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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)

BEDS Code/DBN	151102040000
District	Lake Placid City School District
District Address	50 Cummings Road, Lake Placid NY 12946
Superintendent	Roger Catania (Acting Superintendent)
Date(s) of Review	June 7, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	Lake Placid Junior-Senior High School

District Information Sheet							
District Grade Configuration	K-12	Total Student Enrollment	700	% Title 1 Population	34%	% Attendance Rate	94%

% Free Lunch	19	% Reduced Lunch	7	% Student Sustainability		% Limited English Proficient		% Students with Disabilities	

Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	% Black or African American	1%	% Hispanic or Latino	0%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	2%	% White	94%	% Multi-racial	2%

Personnel							
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	3	Number of Deputy Superintendents	0	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	NA	# of Directors of Programs	0
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	3%	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	4%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District	6%	Average Teacher Absences in District	7.5 per day

Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)									
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District		Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools		Number of Schools in Status	

% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	96%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)		% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
x	White		Multi-racial
x	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
x	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
x	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
x	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

Tenet 1 - District Leadership and Capacity: The district examines school systems and makes intentional decisions to identify and provide critical expectations, supports and structures in all areas of need so that schools are able to respond to their community and ensure that all students are successful.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each statement of practice (SOP), and indicate in the OVERALL RATING" row the final designation for the overall tenet rating.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
1.1	The district has a comprehensive approach for recruiting, evaluating and sustaining high-quality personnel that affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.			X	
1.2	The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that leads to appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community, which promotes school improvement and success.				X
1.3	The district leadership has a comprehensive explicit theory of action about school culture that robustly communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.				X
1.4	The district has a comprehensive plan to create, deliver and monitor professional development in all pertinent areas that is adaptive and tailored to the needs of individual schools.			X	
1.5	The district promotes a data-driven culture by providing strategies connected to best practices that all staff members and school communities are expected to be held accountable for implementing.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 1:				**I**

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.1	The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for the school leader to create, develop and nurture a school environment that is responsive to the needs of the entire school community.				**X**

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.1	The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports that are connected to the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and are inclusive of the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects in a data-driven culture.			**X**	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.1	The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices that lead to effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.				**X**

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I

5.1	The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students' social and emotional developmental health.			X	
Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.					
#	**Statement of Practice**	**H**	**E**	**D**	**I**
6.1	The district has a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan that states the expectations around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families.				X

District Review Narrative:

Tenet 1 - District Leadership and Capacity: The district examines school systems and makes intentional decisions to identify and provide critical expectations, supports and structures in all areas of need so that schools are able to respond to their community and ensure that all students are successful.	**Overall Tenet Rating**	**I**
Statement of Practice 1.1: The district has a comprehensive approach for recruiting, evaluating and sustaining high-quality personnel that affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.	**SOP Rating**	**D**

Debriefing Statement: The district has adopted a new process for recruiting and hiring personnel that ensures a large pool of applicants and a selection committee structure that includes a wide range of stakeholders. The district is in a state of transition, with a newly appointed acting superintendent, who will transition to interim superintendent starting July 1, 2013, when three new school leaders will begin their positions as well. While the districts' approach for recruiting staff promotes staff quality, the district's lack of attention to particular school needs and to staff retention, limits the schools' ability to meet the needs of the community.

Areas for Improvement:

- While the district has a process for recruiting high quality staff, it does not always consider school needs and it does not provide support for staff retention. District leadership is in a transition state; the acting superintendent started his position one week prior to the on-site visit by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), and the Board of Education (BOE) has been reconstituted. District cabinet members reported that the new members of the BOE have begun to take a much more active role in the hiring process. The new process for hiring staff ensures a large group of applicants and a stakeholder committee comprised of 24 members, including teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members. District cabinet members reported in interviews that the district uses the On-line Application System (OLAS) for educators as a tool for posting open positions to recruit from a wide pool of applicants, which increases the size and potential quality of the candidates. They stated that the district website is also used as a tool for attracting new applicants. While numerous stakeholders are considered in the recruitment and hiring process, district administrators stated that when cuts were made in personnel there was no explanation as to why one position or person was being cut versus another, and they were not consulted or included in the decision making process. They added that the former district leader cut the special education teacher positions at the elementary school to two people for the beginning of the 2012-13 school year, despite the building leader expressing concern that the needs and Individualized Education Program (IEP) services for students with disabilities could not be met under that level of staffing. The district cabinet reported that the district has not provided support to the schools to sustain or retain staff but expressed expectations that with the new leadership this will be remedied. The district has a process for recruiting high quality personnel, but it has not been comprehensive and the district has not provided assistance to retain staff, which limits the schools' ability to address the

needs of their constituents.

Statement of Practice 1.2: The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that leads to appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community, which promotes school improvement and success.	**SOP Rating**	I

Debriefing Statement: The district does not have a clear vision and goals to guide resource allocation. Recently, the district developed a budget advisory focus group with wide stakeholder representation. This group identified recommendations for alternatives to elimination of instructional positions for closing the budget gap for the 2013-14 budget. However, the lack of a district vision and goals providing guidance and direction to this process, limits its ability to meet school needs.

Area for Improvement:

- The district does not have a clearly articulated vision and goals for resource allocation. The transition in district leadership has impeded the creation of a systematic and equitable process for resource allocation. District cabinet members reported to the IIT that there had been limited stakeholder input into resource allocation decisions under the former district leadership who prioritized resource allocation with a focus predominately on the senior high school level. They indicated that the allocation of resources for the elementary and middle school levels and for special education services on all levels were not equitable. For example, instructional cuts were made for special education teachers at the elementary level despite the school leader's concern that the needs of students with disabilities could not be met under this level of staffing. Recently, the district developed a budget advisory focus group with wide stakeholder representation, including students, parents, business leaders, community members, teachers, administrators and BOE members. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that the advisory group has developed recommendations for resource allocation for the 2013-14 school year. While the budget advisory group and new district administration are now in place, the current lack of a district vision with systems and structure to support resource allocation limits school improvement efforts.

Statement of Practice 1.3: The district leadership has a comprehensive explicit theory of action about school culture that robustly communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.	**SOP Rating**	I

Debriefing Statement: While the acting district leader plans to create a unified theory of action in collaboration with constituents, the district does not currently have a theory of action with prioritized goals. The lack of a clearly articulated theory of action of high expectations hinders coordinated efforts to improve professional practice and meet the needs of stakeholders.

Area for Improvement:

- The district does not currently have a theory of action. While the self-assessment noted that the BOE establishes yearly goals that were communicated to the school community, the IIT did not find evidence of measurable, specific goals or that they were communicated to constituents. The district

cabinet stated that the district's expectations focused on compliance with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). The acting superintendent noted that while past leadership had numerous committees, district efforts lacked prioritized goal setting. He stated that he intends to create a comprehensive theory of action of high expectations through a collaborative process with all constituents. He explained that even if he personally had the best theory of action, it would not be appropriate for the district because, "it can't be just mine, it has to be shared." The acting superintendent reported that the district has hired school leaders who are experienced teachers, so that they can provide instructional leadership in keeping with his vision of improved student achievement and engagement. While the new leadership is preparing to create a theory of action that communicates high expectations, the current lack of clearly articulated and prioritized goals is hindering efforts to improve professional practice to meet the needs of all constituents.

Statement of Practice 1.4: The district has a comprehensive plan to create, deliver and monitor professional development in all pertinent areas that is adaptive and tailored to the needs of individual schools.	**SOP Rating**	D

Debriefing Statement: While the formal written, professional development (PD) plan has not been revised for five years, the district offers PD focused on current Regent's Reform Agenda initiatives and the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. There has been limited collaboration between district and school leaders to identify instructional priorities and make a plan to address them. Because the district does not have a comprehensive plan and there is limited collaboration with school leaders and staff, PD does not always meet the needs of individual schools.

Area for Improvement:

- While the district does not have a formal, written comprehensive needs-based PD plan, the district offers PD focusing on the Regent's Reform Agenda initiatives. District cabinet members reported to the IIT that the district's formal, written PD plan was five years old, and there is no district-wide PD calendar. Cabinet members reported that schools create their own PD plans because the needs of each building are often different. They reported that there was often discussion about the need for a district PD planning committee that would include teachers and administrators, but this has not been acted upon. Cabinet members indicated the PD the district provides is primarily dependent on opportunities available through the network teams. They also indicated that district PD was driven by requirements, such as the CCLS and the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). Teachers at the high school reported that the district provided PD on PBIS, including on-going training from a PBIS coach. The district cabinet noted that the majority of district PD was not based on data relating to identified school needs. The IIT found no evidence of district provided follow-up support for school staff. The acting district leader has identified the creation of a district-wide PD committee as one of the steps that needs to be taken in order to ensure cohesive and comprehensive alignment of curriculum and instruction. While the district offers some PD through district and network options, it does not have a formal, comprehensive PD plan that is targeted to identified school needs. . As a result, PD does not always meet the needs of the school community.

Statement of Practice 1.5: The district promotes a data-driven culture by providing strategies connected to best practices that all staff members and school communities are expected to be held accountable for implementing.	**SOP Rating**	I

Debriefing Statement: While the district collects some data, which it shares with the school community on a limited basis, it does not have a strategy for the creation of a data driven-culture. The incoming district leader plans to use data to prioritize goals and work collaboratively with the schools. Because the district does not have an overarching plan to support school use of data, and they are not using data to drive their planning and outcomes, their ability to hold staff members and schools accountable is limited.

Area for Improvement:

- The district does not have a district-wide strategy for data use that it communicated to all members of the school community. District staff reported a "lack of transparency" with the schools about data concerning the status of schools and the district-wide sub-group performance on the State assessments. Although the district introduced Star Reading and Star Math assessments in January 2013, they have not communicated their expectations to the schools of how data is to be used to support instruction and goal setting for students. While district cabinet members reported data provided by school leaders was reviewed at district cabinet meetings, the IIT was not clear from a review of documents what data was reviewed and for what purposes. Further, the IIT did not find evidence of data analysis regarding subgroup performance, item analysis from State assessments, and identification of best practices on the use of data to improve instruction or student achievement. Teachers reported they were not familiar with school report card data or the meaning of Annual Yearly Performance (AYP) or any district expectation for data use. As a result of the lack of a data-driven culture and communication from the district regarding best practice strategies around data use, the district's ability to hold staff and schools accountable for student achievement and school improvement is limited.

This section provides a narrative that communicates how the school communities perceive the support provided by the district.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions Statement of Practice (SOP) 2.1: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for the school leader to create, develop and nurture a school environment that is responsive to the needs of the entire school community.	**SOP Rating**	**I**

Area for Improvement:

- According to the school leaders, there has been no regular venue for reciprocal communication between the district and the schools, and the district has not provided support to enable the school leaders to implement interventions to meet the instructional needs of the school. The high school leader reported that the district has had no leadership presence at the junior-senior high school this year. The interim middle school leader stated that he did significant data mining and interviews with

staff in order to ascertain the reasons for their designation as a focus school. He reported that he made suggestions for changes that he felt would address some of the barriers to student achievement. He stated that none of these suggestions were accepted, implemented, considered, or even discussed by the former district leader who had been in his position until very recently. District staff reported that there were bi-weekly district cabinet meetings, which included school leaders. However, cabinet staff noted these meetings were primarily focused on information concerning compliance with the new Regents Reform Agenda mandates and did not invite reciprocal communication to foster an effective relationship. School leaders reported that they have had daily contact with the new acting district leader since he assumed his position, one week before the IIT review. Because the district has not fostered reciprocal communication or provided support to school leaders in their efforts to improve school performance, school leaders have been hampered in their ability to be responsive to the needs of the school community.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support Statement of Practice (SOP) 3.1: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports that are connected to the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and are inclusive of the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects in a data-driven culture.	**SOP Rating**	**D**

Area for Improvement:

- The district cabinet reported that most PD this year has focused on CCLS alignment and the APPR process. The district provided four half-day PD sessions for these initiatives. Teachers reported to the IIT that they have received some PD from the district on CCLS curriculum alignment, but they have not received guidance and support to ensure alignment meets CCLS expectations. A review of curriculum maps by the IIT indicated that there was no evidence of the integration of the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects into the core content. Special education teachers indicated they were excluded from the curriculum mapping process because the district did not provide them with access to the district mapping software. While the district cabinet indicated that the district has initiated the use of Star Reading and Star Math assessments, teachers reported that they are in the beginning stages of learning how to use this data to support implementation of the CCLS. Although the district provides some support for the implementation of CCLS, the lack of district-wide expectations concerning the infusion of the arts, technology and other enrichment areas or the use of assessments to monitor school progress limits student access to a rich educational experience.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions **Statement of Practice (SOP) 4.1:** The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices that lead to effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.	**SOP Rating**	**I**

Area for Improvement:

- The district does not have a current, formal written plan or calendar of PD offerings for school leaders, teachers, and staff. In addition, the district does not work collaboratively with the schools to provide PD opportunities focusing on strategies for effective teacher practice. Document review by the IIT indicated that the district has not updated formal PD plans since 2008. During interviews with the IIT, teachers identified the lack of communication from district leadership as their number one concern affecting their ability to improve their instructional practices. The interim high school leader and high school staff reported that communication between the district and school has deteriorated over the past five years due to changes in district leadership. The acting superintendent reported there is no district-level PD planning committee. While the district provides half day PD every quarter on CCLS, the school leaders indicated that PD focusing on instructional practices has not been a district priority this year. In addition, staff at the middle school and high school noted the lack of follow-up of PD offered by the district. As a result of the lack of collaboration between the district and the schools and the inconsistent PD and follow-up offered by the district on effective instructional practices, school staff is not always able to plan and support student achievement.

Tenet 5- Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health **Statement of Practice (SOP) 5.1:** The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students' social and emotional developmental health.	**SOP Rating**	**D**

Area for Improvement:

- While the district has not developed a formal policy statement, the district provides school staff PD and support on issues concerning student student social and emotional developmental health needs. Teachers at the junior-senior high school reported to the IIT that all faculty and staff have received PBIS training and there is district-wide implementation of PBIS. They added that there is on-going PBIS coaching provided by the district and PBIS committee meetings to review and plan in response to data collected through a district wide data system for identification of behaviors that may indicate a social or emotional problem. A review of the district's PD log indicates multiple dates for PBIS training, in addition to Regents Reform Agenda related activities. Teachers at the high school reported that the PBIS data shows one third less discipline referrals this year as compared to last year and a decrease in the daily referral rate. While school staff members indicated they received initial training on DASA, they reported there was no follow-up to this training. The DASA coordinator indicated there was the need for additional training, but training has not been scheduled. Support staff cited the lack of cohesive and coordinated efforts as a barrier to optimally meeting student

needs. The district cabinet reported that the district collaborates with the community partner, Connecting Youth and Communities (CYC), which provides a variety of resources to aid the school in its efforts to support student needs. For example, CYC conducts surveys to gauge student social/emotional health and alcohol/drug use and shares the results with the district. While the district provides support to school staff to implement district-wide PBIS programming and maintains a community-based partnership that provides additional services and resources, the lack of an over-arching plan of action and inconsistent follow-up support limits the ability of school staff to meet the social and emotional needs of all students.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement **Statement of Practice (SOP) 6.1:** The district has a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan that states the expectations around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families.	**SOP Rating**	**I**

Area for Improvement:

- District cabinet members, school leaders, and school staff indicated that there is no district-wide policy for family and community engagement. The district communicates with families through a variety of ways, including a district website that provides general district-wide information, a parent portal where parents can access student assignments and grades, and an electronic newsletter sent via email to parents. School staff reported that not all parents have internet access, which limits some parents' ability to receive information and to be engaged. Some parents indicated that the website lacked important information. Through document review, the IIT found no evidence of efforts by the district to develop relationships with parents, or to develop an action plan for schools to follow regarding increasing family involvement and reciprocal communication. The district has developed a key partnership with a community organization, which is the entity that coordinates the home, school, community relationship. The junior-senior high school staff, school and district leadership and parents consistently identified CYC as the community partnership that supports both home and school to meet student needs. The CYC sends out a magazine to all families in the district, which informs them about community resources and programs. Parents stated that the last few years of turmoil in the district have been difficult and they feel the district had failed to hear their voices on various issues. The lack of a comprehensive district family and community engagement plan that prioritizes sustained reciprocal communication with families is limiting the district's ability to ensure family engagement in the school and student success.

DISTRICT LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tenet 1: District Leadership and Capacity

In order for the District's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 1, the District should:

- 1.1: Ensure that new staff positions are in keeping with the needs of the school through a collaborative process and establish policies and strategies that support staff retention.
- 1.2: Develop structures for assessing the needs of the school community. Create a clearly articulated vision for the district to guide resources allocation.
- 1.3: Establish a theory of action in collaboration with all school stakeholders that is inclusive of high expectations, and develop an approach for communicating the theory of action to all constituents.
- 1.4: Create a plan that leads to PD opportunities and follow-up support based on the assessment of school staff practices.
- 1.5: Identify a best practice concerning teachers' use of data and communicate expectations concerning teacher use of data to instruct and establish student goals.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions

- 2.1: Create the systems and structures for ongoing communicationn with and support of school leaders to create, nurture and sustain a school community that is responsive to the needs of all consituents.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support

- 3.1: Provide the necessary support for the school community to move forward with the development of CCLS curricula that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment areas. Develop assessment and accountability systems to assess school-wide effectiveness and monitor school progress. Share findings with the school community to ensure complete transparency of District findings.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions

- 4.1: Create systems and stuctures for assessing the instructional needs of teachers across the district based on school data. Provide learning opportunites for teachers to identify best practices and provide the necessary follow-up support.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Developmental Health

- 5.1: Survey staff and the school community to identify potential areas of need for PD to support students' social and emotional needs. Provide opportunities for the district, schools and community organizations to collaborate to deliver PD based on the findings of the needs assessment.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement

- 6.1: Invite families and community organizations to collaborate with the schools and district to create a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan. Ensure that the plan includes creating a welcoming environment and effective communication strategies for all stakeholders.