterns, along with irregularities within and across school sites (Delamont, 1992). This process also supports a report that included descriptions rich in context and interpretations, which connected with and extended the district's contextual knowledge about what it perceives as working and not working across its schools.

## **Analysis of Key District Documents**

A district's formal documents (e.g., district improvement plan, professional development plan) demonstrate its official goals and priorities. To identify the priorities and strategies to which the district has committed, a structured analysis of key district documents was completed.

A document review scoring rubric was developed and used to synthesize document information within each of the six strands of the audit (i.e., curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development [this area had lesser focus in Wyandanch], management, and compliance). The rubric was designed to measure whether each district document contained sufficient information

across each strand. The degree to which each respective document addressed the strand was evaluated by two to three content experts to ensure multiple perspectives during the process. Components of each strand were given a 0–3 rating based on the level of coverage within the document. Once ratings were completed, a consensus meeting was held and a report was generated by all reviewers.

Table 1 lists the key data sources and how they were used by the Wyandanch Union Free School District to review the district during the cointerpretation process.

**Table 1. Alignment of Data Sources With Key Questions**

<b>Guiding Questions</b>	<b>Student Achievement Data</b>	<b>Surveys of Enacted Curriculum</b>	<b>Observations of Instruction</b>	<b>Semistructured Individual Interviews and Focus Groups</b>	<b>Analysis of Key District Documents</b>
1. Are the written, taught, and tested curriculum aligned with one another and with state standards?	X	X	X	X	X
2. What supports exist for struggling students, and what evidence is there of the success of these opportunities?	X		X	X	X
3. Are assessment data used to determine program effectiveness and drive instruction?	X	X		X	X
4. Does classroom instruction maximize the use of research-based strategies?		X	X	X	X
5. Is the district professional development focused on the appropriate content areas, and are there strategies in place to translate it into effective classroom practice?	X	X	X	X	X
6. Do management and administrative structures and processes support student achievement?	X			X	X
7. Is the district in compliance with local, state, and federal mandates and requirements?	X			X	X

### **Phase 3: Cointerpretation of Findings**

The purpose of cointerpretation is to interpret the collected data, which were grouped into three priority areas: professional development; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and management and compliance. This phase guided the action-planning process for the system.

The initial cointerpretation had several steps, starting with the interpretation of the data, followed by the development of problem statements, and concluding with the identification and prioritization of hypotheses specific to each problem statement. These steps occurred in a two-day meeting with key school and district staff. After the meeting, district staff edited and agreed on the problem statements and hypotheses. The synthesized information will be developed into a presentation for a broader school and community audience. Because this process was critical in identifying the priority areas for district improvement, the detailed approach is outlined here.

#### **Interpret the Data**

The cointerpretation process began with the study of the individual audit reports (i.e., school analysis report, documentation report, achievement report, district interview data, SEC data, compliance and management report [interview, focus groups, and document], classroom observation report) to:

- Identify data and information related to the assigned team priority area (i.e., professional development; curriculum, instruction, assessment; management and compliance).
- Select key data points or messages.
- Categorize or cluster and agree upon the critical data points or messages.
- Identify patterns and trends across reports.
- Present and defend critical data points or messages.
- Respond to clarifying questions.
- Refine and reach consensus on key findings.

In the cointerpretation meeting in Wyandanch, as the three investigative groups (i.e., professional development; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; management and compliance) presented their findings to the whole group, some natural combining and winnowing of results occurred. From various data sources, the participants utilized the method of triangulation to provide support for combining and subsuming some of the findings. The following set of three criteria enabled the participants to examine the prioritized list of findings:

- Does the list respond to the essential questions?
- Does the list respond to the subgroup and content areas identified as not meeting AYP?
- Does the list capture the most important findings?

From this process, which required considerable thought and discussion, key findings emerged. All participants agreed to support key findings in the action-planning meetings with the community, parents, teachers, and students.

### **Develop Problem Statements**

The cointerpretation process continued with the development of problem statements. Teams reviewed the key findings to accomplish the following:

- Generate problem statements by taking the critical data points or messages and identifying problems supported by evidence.
- Prioritize problems using specific criteria, such as those that have the greatest likelihood of increasing student achievement if resolved.
- Reach consensus on the top problems facing the district.

### **Identify and Prioritize Hypotheses**

Identification and prioritization of hypotheses occurred next. In this stage, participants performed the following steps:

- Identify a set of hypotheses supported by evidence in the three priority areas for each identified problem.
- Prioritize hypotheses using specific criteria—such as those over which the district has control—and determine which hypotheses, if addressed, can leverage the most change.
- Reach consensus on a set of hypotheses for each problem statement.

A subset of participants met again after the initial cointerpretation meeting to further define these statements and hypotheses.

### **Align and Synthesize Cointerpretation Results**

The final step of the process is to determine the alignment of the cointerpretation results with the Recommendations for Action Planning, included in this report. Areas of misalignment may require further exploration. Then the district team must synthesize this information into a presentation for a broader stakeholder group.

## **Phase 4: Action Planning**

The last step in the audit process is action planning. This process results in an action plan focused on the areas identified in the audit. The key actions in the plan are considered binding recommendations.

The process entails initial goal and strategy setting by a core district team, followed by engaging with a carefully selected stakeholder group that includes district staff, parents, and community leaders. This group will provide input into the success indicators and potential barriers to success

and will serve as champions for the district. Finally, action planning requires detailed planning meetings with groups or departments in the district to determine action steps and associated financial implications and timelines for implementation. Once this process is complete, the audit action plan should be aligned with other district plans.

## **Reference**

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## Key Findings and Problem Statements

As described in the Phase 3 Process Description, each problem statement was generated through the cointerpretation process. In a facilitated process, groups of district administrators and staff identified key findings across multiple data sets to develop the district Problem Statements. With each Problem Statement that follows, the key supporting findings and hypothesis are included. These can be mapped back to the original data sets using the data map in the Appendix. Also included is a short review of research, which is intended to begin informing the action planning processes.

### Problem Statement 1

**The written, taught, and tested K–12 English language arts curriculum is not adequately aligned with state standards, leading to consistently poor performance as measured by the English language arts state assessment.**

In response to the essential question “Are the written, taught, and tested curriculum aligned with one another and the state standards?” participants find numerous data sources showing a need to better align the district’s written, taught, and tested K–12 English language arts curriculum with state standards. For example, teachers and principals report that there is little alignment of materials and curriculum across schools in the district and that English language arts materials and programs are generally adopted at the school level, with little consultation with the district office. The *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* (SEC) reveal that teachers are not fully covering the state standards; instead, teachers are spending more time teaching comprehension and giving attention to other topics. Observations during summer school and student reports further confirm this lack of alignment.

Participants present several hypotheses that address the root causes of curriculum misalignment. These hypotheses generally focus on the need for stronger guidance from the district office. They point out that the district needs an English language arts director who is focused on aligning the curriculum to the state standards. This director can ensure a clearly articulated curriculum that is regularly reviewed and updated, along with pacing guides, curriculum maps, and scope and sequence. The hypotheses further suggest the need for processes to be put in place to evaluate how well the curriculum is being implemented and how it should be improved.

### Research

A fully articulated curriculum with specific benchmarks, performance indicators, assessments, and strategies provides teachers with a common set of expectations. When the curriculum, materials, programs, instruction, and local assessments are aligned, student progress can be monitored throughout the year (Porter, 2002). Using assessments during instruction can aid in planning instruction, monitoring student progress, and determining what curricular changes need to be made. This alignment of the curriculum, instruction, and assessments to the state standards allows all students access to the full written curriculum (Webb, 1997). While a written curriculum must provide depth and breadth, it is also crucial that priorities are decided upon so that the critical standards are covered in all classrooms across the district (Marzano, 2003).

According to the district, areas in literacy instruction outside of comprehension are neglected. A comprehensive reading curriculum includes a balance of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension taught on a regular basis (National Reading Panel, 2000). Because data in Wyandanch show issues in English language arts at the middle and high school level, it is worth noting that middle and high school students typically do well with decoding, literacy comprehension, and basic literacy skills but struggle with inferencing, drawing conclusions, and communication complex ideas (Carr, Saifer & Novick, 2002). Aligned curriculum and assessments aid in the planning of instruction and identifying students at risk for reading difficulty; they also can aid in making curricular changes.

While the curriculum must be delivered to all students, having a usable and clearly articulated curriculum allows grade-level teachers to make decisions about differentiation for particular student needs. Because students vary in readiness, interests, and learning style, appropriately differentiated instruction allows teachers to vary instructional approaches by varying the content, the process, or the product (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). Varying the process as a method of differentiation allows schools to choose from a range of instructional strategies, but it allows for all teachers to hold the same content standards for all students.

The written curriculum is a central component of teachers' work. Continuous and consistent curriculum implementation requires skilled and supportive building and district-level leadership in order to motivate teachers and monitor progress (Fullan, 2003).

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## **Problem Statement 2**

**There are limited supports for struggling students, which negatively impacts the performance of at-risk students, English language learners, and students with disabilities.**

In response to the essential question “What supports exist for struggling students, and what evidence is there of the success of these opportunities?” participants identify multiple data sources pointing to a need for more effective supplemental services. In particular, participants discuss a shortage of afterschool programs that support academic achievement, especially at the secondary level, and weak articulation of special area services (such as ELL and special education) and general education programs.

Cointerpretation participants identify several hypotheses to address the root causes of this problem statement focusing on a better understanding of how to work with special populations. Participants suggest that (1) teachers have a limited repertoire of intervention strategies to help struggling students, (2) the district lacks a comprehensive and organized system of interventions, (3) teachers lack training in using data to target students for interventions, and (4) teachers have a limited understanding of working with students who speak a language other than English at home.

## **Research**

A similar problem statement to Wyandanch’s is appropriate for almost every school district in the United States and corresponds to a major intent of NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): to draw attention to and address the needs of students with disabilities and students in underperforming subpopulations.

As noted by the Wyandanch School District, teachers, principals and district-level administrators need more information in many areas as they strive to serve the subpopulations of NCLB. With mainstreaming and immersion of students with disabilities, “mainstream classroom teachers have an essential role to play in the education of PEP [potentially English proficient] students” (Hamayan, 1990). However, classroom/content-area teachers report, nationally, the need for additional training to serve their students with disabilities. A 1998 teacher survey by the National Center for Education Statistics revealed that 71 percent of teachers taught students with disabilities but only 32 percent felt very well prepared to address the needs of those students (Parsad, Lewis, & Farris, 2000).

As noted as a hypothesis, teachers’ and students’ cultures, backgrounds, and histories in Wyandanch are less likely to be similar than in previous years. While students increasingly represent cultures that are nonwhite, non-middle class, and non-English speaking, their teachers remain predominately white, middle-class, native English speakers. The National Center for Education Statistics (2004a, 2004b) reports that for the years 1999–2000 (the most recent data

available) 32 percent of children ages 5 to 17 were nonwhite, but only 19 percent of teachers were nonwhite. Characteristics of various cultures are well studied and now available for teachers to examine and consider in creating environments and instructional practices that more closely align to the comfort level and needs of their students (Sowers, 2004).

Supports for struggling students are too numerous to name here, and a thorough investigation into programs in district's similar to Wyandanch's is suggested. However, afterschool programs serve as one example of programs that supplemental classroom learning and serve as increasing equity by providing additional support for low-performing (and often low-income) students (Gayl, 2004).

Although none of the hypotheses related to the issue of the high number of students in self-contained classroom, this is a concern and will be addressed in the Recommendations section of this report.

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## **Problem Statement 3**

### **Limited use is made of assessment data to determine program effectiveness.**

In addressing the essential question “Are assessment data used to determine program effectiveness and to drive instruction?” participants found that data sources showed that assessment data were rarely used to drive instruction. They spoke positively of the strides the district has made towards holding schools accountable for implementing standards-based instructional programs. They pointed in particular to the new professional development, which includes measurable goals, and the district plan, which clearly articulates the district’s responsibility to educate students. However, participants agree that data could be used more effectively to evaluate programs. For instance, a district document review revealed that not all district students participate in state and local assessments. Further, summer school teachers report not having enough time to use the data they receive from assessments to inform their instruction.

Two hypotheses are most strongly identified by cointerpretation participants as impacting the district’s ability to use assessment data to drive instruction and determine program effectiveness. District participants suggest that district educators need more training in data analysis and that little time was allocated for looking at and making sense of assessment data.

### **Research**

Research is clear about the value of using assessment data to monitor program effectiveness. High-performing districts tend to set clear expectations for schools to meet state and federal growth targets, provide schools with consistent and reliable achievement data on an ongoing basis, and ensure that district assessments and curricula are aligned with state standards (Williams et al., 2005). Districts that implement a data-driven system follow these steps: set a vision, collect and analyze data to determine strengths and challenge areas, develop an action plan, and assess progress on a regular basis (Deligiannis, 2004).

Schools that use data effectively share several characteristics:

- They ask the right questions before gathering data.
- They gather a wide variety of data.
- The most effective performance data is taken from locally developed assessments.
- They operate in a model of longitudinal, continuous improvement.
- They work with data and make decisions collaboratively, across and between levels.
- They have support from the district, leadership, teachers, and community. (Deligiannis, 2004, p. 1)

A synthesis of research states that successful schools draw data from three primary sources: external data, mainly in the form of state and district tests; individual teacher assessment data; and schoolwide assessment data (Deligiannis, 2004). Using real, current data also is important (Noyce, Perda, & Travers, 2000). These conclusions point to the need for use of current data.

According to Earl and Fullan (2003), many administrators express insecurity about their data-gathering skills, data interpretation, and data-based decision making. Others indicate they have not had training or experience with data collection, management, or interpretation. As Stiggins (1994) suggests, assessment literacy is the key to making thoughtful decisions about assessment data. Research supports that data-driven decision making requires professional development and continued support (Holloway, 2003). Creating an atmosphere where a consistent data-driven approach is used requires strategic planning, support for the initiative, and sustained focus (Feldman, Lucey, Goodrich, & Frazee, 2003).

Principals, in particular, need special training in assessment. Some experts have found that principals' training around data use is most beneficial when it focuses on using student assessment data for a wide variety of school improvement areas. These areas include using data to (1) identify struggling students, (2) develop strategies to follow up on the progress of selected students and help them reach goals, and (3) evaluate and provide formative feedback to improve teachers' performance (Williams et al., 2005)

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## **Problem Statement 4**

### **Research-based practices are not emphasized in Grades 5 through 12.**

In answering the essential question “Does classroom instruction maximize the use of research-based strategies?” participants find multiple data sources suggesting that while research-based practices are used in the early grades, they are much less likely to be used in Grades 5–12. The *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum*, in particular, reveal that district teachers in Grades K–4 are more likely than teachers in Grades 5–12 to use research-based instructional strategies.

Several hypotheses have been generated to explain why best practices are more likely to be used in the early grades than when students are older. First, participants suggest that one cause is the lack of a districtwide approach to instruction. They suggest that the consistency required by the federal Reading First program has played a unifying role for K–3 literacy instruction, but there is nothing comparable at the higher grade levels. Second, participants suggest that teacher outlook in the higher grades inhibits implementation of research-based practices in the classroom, especially in a switch from a focus on literacy to a focus on content. Third, participants suggest there is insufficient training in best instructional practices—especially in the higher grades, which are unaffected by Reading First.

### **Research**

Problem Statement 1 discusses aligning the language arts curriculum to the New York standards by grade level. During this process of standards alignment, critical benchmarks will be identified, instructional strategies chosen, and assessments developed.

The National Reading Panel (2000) has identified five areas of reading in which readers need instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The amount of instructional time in each area varies depending on the knowledge and ability of the reader. As instructional time decreases in phonemic awareness and phonics, instructional time in comprehension increases. Researchers in reading observe readers using multiple strategies in order to successfully comprehend text. Comprehension is the construction of meaning between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 2005). Successful readers use multiple strategies flexibly to construct meaning. Multiple areas of comprehension (e.g., inferencing, summarizing) have scientifically based reading strategies for instruction (National Reading Panel, 2000). Choosing a number of strategies allows students to use these same strategies in multiple situations over time. Research has shown that the most effective instructional model includes teacher modeling and practice, including discussion and feedback during the process (Roller et al., 1987).

Middle and high school students need to use these instructional strategies across the content areas as well as in language arts classes. Teaching reading comprehension in all content areas is most effective if it is embedded into the content itself, providing a context for understanding that is dependent on the concepts. Too often, students are asked to absorb content information without having learned the strategies for planning, organizing, and synthesizing the material (Langer, 2001). Using strategies will help readers develop these skills and strategies that allow them to apply these skills independently.

Teachers report being driven by the state Regent's exams in the selection of curriculum and learning activities. Higher performing schools integrate high-stakes test preparation into classroom instruction as a means to boost student performance on state assessments. The underlying skills and knowledge required to take the tests are examined by teachers, principals, and district-level administration; subsequently, strategies are developed for teaching and learning these skills and incorporated into the curriculum (Langer, 2001).

By aligning the language arts curriculum, professional development will become more focused. Tying student learning to professional development allows all stakeholders to have a clear understanding of the goal (Guskey, 2000). Teachers need support as they begin to make changes in their instruction. School leadership plays a large part in reinforcing best practices in schools. School administrators who consistently emphasize, provide training for, and reinforce best instructional practices are able to increase their teachers' confidence in supporting and embracing state assessments as being the driving force behind each student's success (Kaplan & Owings, 2001).

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## **Problem Statement 5**

### **Professional development has limited influence on classroom instruction.**

In answering the essential question “Is the district professional development focused on the appropriate content areas, and are there strategies in place to translate it into effective classroom practice?” participants find that the data suggest neither situation is occurring.

While a variety of professional development offerings are available to district teachers—in the school, at staff meetings, and off-site—data sources suggest that professional development is not well aligned or implemented. For instance, teachers report that the sessions were not well aligned with the materials they use in their classrooms, the resources available to them, or their instructional objectives. They also report that the quality of the workshops was often low and that it often did not impact their classroom instruction.

Cointerpretation participants hypothesize several root causes of the limited impact of professional development in the district. These hypotheses include a lack of strong district practices, including a more coordinated district plan for professional development and better monitoring of the programs, and limited teacher “buy-in,” stemming from teachers’ limited ability to choose the professional development they would find most useful.

### **Research**

Problem Statement 1 discusses aligning the curriculum to the state standards. During this alignment process, standards, instruction, and assessments will be agreed upon at each grade level. Using this information, staff in a school district can work together to plan professional development. Teachers, other staff members, and administrators need to start with the end result in mind. Tying student learning or achievement to professional development makes it important for all stakeholders to have a clear understanding of the goals (Guskey, 2000).

When designing staff development, content is critical in terms of staff buy-in (Richardson, 1994). If teachers perceive little value in the information presented, little change will occur. The concept of “just-in-time” information for teachers can be particularly helpful for changing practice (Schunk, 2004). “Just-in-time” content in professional development comes from the specific needs teachers themselves believe they have.

Many school districts find using different types and formats for professional development allows more staff members to participate in the activities. Often this professional development is offered before, after, or during the school day. Some teachers prefer to meet during the day and prefer job-embedded opportunities. Possibilities for job-embedded professional development include coaching, peer modeling, focus groups (or study groups), and “critical friends” groups.

Professional development also needs to be sustained over time (Steiner, 2004). In many ways, monitoring practices and accountability measures assist in providing duration to learning as the topics of professional development are held alive by conversations and work that utilize the new knowledge. Accountability of professional development is a significant part of a new plan’s

success. Principals are key in this process, supporting teachers as they begin to implement new ideas.

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## Problem Statement 6

### **Resources are not allocated based on prioritized needs to affect meaningful student achievement.**

In answering the essential question “Do management and administrative structures and processes support student achievement?” participants focus attention on data sources, suggesting that resources are not well aligned with the district’s priorities.

For example, participants note that the district document review reveals that the district is increasing its focus on mathematics and language arts. However, the 2005–06 budget does not reflect this emphasis. Administrator interviews also suggest that the financial strain and the response of searching for multiple grants for funding have further fragmented how resources are targeted.

Participants identify several hypotheses as to the root causes of this problem statement. First, they point out that the budget is currently based on a formula model rather than a program model. As a result, the budget process is less receptive to curriculum needs. Second, as discussed previously, the district’s limited resources also makes it more difficult for the district to fund programs that would affect meaningful student achievement. Finally, participants suggest that the district’s limited use of data to evaluate program effectiveness (Problem Statement 3) makes it more difficult for resources to be shifted in response to what is working and what is not working.

## Research

For schools to link resources to student achievement, they may need to engage in program restructuring and resource reallocation, requiring all key stakeholders to analyze school-level data (Odden & Archibald, 2001). This focus on data may help to solve the problem of fragmentation of programs due to competing priorities. Marzano’s (2003) work indicates that

creating a guaranteed and viable curriculum is the school-level factor that has the most impact on student achievement

A second change that must occur is greater school-based management and shared decision-making regarding budget, staffing, and curriculum with school leaders (Cotton, 1999). Decision-making must be collaborative: “Administrators, principals, and teachers play the key roles in determining how to use current educational resources better” (Odden & Archibald, 2001, p. 1). Rosenholtz (1991) points out that when people work together, they can work more successfully, resourcefully, and steadily. Thus, a focus on student achievement will require the analysis of student data to establish priorities by an administration and faculty that work collaboratively together to make decisions. Support for curriculum areas belongs in a district’s strategic plan. In order to improve student achievement, it needs to be a part of the district documents. The strategic plan needs to encompass an organizations resources and purposes (Peterson, 1989).

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## Problem Statement 7

**The district lacks effective practices to hold schools responsible for programs, learning, and results.**

Lack of strong accountability practices emerges as a problem statement at the cointerpretation meetings from the evidence in key district documents and interviews with teachers, principals, parents, and students. In particular, data from the document review and teacher and principal interviews suggest that there are few consistent mechanisms for evaluating teachers’ instructional practices and supporting their instructional growth.

Cointerpretation participants focus on the issue of too many programs and insufficient evaluation of the programs as the key underlying cause. They find little coordination or overlap between programs.

## Research

Research indicates that schools and districts must strike a thoughtful balance between programming and accountability in order to live out the potential of standards-based education. The premise is that if we agree upon standards for what students ought to know and be able to do, agree as a community to commit to working with *all* students to achieve these standards, develop measures that tell us how well we (teachers, students, student subgroups) are doing, and then use feedback from these measures to make necessary changes to stay true to the agreement, we will improve educational opportunities and ensure student success (Herman, Baker, & Linn, 2004). However, programming and assessment efforts that are too loosely organized are ineffective, suggesting the need for coordinated or streamlined programs closely tied to assessment and accountability goals (Herman, Baker, & Linn, 2004; Linn & Haug, 2002; Sironnik & Kimball, 1999).

Research supports the need to have accountability for professional development results. Effective professional development models have staffs in schools and districts working together to plan professional development. Districts need to start with the end result in mind. Tying student learning to professional development makes it important that teachers have an understanding of the goal (Guskey, 2000).

The evaluation process needs to be an integral part of the professional development process that uses multiple data sources along with plans for evaluation. There is a need for ongoing dynamic assessment of instruction to determine the effectiveness of the program (Bangert-Drowns, 1993). If professional development activities are not aligned to larger goals, evaluated, and ongoing, the resulting effect can be that of “Christmas tree schools,” as described by Bryk, Easton, Kerbow, Rollow, & Sebring (1993). Such schools have many disconnected programs and practices but little sense of coordination or vision.

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## **Problem Statement 8**

**The instructional leadership of the superintendent, principals, teachers, and other district staff is at times negatively impacted by the Board of Education.**

This problem statement arises from the interview data with teachers, principals, and district staff, which suggest that the Board of Education is so closely involved with activities in the district, it hinders rather than helps the process of schooling.

### **Research**

The key to turning around this type of relationship is to effectively create a new relationship between the school board and the superintendent that is clear in terms of the board's governance responsibility and the superintendent's operational responsibility for students' academic success (Dawson & Quinn, 2004).

There are many suggestions in the research about the roles and responsibilities of school boards. The espoused models range from corporate structures to learning communities. Reeves (2000) recommends the establishment of an accountability system to help resolve the paradox of leadership and policy: "Boards that become immersed in administration cannot lead policy" (p. 205). Reeves suggests that the two roles can be resolved by setting up a "comprehensive accountability system which will provide board members with a blend of very specific school-level information, along with qualitative and narrative data that puts this information in proper context" (p. 206).

This accountability framework also can serve another purpose of providing school leaders with important information on which to base decisions about improving student learning. Reeves then goes on to explain that the accountability framework becomes the framework "within which all other initiatives, programs, evaluations, plans, and other educational policy matters must be placed" (p. 208).

The research is clear about the need for a district to establish a board-administrator agreement and to delineate the roles of the board and superintendent. A board-administrator agreement would provide the cornerstone upon which a district's management team concept and structure could be built. The agreement or board policy should "address the purpose of the team and the board's commitment to the team concept; the team's rights, responsibilities, and limits of authority; the membership, composition, and organization of the team; the responsibilities of each team member; and the specific tasks or types of matters with which the team may deal"

(Anderson, 1988, p. 9). Such an agreement would greatly clarify the roles and responsibilities of board members.

Although there are many models that seek to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the school board, all agree on the need to clearly delineate those roles and to distinguish them from the role of the superintendent, the chief executive officer of a school district.

Another aspect of this problem could be a breakdown in communication between district and school personnel and the community. Administrators are the educational focal point between the school and the local community, so they must be able to communicate effectively any concerns, ideas, or news, and to receive feedback (Rowicki, 1999). In fact, it has been recommended that administrators actively seek feedback (Bolman & Deal, 1993). This task may entail some outreach by the schools and district to engage parents; it can be accomplished by fostering a climate where parental involvement is valued, providing professional development on effective communication between school and family, and equipping staff with strategies to engage parents (Mississippi Department of Education, 2004).

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## **Problem Statement 9**

### **District policies, procedures, and plans are inconsistently implemented, monitored, and evaluated.**

Another problem statement drawn forward from the data is a lack of coherence and follow-up with district programs. The document review indicates that while plans for the implementation of an aligned curriculum are in place, district policies, procedures, and administrative oversight need to be improved to ensure accountability and implementation.

Cointerpretation participants hypothesize several root causes of this problem. First, they suggest that the lack of coherence and oversight stems from a lack of formal written plans for some initiatives. They further suggest that the existing plans are not sufficiently specific. Second, participants emphasize that some of the inconsistency in implementation is a result of system overload: too many responsibilities without enough staff or time to complete them successfully.

### **Research**

Recent literature on school improvement has emphasized the key role that districts play in improving instruction by providing vision, focus, support, and policy coordination (Bodilly, 1998; Spillane, 1996). Berneice Brownell (2004), a former superintendent in New Jersey for 12 years, suggests that a leadership workshop may be required to create a way to avoid heated and hostile discussions about district plans. A leadership workshop allows administrators to assess their competency in three areas: (1) education administration content, (2) pedagogical content and an understanding of research-based instruction, and (3), inter- and intrapersonal skills to communicate effectively. If an area is lacking, professional development may be in order.

Today's administrators need to be instructional leaders who understand the concepts of teaching and learning, use data to make decisions, and align staff development with student learning needs (Lashway, 2002). In this case, professional development for administrators could include effective time management, building communication skills, and developing content knowledge, such as how to write and implement a plan for school improvement. Professional development may include monthly conferences, support groups, peer observation, and periodic "walk-throughs" of each school that lead to evaluation, dialogue, and reflective analysis.

### **Research**

Bodilly, S. J. (1998). *Lessons from New American Schools' scale-up phase: Prospects for bringing designs to multiple schools*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Brownell, B. B. (2004). Time for a leadership audit? *School Administrator*, 61(6), 32.

Lashway, L. (2002). Trends in school leadership. *ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document No. ED470967). Retrieved February 4, 2006, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED470967>

Spillane, J. P. (1996). Districts matter: Local educational authorities and state instructional policy. *Educational Policy*, 10, 63–87.

# Recommendations for Action Planning

## Recommendation 1

**Develop a written English language arts curriculum that includes the depth and breadth of the state standards; is mapped at all grade levels; is articulated and explicit enough for teachers to teach to; implements teacher supports, including training on specific literacy skills; and implements monitoring processes to ensure consistent curriculum implementation and delivery across the district.**

Problem Statement 1 identifies multiple data sets that confirm the lack of a K–12 articulated, mapped, and supported curriculum in English language arts. We suggest that Wyandanch Union Free School District invest heavily in the development of such a curriculum. In addition, Problem Statement 3 indicates that assessment data is not effectively used in the district. Combining longitudinal data with state standards, Wyandanch Union Free School District has the opportunity to create a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners.

A fully, articulated curriculum would:

- Be standard-based.
- Have benchmarks.
- Be based on scientific reading research.
- Include aligned assessments to monitor student progress, instructional practices, and programs.

Problem Statement 1 identifies the lack of a fully developed written curriculum. The conclusion of Marzano’s (2003) research synthesis is explicit: “Guaranteed and viable curriculum” is the most important factor impacting student achievement. We suggest that Wyandanch do the following:

- Develop an English language arts written curriculum that provides specific and clear guidance to teachers. This task could be accomplished through a variety of formats, such as curriculum mapping, written scopes and sequences (including suggested pacing guides), and documented district guides for instructional strategies.
- Include suggestions for modified and differentiated instruction to address the needs of ELL students, special-needs students, and culturally diverse learners.
- Ensure that creation and inspection of district benchmarks are part of the review and revision process.
- Develop processes for data collection, analysis, reporting, and interpretation. (This activity is addressed in more detail in Recommendation 3, which addresses data.)
- Support teachers in the implementation.

In addition, the lack of effective tools for monitoring of curriculum implementation was identified as a root cause of this issue. Actions for consideration include the following:

- Assess systems in place to monitor English language arts curriculum implementation and examine how these systems can be made more effective. If nothing currently exists:
  - Consider hiring (as noted in hypotheses) an English language arts specialist for the district.
  - Develop districtwide and schoolwide systems to support ongoing monitoring of English language arts curriculum implementation.
  - Revise or create instruments (i.e., observation protocols, curriculum review protocols) to conduct reliable review and assessments of the English language arts curriculum.
  - Provide training for administrators and teachers to support consistent English language arts curriculum implementation.
  - Develop peer review and observation structures that allow teachers within and across schools to provide one another with critical feedback on the quality of English language arts curriculum implementation.
  - Tie administrator and teacher evaluation procedures to curricular and instructional implementation of the defined district curriculum.

## Reference

Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

## Recommendation 2

**Improve the supports for students with disabilities and students from poverty and other cultures. *As related to students with disabilities:* (a) examine the number of students identified, the rate of placements in self-contained settings, and the cost per pupil; (b) decrease the numbers in all three areas; (c) increase professional development for content-area teachers; and (d) introduce effective strategies for and provide time for special education and classroom teachers to meet, plan, and teach together. *As related to students from various cultures, including the culture of poverty:* (a) increase professional development; and (b) hold teachers accountable for adjusting their classroom environments, lessons, and instructional practices to correspond appropriately to their students' cultures (Problem Statement 2).**

This recommendation represents solid measures to address the need for immediate districtwide change in the attention and direction for students with disabilities and students from various cultures as described in Problem Statement 2. A number of ideas are presented below for the district to consider in implementing the recommendation.

### ***For Students With Disabilities:***

- Investigate the rate of identification by school, by grade level, by ethnic/cultural group, by teacher, and by other means looking for patterns and explanations for the high rate of teacher referrals and special education team placements.
- Examine students served by the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and provide services locally for students when appropriate.
- Reduce the number of students in self-contained classrooms to benefit both the students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers (Least Restrictive Environment Coalition, n.d.; Staub, 1996).
- Provide classroom teachers with knowledge and skills to appropriately provide a continuum of services and instructional strategies that do and do not include enrollment in special education (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998).
- Implement a prereferral team at the school or district level to assist teachers with instructional ideas and supports, and to clearly delineate the requirements for enrollment in special education. This suggestion is especially critical due to the national high-rate of minority students enrolled in special education (Elementary and Middle Schools Technical Assistance Center, n.d.).
- Create additional student support systems (e.g., afterschool programs).
- Create a districtwide commitment and plan to students with disabilities, and instill the concept that *all* teachers are responsible for the success of *all* learners.
- Increase professional development for content-area teachers related to instructional practices for and understanding the needs of students with disabilities, including but not limited to (1) making academic and behavioral adjustments in their classrooms, (2) using adaptive technology, (3) clarifying teacher roles and academic expectations, and (4) focusing on features of successful programs (Bradley & West, 1994; Malarz, 1996; Pankake & Palmer, 1996).
- Provide time and instruction to improve the communication, coplanning, and coteaching of special education teachers and content-area teachers (Hollingsworth, 2001).

### ***For Students From Various Cultures, Including the Culture of Poverty:***

- Establish a professional development theme of “culture” to counter myths and assumptions, to change attitudes and beliefs, and to provide teachers with assistance in creating culturally responsive classrooms (Pajkos & Klein-Collins, 2001).
- Implement systems of monitoring and mentoring teachers in the establishment of culturally responsive classrooms.

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### **Recommendation 3**

**Design and implement a plan that will result in the systemic use of data to drive decision making across district programs, in schools, and in classrooms in the area of English language arts (Problem Statements 3, 6, 7, and 9).**

A number of problem statements reflect the need for a systemic approach to data use. Problem Statement 3 identified the need to use assessment data to inform instruction at the classroom and programmatic levels. Problem Statement 6 mentioned the need to more systematically distribute funds to appropriate areas (an area in which data would point directly to problem areas), and Problem Statement 7 discusses the need to better evaluate programs using data. This recommendation has a complexity that directly impacts many aspects of the district, including personnel, infrastructure, instruction, curriculum, and professional development.

The district needs to be clear about its priorities. In order to do this, the district needs to establish a system of accountability (see Problem Statement 9) that focuses on student achievement data.

By clearly identifying the learning needs of students, the district will be able to establish priorities to improve student achievement. Funding should follow these priorities. Extraneous initiatives generated by grants should be discouraged if they do not coincide with the established priorities for they siphon off time and money.

In order to support learning improvement in each school, the district should consider restructuring governance so that there is greater school-based management and shared decision making. Principals are closer to the needs of their students than are district personnel. Funds, however, should come with expectations for improvement in student learning.

Principals need to establish learning teams (such as such as professional learning teams, study teams, and school leadership teams) in their respective schools that fulfill the expectations of this Accountability System. These teams will start with what the district and state have identified as what is important for students to learn: a guaranteed and viable curriculum. The teams will then analyze student performance data based on those targets for learning, identify strengths and weaknesses, analyze what is working well and what is not, make recommendations for improvements, prioritize those recommendations, allocate funds accordingly, and evaluate progress.

The district needs to monitor school plans and how the funds are being used to improve achievement. “Student achievement is the measure of school performance” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

To systemically use data to drive decisions, the district needs to do the following:

- Determine the essential data elements that are needed at the district, school, and classroom levels.
- Develop operational processes and procedures that ensure data are collected, analyzed, disseminated, or reported, and that programmatic and instructional decisions are made at all levels in the district in an efficient and timely manner.
- Ensure that schools and staff have equitable access to the technology needed to collect and report data.
- Provide the support (technology assistance, development of “user-friendly” reporting mechanisms, and professional development at multiple levels) needed to make the systemic use of data possible, understood, and valued.
- Develop the requisite organizational and staffing structures needed at the district and school levels to carry out the actions necessary for the systemic use of data.

To improve performance in English language arts, the district will need to (1) train administrators and teachers in understanding the data sources, using data from various sources, and effectively implementing data-driven decision-making practices; (2) provide procedures for administrators to support and monitor effective data use in the classroom; (3) integrate and streamline various assessments that provide similar information; (4) implement new and different kinds of classroom-based assessments (e.g., running records, observation logs) in a consistent manner districtwide and use these assessments to report up to the school and district

and provide “user-friendly” information for teachers; (5) improve communication between the district and schools to promote a deeper understanding of the importance of data and how to interpret and use the data on an ongoing basis; (6) create guidelines and professional development to support the use of data to restructure curriculum and instruction to meet students’ needs; and (7) align the school improvement planning process to include the use of newly created data templates to fully analyze student achievement in English language arts.

To utilize data to assess the performance of students across the district, a similar assessment must be utilized across buildings. These assessments must be both formative and summative. Achievement test data should be used as a component of assessment. Effective data-driven decision making requires the use not only of the standardized test data but also formative assessments conducted throughout the academic year to accurately represent a student’s reading achievement and growth (Afflerbach, 2004).

The district may want to consider these additional ideas:

- A districtwide committee that would create an assessment plan. This committee would determine what assessments should be used for progress monitoring, screening, diagnostic testing, eligibility for additional services, and program evaluation. This committee’s job also would include determining what assessments are required districtwide and what assessments are recommended that schools and teachers can choose from in addition to the districtwide assessments. The plan would include processes and procedures for the reporting of results and supporting the interpretation and subsequent action planning (i.e., creation, implementation, and monitoring of those actions).
- A series of common reading assessments that are given three to four times a year as progress monitoring to identify students in need of additional support and for program or intervention evaluation. The results of these assessments should be used at the district level to refine the district curriculum.
- Timelines for assessment administration and reporting. These timelines need to be set and followed.
- Data analysis, data display, and interpretation of common district-level assessments, which should be conducted at the district, school, and teacher levels.
- Professional development to build school capacity and expertise in the area of assessments and interpretation.
- Examination of how language and literacy acquisition are being monitored and assessed for linguistically and academically diverse students.

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## **Recommendation 4**

**Develop a professional development plan that includes the needs assessments; involves teachers in planning; is focused on literacy strategies, learning theories, and content; and has specific literacy best instructional practice training for all middle and high school teachers and administrators (Problem Statements 1, 2, 4, and 5).**

Problem Statement 1 identifies the need for professional development as a part of the writing of a comprehensive English language arts curriculum. Problem Statement 2 identifies the need for professional development focused on instructing students with disabilities and ELL students; this professional development is needed for all teachers, not just those serving special-needs students. Findings under Problem Statements 4 and 5 identify the need for teacher professional development more generally in literacy instruction, and also specifically in the upper grades. Given limited resources, Wyandanch should consider focusing the majority of its professional development resources in literacy. We recognize that there always will be a need for some professional development in other areas, but we also know that if too scattered, professional development activities have little chance to change teacher behavior. Wenglinsky (2002) found that when teachers spend time on professional development that is not focused on content, there is little impact on student outcomes. It is critical that this focus is agreed upon and communicated across the district.

Once a fully articulated English language arts curriculum is in place, this curriculum, along with strategies for content-area literacy instruction and instruction for special education and ESL students should provide a framework for the agreed-upon practices. In addition, as curricular programs are implemented, professional development for those programs should be included. With a framework for literacy practices in place, the district can then determine where to prioritize professional development offerings. While the district may want to conduct a more focused needs analysis in this area, findings from this audit reveal a need for targeted professional development in the following areas:

- Reading methods at all grade levels and across subject areas, with a targeted focus at the upper grades (Grades 5–12).
- Differentiation of instruction for students with disabilities.
- Cultures and experiences of the students within the district.
- Specific research-validated teaching strategies.

It also is important that the methods used for professional development are conducive to improving instruction and developing and retaining high-quality teachers. Job-embedded professional development is regarded by experts as a strong approach which offers multiple pathways. Professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), schoolwide study groups (Taylor, 2004), literacy coaching, using specialists (Walpole & McKenna, 2004), lesson study

(Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998), mentoring and induction (Boyer, 1999, as cited in Holloway, 2001), and a myriad of other systemic initiatives have a strong research base and require similar elements for successful implementation. The elements needed for successful implementation of professional development resemble those needed for developing a data-driven organization and should include supporting common articulated goals, building professional knowledge as well as providing support to teachers—especially those new to the profession—during the change process.

Finally, the district needs a cohesive plan for the development of high-quality teachers with focused and targeted professional development activities. The plan—before implementation—should be assessed for the following focus areas:

- **Administrator and faculty buy-in:** How will the plan elicit principals’ and teachers’ interest?
- **Sustainability:** What are the implementation timelines? Does the plan have a cohesive focus that helps teachers build on knowledge and skills over a long period of time?
- **Monitoring:** How will the district determine at multiple points within a school year and across school years if the professional development is impacting instruction? How will site administrators monitor the implementation of skills learned in professional development?
- **Addressing the right needs:** How will the district collect data to determine the content needs of professional development? Data sources should include a combination of student achievement data, teacher and principal recommendations, and data from analyses of enacted curriculum as compared to written curriculum (i.e., which teachers are not teaching the state standards).
- **Research-based content:** Initiatives should be guided by research. They should be creating an aligned set of research-based strategies that are implemented in content-based classrooms.
- **Appropriate and varied methodologies:** Methodologies for professional development should consider more than just informational sessions. Peer review models, coaching programs, or other job-embedded programs can be added to increase staff buy-in, sustainability, and effectiveness. The district may consider creating communities of practice that meet (with release time or other incentives) to engage in continuous and structured meetings to assess instructional practices, analyze data, read relevant research, and share knowledge.
- **Cohesiveness:** How will the district ensure that the professional development plan cohesively serves the entire district? What policies should be in place to ensure that all schools have access to the same level of professional development activities?

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## **Recommendation 5**

**Incorporate into the established planning cycle a budget planning process that results in budget allocations and expenditures that are clearly aligned with the district’s goals and objectives as well as responsibility for results (Problem Statements 6, 7, 8, and 9).**

This recommendation includes the following:

- Identifying goals, objectives, and expenditures for individual district-office operating units and individual schools.
- Budgeting funds from all sources, including both general fund and grants, in a timely way, and in aggregate, to the district offices for district results and to the schools for school results.
- Preparing and allocating funds for schools on projected enrollment and amending allocations in a timely way based on actual enrollment.
- Identifying and communicating to the person responsible the requirements for and results expected from grant expenditures prior to any expenditure being made.
- Establishing a financial management reporting system that provides timely and accurate information for all budget holders, enabling oversight and ongoing monitoring of both revenues and expenditures.
- Scheduling reports to the Board of Education on budget revenues and expenditures at least four times per year.

Two guiding principles are reflected in this recommendation:

- District funds should be spent to support clearly established district goals and objectives.
- The allocation of funds between individual central offices and individual schools should be based on the responsibility for achieving these goals and objectives that have been assigned to each.

When data are used to establish district priorities, it follows that resources should be allocated to attain them. However, it is not enough to align spending plans with budget priorities. Those priorities must be articulated as goals and objectives and then specifically assigned to district staff to be accomplished. Line accountability dictates that budgeted funds should be available to those with whom the responsibility for accomplishing the goals and objectives rests (see Recommendation 6).

Transparency about revenues and expenditures is essential to both the economic and community health of the Wyandanch school district. If the district's priorities, goals, and objectives are sufficiently clear and based on data-driven needs, budget monitoring can serve as an opportunity for the district to enlist the support of community stakeholders.

Wyandanch should establish an annual district planning cycle that addresses major district activities, including vision and mission, performance standards, goals and objectives, enrollment, budget, staffing, testing, monitoring, and reporting on results. It should minimize the writing of multiple plans and focus on results for which the school district will be held accountable.

Developing and implementing a predictable cycle for planning activities will allow stakeholders to participate fully in these important processes. It is crucial that this planning cycle, especially budget development activities, provide for staff and public involvement at the district and school levels. A regular planning cycle also will help the Wyandanch School District to anticipate and clarify data needs.

## **Recommendation 6**

**Reorganize the administrative structure of the Wyandanch Union Free School District using the principle of line accountability for results. The application of this principle will ensure that individuals have a single supervisor, know specifically the responsibilities to which they have been assigned, and know the results for which they are accountable (Problem Statements 7 and 8).**

This recommendation references Problem Statements 7 and 8. Although Problem Statement 7 reflects the district's dissatisfaction with its limitation to hold schools responsible for programs, learning, and results, Problem Statement 8 refers to a lack of district policies, plans, and procedures. Both of these issues can be addressed by an administrative reorganization.

This recommended administrative reorganization will affect both central office staff and school principals and is essential in order to clarify who is responsible for what. Four functions form the basis of the recommended accountability relationship: objectives setting, resource provision, direction setting, and performance evaluation. Each supervisor must have the authority to exercise these four functions with the staff he or she supervises. No one should report to more than one supervisor at the risk of jeopardizing a strong accountability system.

The following steps are recommended:

- Specifically delineate the responsibilities for results that are assigned to the central office and the responsibilities for results that are assigned to individual schools. Once these roles have been established and defined, a written organizational chart depicting roles and relationships should be created and widely circulated.
- Change the reporting structure so that school principals report directly to the superintendent. In a district the size of Wyandanch, the direct reporting relationship of the superintendent and principals provides for better communication, understanding, and implementation of the educational program. There is no need for intermediate positions. With every additional level in the organization, there is increased likelihood that the superintendent's direction and priorities are distorted.
- Provide district office staff with specific information about who supervises their work, what they are expected to accomplish, and what authority and resources they have at their disposal. Through established objectives, budgeted resources, direction, and evaluation central office staff will gain a clearer picture of their appropriate roles and relationships with schools.
- Provide the members of the superintendent's cabinet with training in the development, understanding, and acceptance of the Board of Education organizational and cultural imperatives. This training is designed to help all members of the senior administration internalize the operating framework for the district that should guide their work and decision making.
- Develop written role and responsibility statements for all administrative positions. Role and responsibility statements are not job descriptions that merely describe how jobs are to be performed and what work is to be done; instead, they delineate publicly the results for which the incumbent is responsible. Written statements serve to clarify each individual's commitment to accountability for results.
- Establish and maintain standard operating procedures that ensure communication between the superintendent and his cabinet, including regularly scheduled meetings (twice a month) with printed agendas and clear objectives, recorded minutes that are filed, and clear direction for follow-up action as needed.
- Acquire professional development for administrators that includes effective time management, building communication skills, and developing content knowledge (such as how to write and implement a plan for school improvement).

## **Recommendation 7**

### **Address the problematic relationship between the Board of Education and the Wyandanch School District administration (Problem Statement 9).**

Problem Statement 9 clearly indicates the need to create a new relationship between the Board of Education and the superintendent that clearly articulates the board's governance responsibilities and the superintendent's operational responsibilities. To accomplish this task, the board should hire an outside consultant to facilitate this process; both parties currently are too involved in long-standing behaviors to be objective about the necessary changes that will need to be made.

- Develop a board-administrator agreement based on the new governance structure that specifies in writing the roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent.
- Establish an accountability system that also will serve to resolve the paradox of leadership and policy. This accountability system will provide important information for policy matters and leadership initiatives. In this system, data should play a significant role. The focus of both the board and the school leadership should be the improvement of student achievement.
- Clarify for teachers, parents, community members, administration, and board members the appropriate contact people for expressing concerns and providing feedback about educational issues. Create mechanisms to promote and encourage this communication.
- Develop a set of organizational and cultural imperatives that guide the working relationship of the Board of Education with the administration. These imperatives define a set of beliefs, establish guidelines for conducting district operations, and clarify expectations for all individuals involved.
- Provide state-level training for board members, in which all board members participate.
- Establish a schedule of periodic working retreats in which the board participates with the superintendent.

## Appendix A: Data Map

### Wyandanch School District Cointerpretation Key Findings, Problem Statements, and Hypotheses

During the cointerpretation process, participants analyzed 12 individual reports (data sets). Participants identified findings from across the data sets under each of the six strands examined through the audit: curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment, management, and compliance. Participants worked together to identify which findings were most significant. The key findings were then translated into problem statements. The participants articulated hypotheses on the root cause of each problem. The following tables document the results of this cointerpretation process.

Table A1 lists each of the problem statements identified by cointerpretation participants, followed by the hypothesized root causes. The hypotheses followed by a plus sign (+) are those that received enough support to move on in the process. The problem statements are divided into the audit guiding question they answer.

**Table A1. Problem Statements and Hypotheses**

<b>1. Are the written, taught, and tested curriculum aligned with one another and with state standards?</b>
Problem Statement 1: The written, taught, and tested K–12 English language arts curriculum is not adequately aligned with state standards, leading to consistently poor performance as measured by the English language arts state assessment.
Hypotheses: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lack updated/revised curriculum. +</li><li>2. Lack consistent professional development for implementation. +</li><li>3. Lack schedule for evaluating and revising process. +</li><li>4. Need for English language arts director. +</li><li>5. Don't have pacing charts, curriculum maps, scope and sequence, etc. +</li><li>6. No districtwide assessments (including teacher made) or guidelines for assessments.</li><li>7. Don't have appropriate materials.</li><li>8. Teachers not teaching what is on the state test.</li><li>9. Don't have a plan for evaluation.</li><li>10. Don't have districtwide support to develop one. +</li></ol>

**2. What supports exist for struggling students, and what evidence is there of the success of these opportunities?**

Problem Statement 2: There are limited supports for struggling students, which negatively impacts the performance of at-risk students, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

Hypotheses:

1. Staff don't understand cultural differences (languages other than English, poverty, etc.) +
2. Research is not used to drive instruction. +
3. Lack of monitoring plan (at district/building level)
4. Don't know how to interpret data. +
5. Lack of allocated resources.
6. Lack of congruence between staff (mainstream vs. special education vs. ESL)
7. Identification process clarity
8. Teachers need toolkit of interventions. +
9. District needs to implement a tiered model of intervention. +
10. Need training in diagnostic/descriptive approach. +

**3. Are assessment data used to determine program effectiveness and to drive instruction?**

Problem Statement 3: Limited use is made of assessment data to determine program effectiveness.

Hypotheses:

1. Lack of appropriate training in data analysis. +
2. Lack of follow-up sessions.
3. Lack of administration monitoring. +
4. Feedback from administration/peers. Old dog/New trick.
5. Lack of knowledge.
6. "Fear" of assessment.
7. Not built into district schedule. +
8. Inability to change schedule for student needs.
9. Lack of outside resources.
10. Deemed low priority
11. Lack of identified data manager.

**4. Does classroom instruction maximize the use of research-based strategies?**

Problem Statement 4: Research-based practices are not emphasized in Grades 5 through 12.

Hypotheses:

1. Reading First drives the professional development and implementation in Grades K–3. +
2. Less fragmentation at the elementary level. +
3. Lack of instructional K–12 model. +
4. Teachers in 5–12 are more content driven. +
5. Middle and high school are test driven (Regents). +
6. Lack of knowledge of best practice strategies. +
7. Built-in bias against teaching literacy skills. +
8. Older teachers tend to resist new strategies even though they work.
9. Upper grades deal with more complex student issues. +
10. Lack of articulation among levels. +

**5. Is the district professional development focused on the appropriate content areas, and are there strategies in place to translate it into effective classroom practice?**

Problem Statement 5: Professional development has limited influence on classroom instruction.

Hypotheses:

1. Lack of administrative monitoring. +
2. No ownership or input as to choice. +
3. Indifference (apathetic).
4. No time to experiment.
5. Lack of feedback from administration/peers.
6. Lack of resources to implement.
7. Topic focus is not research-based.
8. Professional development workshops are poor quality.
9. Personal perception of professional development.
10. Time of day. +
11. Not relevant to what I am teaching.
12. Professional development needs are not adequately identified in the comparative assessment program. +
13. We don't do needs assessment.

<b>6. Do management and administrative structures and processes support increased student achievement?</b>
Problem Statement 6: Resources are not allocated based on prioritized needs to affect meaningful student achievement.
<p>Hypotheses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budget is not curriculum driven. +</li> <li>2. Budget is based on a formula model as opposed to a program model. +</li> <li>3. Lack of evaluation of ongoing programs. +</li> <li>4. Lack of prioritization for comparative assessment program. +</li> <li>5. Lack of resources to support programs, services, etc., that would affect meaningful student achievement. +</li> <li>6. Budget is cut annually without consideration of student needs. +</li> <li>7. Lack of using data to drive decisions. +</li> </ol>
Problem Statement 7: District policies, procedures, and plans are inconsistently implemented, monitored, and evaluated.
<p>Hypotheses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They don't exist in written form. +</li> <li>2. Plans are written and not implemented. +</li> <li>3. Accountability is vaguely defined. +</li> <li>4. Evaluation is not systematic. +</li> <li>5. Short on staff to implement.</li> <li>6. It is unclear who is to implement.</li> <li>7. Lack of stakeholder buy-in.</li> <li>8. Timeline is not implemented.</li> <li>9. System overload. +</li> <li>10. Too few people; too many tasks. +</li> <li>11. Possible micromanagement.</li> <li>12. Administrator apathy.</li> <li>13. Time management. +</li> <li>14. Too many plans, policies.</li> <li>15. Lack of clear lines of authority.</li> </ol>

Problem Statement 8: The instructional leadership of the superintendent, principals, teachers, and other district staff is at times negatively impacted by the Board of Education.

Hypotheses:

1. Lack of written administrative procedures (no standard operating procedures manual). +
2. Board overrules administrators. +
3. Community influences board members to receive preferential decisions (lots of individual agendas). +
4. Requests of the superintendent by the Board of Education forces administration/others to readjust their priorities to meet board deadlines. +
5. Reactive and uninformed decision making on board's part for some issues. +
6. Board has lack of confidence in district leadership and teaching staff. +
7. Lack of trust among community, board, and district staff.

#### **7. Is the district in compliance with local, state, and federal mandates and requirements?**

Problem Statement 9: The district lacks effective practices to hold schools responsible for programs, learning, and results.

Hypotheses:

1. Too much time is spent introducing and implementing new program and not enough time evaluating the results and monitoring learning, etc. +
2. Very little or no correlation among programs. +
3. Too many programs. +
4. Teachers are overwhelmed. +
5. Lack of congruence and alignment in programs and identification.
6. Haven't done an analysis and identification of effective practices. +
7. No consistent districtwide effective practices.
8. Time management. +
9. Lack of clear instructional pathway ensuring learning.
10. Overload on building staff.
11. Administrator apathy.

Table A2 lists the key findings identified by cointerpretation participants. The key findings were chosen from all of the findings identified by the group through two rounds of voting and informal discussion. Some of the key findings were produced by combining multiple findings identified during the first stage of the coarticulation process.

**Table A2. Key Findings**

<b>The Key Findings</b>
1. District often spends money on things that are not connected to the district key priorities around improving student achievement.
2. District has not had consistent leadership (administrator and teachers) due to high turnover, which impacts stability and vision/direction.
3. District not meeting academic, social, environmental, health and emotional needs of at-risk students (e.g., special needs, ELL, homeless populations, foster care) due to lack of personnel, resources, planning.
4. The data indicate that the written, tested and taught curriculum in Grades K–12 are not aligned with the state performance standards in the following areas: fluency, speaking and presenting, listening and viewing, author’s craft, writing applications, critical reading. The main focus across all grade levels is comprehension.
5. District has limited effective practices to hold school accountable for programs, learning, and results.
6. School board micromanages district- and school-level functions.
7. Key district plans that impact curriculum, instruction, and assessment are in place; however, the necessary procedures, policies, and administrative oversight are not in place to ensure accountability and implementation (systemic change and infrastructure).
8. Articulated research-based strategies are not consistently used throughout the district across all grade levels.
9. Strong sense by parents that students receive a good education at elementary levels and quality diminishes as students progress through grade levels as they progress through K–12 system.
10. More than half of teacher respondents said professional development did not influence their instruction.
11. K–12 teachers see student attendance as a problem and mobility as a concern.

Table A3 lists all of the findings identified by cointerpretation participants. Findings were pulled from various data sets, which are available in the supportive documentation section of this report. The data sets include the following:

- PR—Preliminary Report (Supportive Document A)
- SA —Student Assessment Report (Supportive Document B)
- KDD—Key District Document Review Summary (Supportive Document C)
- DS—Key Findings from District Interviews (Supportive Document D)
- TP—Teachers and Principals Report (Supportive Document E)
- PS—Findings from Parent Focus Groups and Findings from Student Focus Groups (Supportive Documents G and H)
- SEC—*Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* Reports for Schools and Districts (Supportive Document M)
- CO—Classroom Observation Data Report (Supportive Document I)
- MC1—Management and Compliance Document Review Summary (Supportive Document J)
- MC2—Management and Compliance Findings from Administrator and Board Interviews (Supportive Document K)
- MC3—Management and Compliance Findings from Principal and Teacher Interviews (Supportive Document L)
- SWD—Special Education Report (Supportive Document F)

Findings in italics were adopted by the group as key findings. The final column in the chart indicates the number of participants who felt that each finding should be included in the key findings. Some findings were considered in two separate votes, thus two-vote counts are included in this column. Finally, the reader will notice that some of the key findings were chosen through discussion, rather than the voting process. These key findings are included even though they did not receive the required number of votes during either round of voting.

**Table A3. All Identified Findings**

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
1. <i>The data indicate that the written, tested, and taught curriculum in K–12 are not aligned with the state performance standards in the following areas: fluency, speaking and presenting, listening and viewing, author’s craft, writing applications, and critical reading. The main focus across all grade levels is comprehension.*</i>							X						8
2. Limited attention to state performance indicators with exception to comprehensions and limited degree of recall of phonics (K–3).							6						1
3. Increase in language study and decrease in phonics recall for 3rd grade. Fluency negative.							7						
4. Increase in skills associated with 4th-grade assessments. Fluency negative.							8						
5. Lack of focus on development of speaking and presenting and writing components.							9						
6. Missing writing process and creating writing applications and speaking and presenting.							11,12, 13						

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
7. K–12 not focusing on critical reading, author’s craft, and comprehension.							11,12, 13						
8. Fluency is not addressed across grade levels.							X						1
9. Teachers report major to moderate alignment of instruction to curriculum; however, major disparity to topographical mapping to state standards.							all						1
10. Teachers report confidence in managing classrooms and differentiated instruction.							38						
11. K–12 teachers report mobility a concern.							45						
12. Less time spent on prioritizing curriculum as it relates to teaching and learning.							18–27						2
13. There is a disparity between the time spent in standards.							7						1
14. Strongest influence in teaching to standards is K–4 level.							18-27						
15. There is a discrepancy between the amount of time spent in writing on teacher surveys versus the graphs.							19,22, 25, 7–11						
16. Classroom instruction does not maximize the use of research-based strategies in K–3 (sight words and basic writing skills). (essential question 4)							7						

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
17. Curriculum alignment from Grades K–7 shows a greater difference in Grades K–3 versus Grade 4 versus Grade 7. (essential question 1)							7–8						
18. <i>Skills used in the middle school are not aligned with the high school or the elementary.*</i> (essential question 1)							7–10						5
19. Based upon teacher survey, classroom instruction does not maximize use of research-based strategies in Grades 5–12. For example, K–4 uses work center, working in small groups, graphic organizers, guided reading/writing, teacher reads aloud; the upper grades use them very little. (essential question 4).							18–75						2
20. Since 20002–03, subgroup #'s have changed (e.g., Grade 4, low SEC).		3, 4											
21. Performance levels of special-needs students at the middle grades has fluctuated.		3											
22. Net effect of growth at Grade 4 is zero.		2											
23. Most sustained increase occur at Grade 8 (over 3 years, 26.3 percent change).		2											
24. Curriculum is determined by school leadership opposed to centralized K–12 focus.				1									2

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
25. The district does not have a systemic or consistent English language arts program.					1								2
26. <i>Strong sense by parents that students receive a good education at elementary levels and quality diminishes as students progress through grade levels.* (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment [CIA])</i>						1							8
27. <i>Students not doing well do not receive necessary support (e.g., afterschool programs.* (CIA)</i>						2							1,5
28. Parents see lack of systemic alignment (e.g., student does well at elementary and declines at middle and secondary). (CIA)						2							
29. <i>Elementary, middle, and high school students say curriculum is not challenging enough and is repetitive.* (CIA)</i>						1							6
30. Middle and high school students report that English language arts follows strong routines and effective classroom management. (CIA)						1							
31. High school students report that classroom tests and state tests seem unconnected. (CIA)						2							
32. Middle school students report they are prepared for state testing. (CIA)						2							

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
33. High school and middle school students report when there is alignment between classroom and state assessments, they are better able to do well on state tests. (CIA)						2							
34. Data indicate that what was observed did not align to state standards (e.g., fluency, writing, 60 percent of time spent on comprehension). (CIA)	21–27												
35. Table 5 (classroom observation) in supplementary documents shows that comprehension was observed 58 percent of the time, in Grades 4–12, speaking and listening (4 percent), word study 16.7 percent). No observation of fluency. (CIA)								3					
36. Table 3 (classroom observation) in supplementary documents shows that classroom environment organization was primarily rows (37.5 percent), tables (37.5 percent), and groups (25 percent). (CIA)								5					

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
1. Limited lines of communication between regular education and special education programs and teachers across grade levels.												7	
2. Few scheduled opportunities for common planning time at elementary schools.					2								1
3. <i>More than half of respondents said professional development did not influence their instruction.*</i>					3								
4. Elementary teachers report time is not available to analyze student assessment results. PD	15												
Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
1. Teachers at middle and high school see attendance as a problem.							45						2
2. <i>The document review indicates that plans for the implementation of an aligned curriculum are in place; however, the necessary procedures, policies, and administrative oversight are not in place to ensure accountability and implementation.*</i>			all										4
3. Plans are broad, lacking specific executable steps and structures to implement (e.g., no testing schedules to organize data/assess).			2										

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
4. No plans exist on how technology will be used across the curriculum.			3										
5. There is a high rate of students identified (17 percent to 25 percent) to receive special education (overidentification).												5	
6. Limited early intervention and prereferral options to reduce #s ultimately identified for services.												5	1
7. Low academic achievement for students with disabilities.												6	
8. District spends 56 percent more than state per special ed student. Reverse is true for regular education students.												6	
9. <i>District has not had consistent leadership due to high turnover, and impacts stability and vision/direction.*</i>				1									8
10. <i>School board micromanages district and school level functions.*</i>				1									3
11. Financial strain reinforces fragmentation due to funding constraints (e.g., reliance on grants).				4									2,3
12. <i>High rate of teacher turnover.*</i>				4									
13. The textbook series is not aligned to standards, requiring teachers to use supplemental materials.					1								

Findings	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
14. <i>District not meeting academic, social, environmental, health, and emotional needs of at-risk students, (e.g., special needs, ELL, homeless populations, foster care), lack of personnel, resources, planning.*</i>					2								6
15. Students are not allowed to take books home. (MC)						1							
16. Parents and students (mid/HS) do not have an orderly learning environment (outside classroom). (MC)						2							
17. District has limited evidence of policies and procedures for teacher support. (MC)									2, 3				
18. District does not have an aligned curriculum. (MC)									2				
19. No evidence of professional development for principals on how to evaluate teachers and provide support. (MC)									3				
20. <i>District has limited effective practices to hold school accountable for programs, learning, and results.*</i> (MC)									4				4
21. Limited evidence to support a curriculum-centered budget. (MC)									5				

Findings Management and Compliance (MC)/CIA	Data Sets												Votes
	PR	SA	KDD	DS	TP	PS	SEC	CO	MC1	MC2	MC3	SWD	
22. Principal’s authority is eroded by the actions of the Board of Education. (MC)										1			
23. There is an absence of trust in the relationship between board and its administration and wider community. (MC)										1			
24. Principals would like to have cabinet status. (MC)										1			
25. More than half of teachers/principals interviewed said the school climate is poor. (MC)											1		
26. Every year between 70 and 120 students are rendered homeless. (MC)	4												
27. One of the highest rates of foster care students on Long Island and in New York state. (MC)	4												

## **Appendix B: Action Planning**

### **Action Planning Process Overview**

Wyandanch Union Free School District followed the recommended action planning process we provided. A brief description of the steps taken, along with the agreed upon goals and strategies are included here. Submission of the completed action plan is the responsibility of the district.

### **Goal and Strategy Planning**

After the review of the interim report, the Goals and Strategy meeting was the preliminary step within the Audit Action Planning Process. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, Learning Point Associates facilitated a group of 11 administrators and 3 teachers in review and reflection of the recommendations for the district as written in the interim report; and to set goals, strategies and success indicators. Learning Point Associates provided templates for this process. The goals and strategies were solidified in April.

### **Action and Task Planning**

After districts identify goals, strategies, and success indicators, they begin to create action steps that would help employ the strategies and work towards the fulfillment of the district goals. The district monitors its progress through the utilization of the success indicators. Learning Point Associates facilitated a meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup> to assist the district in completing this process. The district identified action items and completed task descriptions for them. Learning Point Associates provided feedback on the actions and task descriptions through two follow up meetings: one on May 11<sup>th</sup>, and one on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. After this step, Wyandanch Union Free School District held a Community Forum on June 5<sup>th</sup> to share the Goals, Strategies, and Actions with the larger community.

### **Integration and Alignment Actions**

This step discussion encourages articulation and collaboration of action steps across areas of concentration. Plans for each of the goals should be reviewed across groups to identify areas of overlap, commonality, and difference with regards to their action steps and timelines. This step was not begun with Learning Point Associates. Wyandanch Union Free School District will embark on this process once the goals and strategies are approved.

### **Integration and Alignment of Audit Action Plan with Other District Plans and/or to School Plans as Needed**

The final component of the Action Planning process involves the integration and alignment of the audit action plan with other district and school plans. Wyandanch Union Free School District will embark on this process once the goals and strategies are approved.

**Goal #1:**  
 By the end of the 2008-09 SY, 75% of all students will meet or exceed proficiency on New York State English Language Arts standards as measured by the New York State and District assessments.

STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<p><b>Strategy A:</b>                      Revise and implement a fully articulated K-12 English Language Arts that would meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be standards-based;</li> <li>Have benchmarks;</li> <li>Be based on scientific research;</li> <li>Include aligned assessments to monitor student progress, instructional practices and programs.</li> </ul>	Develop a research-based curriculum. Pilot the research-based curriculum. Document feedback from the pilot.	85% of all classroom teachers in each school across the district use the English Language Arts curriculum guide to plan and monitor, and assess instruction.	100% of all classroom teachers in each school across the district use the English Language Arts curriculum guide to plan and monitor and assess instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign in sheets for training.</li> <li>• Signed receipts for documents.</li> <li>• Feedback and revision session minutes.</li> <li>• Grade level meeting agendas.</li> <li>• <b>Surveys of Enacted Curriculum.</b></li> <li>• Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Research gathered.</li> <li>• Standards aligned.</li> <li>• Lesson plans.</li> <li>• Teacher observations</li> </ul>

	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	<p>Challenges</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Time.</li> <li>2. Funding.</li> <li>3. Prevailing and entrenched mindset and expectations</li> <li>4. Lack of a coherent instructional delivery system.</li> <li>5. Lack of district-wide expectation for lesson plans.</li> </ol>	<p>Supports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Middle School has adopted textbook series.</li> <li>2. High School has plans to adopt textbook series.</li> <li>3. Elementary School has Reading First.</li> <li>4. District requires lesson plan review.</li> <li>5. Teacher and administrator accountability for student achievement</li> <li>6. LIRSSC provides ongoing technical assistance.</li> </ol>

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
1.A.1	Create a K-12 district wide task force to develop a curriculum framework and implementation timeline.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Director of Curriculum
1.A.2	Create a K-12 English Language Arts curriculum that is aligned with state standards, that is research based and includes modifications for English Language Learner and Special Education.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	<b>District Funds</b>	Supt, Director of Curriculum, Director of Special Ed, Director of Finance, Principal, Teachers
1.A.3	Review and create instruments to conduct reliable review of district benchmarks for the K-12 English Language Arts curriculum.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	<b>District Funds</b>	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Director of Curriculum
1.A.4	Develop a district wide and school wide systems to support ongoing monitoring of English Language Arts implemented curriculum.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		Director of Curriculum, Principal, Coordinator
1.A.5	Provide professional development for administration and staff to support consistent delivery of the curriculum.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Coordinator

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
1.A.6	Create curriculum review board to conduct reliable review and assessment of the English Language Arts curriculum.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		Supt., Director of Curriculum, Principal
1.A.7	Tie administrator and teacher evaluation procedures to curricular and instructional implementation of the defined district curriculum.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		Supt., WTA, WAA, Director of Curriculum, Labor Counsel

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STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<p><b>Strategy B:</b>  <b>Revise and implement a district wide ongoing professional development plan to support meaningful classroom change resulting in improved student achievement in English Language Arts for all populations.</b></p>	<p>75% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will indicate their satisfaction with the content and process used through their teaching experiences upon administration of a survey.</p> <p>75% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will report an increase in knowledge of instructional strategies and skills.</p> <p>75% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will apply what they have learned in the classroom.</p>	<p>85% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will indicate their satisfaction with the content and process used through their teaching experiences upon administration of a survey.</p> <p>85% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will report an increase in knowledge of instructional strategies and skills.</p> <p>85% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will apply what they have learned in the classroom.</p>	<p>100% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will indicate their satisfaction with the content and process used through their teaching experiences upon administration of a survey.</p> <p>100% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will report an increase in knowledge of instructional strategies and skills.</p> <p>100% of teachers who participate in professional development on ELA curriculum and instructional strategies will apply what they have learned in the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plans reviews.</li> <li>• School walkthroughs.</li> <li>• Teacher observations.</li> <li>• Teacher evaluations.</li> <li>• Surveys.</li> <li>• Teacher Professional growth plans.</li> </ul>

	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no accountability for results with the current professional development opportunities offered.</li> <li>• Administrators and teachers and teacher assistants and aides participate in limited professional development.</li> <li>• Contract requirements for district-wide professional development are not followed.</li> <li>• Commitment to the development and implementation of PD opportunities is limited.</li> </ul>		<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NUA, ISA and Reading First have been providing job-embedded professional development.</li> <li>• There are three Reading First coaches at the elementary school level.</li> <li>• There is a newly developed coherent, systemic professional development plan.</li> <li>• LIRSSC provides ongoing technical support.</li> <li>• Teacher accountability for student achievement</li> </ul>

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
1.B.1	Revise current professional development plan to include group processes to ensure the following: administrator and faculty buy in; sustainability; monitoring; targeting; research based content; appropriate and varied methodologies, and; cohesiveness on an ongoing basis.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
1.B.2	Assess professional development needs based on the revised fully articulated curriculum and student achievement data trends.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
1.B.3	Conduct research to inform the professional development plan in the following areas: reading methodology with a K-12 focus; differentiation of instruction for students with disabilities; cultures and experiences of the students within the district, and; specific research validated teaching strategies.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
1.B.4	Use known and agreed upon criteria to conduct reviews at multiple points to determine effectiveness of professional development on instruction.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	WAA, WTA, Principal, C & I Coordinator
1.B.5	Ensure that there are district policies and procedures to support effective implementation of professional development.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principal, WAA, WTA

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STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<b>Strategy C:                      Develop an assessment plan for collecting, analyzing, and reporting and using data.</b>	100% student and teacher participation in a K-12 district testing cycle. 75% of classroom teachers use English Language Arts assessment data to inform instruction. 95% participation rate 80% graduation rate >92% Attendance rate <6% Suspension rate	100% student and teacher participation in a K-12 district testing cycle. 85% of classroom teachers use English Language Arts assessment data to inform instruction. 95% participation rate 80% graduation rate >92% Attendance rate <6% Suspension rate	100% student and teacher participation in a K-12 district testing cycle. 100% of classroom teachers use English Language Arts assessment data to inform instruction. 95% participation rate 80% graduation rate >92% Attendance rate <6% Suspension rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening data and test results.</li> <li>• Agendas from common planning time, department meetings, conference days, and professional development days.</li> <li>• Materials used for professional development.</li> <li>• Results from SEC.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of effective systemic accountability for results for student achievement.</li> <li>• There is no coherent systemic method for assessment.</li> <li>• There is inconsistent application of data analysis.</li> <li>• There is inadequate training provided to staff for implementing assessment measures.</li> <li>• Current contract provisions are not aligned with effective pedagogy.</li> <li>• No provisions for professional growth plans and remediation.</li> <li>• There is a need to establish of higher expectations for student achievement.</li> </ul>			<b>Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of an effective Reading First assessment plan.</li> <li>• There is a Director of Testing.</li> <li>• There is board approval of findings and recommendations of Curriculum Audit.</li> <li>• Observation/evaluation processes and instruments.</li> <li>• Teacher accountability for student achievement.</li> <li>• LIRSSC</li> <li>• BETAC</li> <li>• SETRC</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort C, New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
1.C.1	Determine the essential data elements that are needed at the district, school, and classroom level to set targets.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative, BOCES RIC
1.C.2	Develop school specific accountability targets by building and grade level.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
1.C.3	Create protocols and set expectations at the district level for collecting, reviewing, and analyzing data according to a district-wide timeline	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
1.C.4	Create a plan to disseminate information necessary for systemic use in data analysis.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	WAA, WTA, Principal, C & I Coordinator
1.C.5	Identify and establish a series of common reading and writing assessments to be administered 3-4 times a year with corresponding rubrics.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Reading First (K-3), Title I (K-3 Writing, 4-12 Reading)	Supt., Principal, WAA, WTA
1.C.6	Provide professional development to build school capacity and expertise in the area of	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I and Building Funds	Director of Curriculum,

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
	assessment and interpretation.					Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative, BOCES
1.C.7	Develop a process to be utilized at regular intervals to monitor language and literacy acquisition in the English Language Learner and Special Education student and use the data to inform instruction.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative, BOCES, BETAC, VESID

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STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<b>Strategy D:</b> <b>Establish and implement a continuum of research based academic intervention programs and services in English Language Arts for all English Language Learner (ELL) students.</b>	75% of all teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy in English Language Learners and Special Education. 75% of all teachers will utilize research based strategies in English Language Learners. 75% of all teachers will utilize differentiated instruction.	85% of all teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy in English Language Learners and Special Education. 85% of all teachers will utilize research based strategies in English Language Learners. 85% of all teachers will utilize differentiated instruction.	100% of all teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy in English Language Learners and Special Education. 100% of all teachers will utilize research based strategies in English Language Learners. 100% of all teachers will utilize differentiated instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plans review.</li> <li>• Teacher observations.</li> <li>• Professional development materials, agendas and surveys.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding willing and qualified teachers for the program.</li> <li>• There is a lack of consistent, research-based materials and methods in use.</li> <li>• There is a lack of written procedures and guidelines to ensure consistent and effective implementation of all programs.</li> </ul>			<b>Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students receive all State mandated services.</li> <li>• Parents support for children’s education.</li> <li>• Access to technical assistance from BETAC.</li> <li>• Title IIIA and CR Part 154 Grant Funding.</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
1.D.1	Convene a district task force in collaboration with external partners to conduct a specific study on the existing supports for English Language Learner students and make recommendations for change.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES
1.D.2	Develop school-specific accountability targets for English Language Learners to meet or exceed proficiency in English Language Arts.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES
1.D.3	Create a K-12 handbook of research based instructional strategies to assist classroom teachers in meeting the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title III Funds; CR Part 154 Grant Funds	ELL Coordinator, Curriculum, WTA, WAA
1.D.4	Review and revise current policies and procedure for providing instructional supports for English Language Learner (ELL) students.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES
1.D.5	Increase professional development for teachers and administrators relative to research based strategies.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds; Title III Funds; CR Part 154 Grant Funds	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
1.D.6	Investigate and disseminate information regarding exemplary programs with similar demographics.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES
1.D.7	Provide job embedded professional development to model successful academic intervention programs.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds; Title III Funds; Part 154 Grant Funds	BETAC, Curriculum, Principals, ELL Coordinator, BOCES

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STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<p><b>Strategy E:</b>  <b>Establish and implement a continuum of research based academic intervention programs and services in English Language Arts for all special needs and at risk students.</b></p>	<p>75% of <b>all</b> teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy for at risk students and students with special needs.                      75% of <b>all</b> teachers will utilize research based strategies for at risk students and students with special needs .                      75% of <b>all</b> teachers will utilize inclusion practices and differentiated instruction for at risk students and students with special needs.</p>	<p>85% of all teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy for at risk students and students with special needs.                      85% of all teachers will utilize research based strategies for at risk students and students with special needs.                      85% of all teachers will utilize inclusion practice and differentiated instruction for at risk students and students with special needs.</p>	<p>100% of all teachers will understand the academic needs for literacy for at risk students and students with special needs.                      100% of all teachers will utilize research based strategies for at risk students and students with special needs                      100% of all teachers will utilize inclusion practice and differentiated instruction for at risk students and students with special needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WUFSD handbook for academic intervention.</li> <li>• Lesson plans showing differentiated instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher observations.</li> <li>• Professional development materials, agendas and surveys.</li> </ul>
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding willing and qualified teachers and support staff for the program.</li> <li>• There is a lack of consistent, research-based materials and methods in use.</li> <li>• There is a lack of written procedures and guidelines to ensure consistent and effective implementation of all programs.</li> </ul>			<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students receive all State mandated services.</li> <li>• Parents support for children’s education.</li> <li>• Access to technical assistance from SETRC and LIRSSC</li> <li>• Funding through IDEA.</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
1.E.1	Convene a district task force in collaboration with external partners to conduct a specific study on the existing supports for Special Education students and make recommendations for change.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	IDEA	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES
1.E.2	Develop school-specific accountability targets for Special Education students to meet or exceed proficiency in English Language Arts.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES
1.E.3	Create a K-12 handbook of research based instructional strategies to assist classroom teachers in meeting the needs of Special Education students.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	IDEA	Special Ed Director, Curriculum, WTA, WAA
1.E.4	Review and revise current policies and procedure for providing instructional supports for Special Education students.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
1.E.5	Increase professional development for teachers and administrators relative to research based strategies.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	IDEA	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES
1.E.6	Investigate and disseminate information regarding exemplary Special Education programs with similar demographics.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES
1.E.7	Provide job embedded professional development to model successful academic intervention programs.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	IDEA	VESID, SETRIC, Curriculum, Principals, Special Ed Director, BOCES

**Goal #2**

**By the end of 2008-2009 school year, the district will have implemented a systemic planning, monitoring, evaluating and accountability process for administrative operations to support increased student achievement.**

STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<b>Strategy A: Reorganize the administrative structure of the Wyandanch Union Free School District using the principle of line accountability for results</b>	100% of all district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and documented for all stakeholders.  75% of all district functions are operationalized and carried out.	100% of all district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and presented to all stakeholders.  85% of all district functions are operationalized and carried out.	100% of district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and presented to all stakeholders.  100% of all district functions are operationalized.	Organization chart <b>Comprehensive District Procedure Manual</b> SED compliance targets are met yearly Agenda of monthly meetings Quarterly status reports
<b>Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Prevailing culture and norms deeply entrenched</li> <li>• Evolving responsibilities (State, NCLB)</li> <li>• Competing Priorities and roles conflicting and overlapping</li> <li>• Transitions in leadership</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>			<b>Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to vision</li> <li>• Supplemental resource</li> <li>• Administrator Buy in</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
2.A.1	Review, evaluate, and disseminate an organization chart that depicts roles & responsibilities related to all district administrative functions and positions	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt.
2.A.2	Identify and specifically delineate decision-making responsibilities that will be held at the central office and those that will be held at the school level.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	*Supt, Principals, Directors, WAA,
2.A.3	Define for each principal and his or her supervisor the primary role of the principal, the objectives to be accomplished in that role and specific student achievement targets to be met.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	*Supt, Principals, WAA,
2.A.4	Establish and maintain standard operating procedures that ensure communication between the superintendent and his cabinet in meeting the established goals,	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	*Supt., Principals, Directors
2.A.5	Develop a district wide procedural manual containing functions, timelines and action steps	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt, Principals, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative

**Goal #2: By the end of 2008-2009 school year, the district will have implemented a systemic planning, monitoring, evaluating and accountability process for administrative operations to support increased student achievement.**

STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<p><b>Strategy C:</b>  <b>Incorporate into the established planning cycle a budget planning process that results in budget allocations and expenditures that are clearly aligned with the district’s goals and objectives and responsibility for results.</b></p>	<p>75% of all district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and presented to all stakeholders..                      District meets 75% of performance criteria established in Performance Plan for District.                      75% of all district functions are operationalized</p>	<p>85% of all district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and presented to all stakeholders.                      District meets 95% of performance criteria established in Performance Plan for District.                      85% of all district functions are operationalized</p>	<p>95% of all district administrative operations are identified with timelines, action steps and presented to all stakeholders.                      District meets 95% of performance criteria established in Performance Plan for District.                      95% of all district functions are operationalized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plans reviews.</li> <li>• School walkthroughs.</li> <li>• Teacher observations.</li> <li>• Teacher evaluations.</li> <li>• Surveys.</li> <li>• Professional growth plans.</li> </ul>
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Prevailing culture and norms deeply entrenched</li> <li>• Evolving responsibilities (State, NCLB)</li> <li>• Competing Priorities and role conflicting and overlapping</li> <li>• Transitions in leadership</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>			<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to vision</li> <li>• Supplemental resource</li> <li>• Administrator Buy in</li> <li>• .</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort (C), New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
2.C.1	Identify and prioritize goals, objectives, and expenditures for individual district office operating units and individual schools	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC
2.C.2	Allocate resources to support student achievement in alignment with the district's priorities.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC
2.C.3	Analyze and report school-level data on a quarterly basis.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title 1 Professional Development Funds	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC
2.C.4	Focus budget decisions on the analysis of processes such as cost-benefit and student data to establish priorities by administration and faculty.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC
2.C.5	Align grant funding expenditures to supplement programs in support of district instructional priorities pursuant to the terms and conditions of the grant.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principal, WAA, WTA Administrators

**Goal #2**

**By the end of 2008-2009 school year, the district will have implemented a systemic planning, monitoring, evaluating and accountability process for administrative operations to support increased student achievement.**

STRATEGY	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS			EVIDENCE TO VERIFY PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIES
	2006-2007 SY	2007-2008 SY	2008-2009 SY	
<p><b>Strategy B:.</b> Establish, an annual district planning cycle that addresses major district activities to provide an organizing framework for district actions</p>	<p>75% of all key stake holders participate in the district’s annual planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating cycle. 75% of key stake holders utilize data to inform decision making.</p>	<p>85% of all stake holders participate in the district’s annual planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating cycle. 85%of key stake holders utilize data to inform decision making.</p>	<p>95% of all stake holders participate in the district’s planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating cycle. 95 of key stake holders utilize data to inform decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agendas from common planning time, department meetings, conference days, and professional development days.</li> <li>• Materials used for professional development.</li> </ul>
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of effective systemic accountability for results for student achievement.</li> <li>• There is no coherent systemic method for planning and implementing</li> <li>• There is inconsistent application of data analysis.</li> <li>• There is inadequate training provided to staff for implementing district procedures</li> </ul>			<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is board approval of findings and recommendations of Curriculum Audit.</li> </ul>	

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort C, New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
2.B.1	Determine the essential district wide functions, timelines and procedures that are needed to implement the policies, mission, vision and state and federal compliance mandates.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I Funds	*Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC WAA, WTA
2.B.2	Identify and prioritize district wide needs, goals and objectives based on student achievement data.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principals, Asst. Prin., Directors LIRSSC
2.B.3	Establish and maintain written standard operating procedures in support of Board policies that ensure all functions and timelines are articulated throughout the district.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title 1 consultant funds	Director of Curriculum, Principal, Asst. Prin., WTA, Parent representative
2.B.4	Develop a planning process	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		
2.B.5	Implement a planning process	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R		

Action:		Completion Year			Financial Resources	Person Responsible
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		
Action Coding: Continuing Effort C, New Effort (N), Modified Effort (M)		Timeline Coding: Develop (D), Implement (I), Evaluate (E), Monitor (M), Revise (R)				
2.B.6	Develop and implement an annual evaluation process which includes annualized goals and objectives as key indicators of performance and accountability.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	N/A	Supt., Principal, WAA, WTA Directors, Labor Counsel
2.B.7	Provide professional development to build district capacity and expertise in the area of planning.	D/I/E	I/M/E/R	M/E/R	Title I and Building Funds	Supt., Principal, WAA, WTA Directors