



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS (DTDSE)



BEDS Code/DBN	150901040000
District	Moriah Central School District
District Address	39 Viking Lane, Port Henry, New York 12974
Superintendent	William J. Larrow
Date(s) of Review	June 12, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	Moriah Elementary School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	PK-12	Total Student Enrollment	750	% Title 1 Population	46%	% Attendance Rate	93%				
% Free Lunch	51%	% Reduced Lunch	19%	% Student Sustainability	0%	% Limited English Proficient	0%	% Students with Disabilities	20.4%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	1%	% Hispanic or Latino	1%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0%	% White	97%	% Multi-racial	1%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	7	Number of Deputy Superintendents	0	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	N/A	# of Directors of Programs	1				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	1	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	1	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District	4	Average Teacher Absences in District	4				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District	1	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools	0	Number of Schools in Status	1		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	0				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	46%	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	40%	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	90%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	87%	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	88%		

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
	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
X	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:			D	

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.		E		

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.			D	

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.			D	

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.			D	

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.		E		

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.

Debriefing Statement: The district leadership uses recruitment and retention strategies to ensure it has adequate personnel, communicates expectations for addressing the needs of its district community, has a reciprocal communication system between the district and its schools, and provides consistent professional development. The district is developing a culture to prioritize data-driven instruction. However, the lack of a formal written plan operationalizing improvement so all constituents could know, support, and contribute has not yet been developed, which limits the district's ability to promote continuous student achievement.

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.

Strength: The district has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district staff and school administrators shared that the district utilizes a hiring committee from each school, which includes a Board member and parents, to interview and select candidates for consideration to the Board of Education for hiring approval. The superintendent reported that the district has a high staff retention rate. However, school level staff shared significant concerns following the loss of critical staff in both school buildings. Documents reviewed indicated the district has a mentorship component. The district reviews all staff evaluations, and the district is receptive to professional development needs, when requested. A comprehensive approach to recruiting, interviewing, and selecting critical personnel allows the district to hire key staff to address the needs of the district and school community.

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.

Strength: The district has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district and school administrators interviewed stated they work collaboratively to assess and allocate resources, to meet student, staff, and family needs. Specifically, district leadership meets weekly to discuss potentially beneficial student programs and resources. In addition, the district has technology resources in all classrooms to support students and staff. Reviewers found that district utilizes the resources available and provides school leaders specific responsibilities and expectations based on their circumstances. For example, one school leader monitors special education services for the lower level (PK-6) grades., while at the high school level, the school leader and special education coordinator monitor and oversee these services. Expectations with clear operational accountability for staff provide structures to allow resources to be allocated to address the needs of the district's schools and its students.

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.

Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- While the district leadership stated high expectations regarding Common Core Learning Standards during interviews, these expectations have not been widely communicated or aligned to professional practices. Specifically, the district does not have an articulated plan with an established timeline for improvement. Moreover, staff stated that they were unaware of the district's mission or expectations. While the district has a vision to improve the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students to prepare them to be college and career ready, community stakeholders did not understand or were not able to articulate the vision. The superintendent reported that he meets frequently with administration for formal and informal conversations as a method for communicating overall expectations. In addition, the superintendent asserted that the district's culture is communicated through open-house presentations, newsletters, and the internet. Nonetheless, the lack of a written plan and a limited understanding of communicating expectations minimize a cohesive understanding of professional practices 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.

Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district creates, schedules, and follows up on professional development (PD) needs and opportunities for all staff. PD sessions offered focused on Common Core Learning Standards and on students living in poverty. However, at the time of the visit, documents reviewed and interviews with school staff found there is insufficient PD on key areas of need. These areas include instructional strategies for economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities subgroups as well as the strategies to address student social and emotional development needs in the classroom. Although the district does not have a written district-wide PD plan, the district has a PD fund to use when needed. The administrative staff interviewed shared that they target the use of resources, conduct budget transfers, and apply for research grants to support the needs of the schools. The district coordinates its staff PD with the Champlain Valley Educational Services Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) PD schedule. The superintendent explained that employee improvement plans are developed for every level of staff when the need arises. However, at the time of the visit, although the district had a system to track that staff received PD it was not evident to the IIT that analysis was done on the impact of the various PD sessions on improving instruction or student outcomes. As such, the generic follow-up system for PD opportunities limits the district's ability to effectively plan and hold staff accountable for instructional practices necessary to improve student engagement and student-learning experiences.

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.

Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district collects and reviews various data sources. During the review, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) reviewed examples of school-based data tools, such as teacher-made exams, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) results, and the online Renaissance Place Program data samples. In addition, the district uses Academic Improvement Measurement System (AIMS) Web for progress monitoring and financial software to track the status of appropriation, revenue, and overdrawn items. In addition, the district reviews other sources of data, such as Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Direct for students with disabilities, School Tool for student progress reporting, and staff attendance. The superintendent and administrative team shared that the School Board receives data reports from these sources to inform its decision-making. In addition, staff interviews indicate there are frequent formal and informal conversations with all levels of staff to communicate general expectations. However, based on the sample data reports reviewed, the IIT concluded that the district does not consistently communicate instructional feedback based on data to school leaders to share with their staff. In addition, based on documents reviewed and interviews with staff, the IIT determined there was a gap between the district expectations for instructional practices and how instruction is being delivered in the schools. In addition, documents reviewed and interviews with staff indicate there is insufficient PD related to instruction for economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities subgroups. Furthermore, reviewers noted the need for PD on student engagement strategies for the social-emotional development needs that affect learning. While the district collects data, it is still developing its ability to engage in data-based dialogues with those at the school level and to use data to hold staff accountable, which limits the district’s ability to leverage data to improve student outcomes.

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

<p>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.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>Strength: The district has received a rating of <i>Effective</i> for this Statement of Practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district supports the school leaders’ efforts to respond to the needs of the school community. For example, the district meets with school leaders weekly to discuss the district’s expectations, as well as school and student needs. Although the district could provide additional PD resources district-wide, the use of other resources are different between the elementary school and high school level. The elementary school has limited programs, and it does not provide enrichment activities for higher achieving students. However, the high school has numerous programs responsive to the needs of its community, including Reconnecting Youth, Youth Advocate Program, School Tool, and college partnerships. As a result, by assessing the needs of the schools and sharing resources based on those needs, enables the district is able to ensure that allocated resources meet the needs of the schools 		

and ultimately result in improved student outcomes.

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 has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district and school leaders stated they have weekly meetings to discuss curriculum, resources, and accountability. Frequent formal and informal conversations are the method for communicating patterns in student learning from the school to the district. The district collaborates with its BOCES to provide targeted PD with regard to curriculum alignment and implementation across all schools within the district. The school staff reported that PD opportunities are available upon request and include the use of art and technology in instruction for all students. In addition, staff reported that they are provided with a variety of data tools, such as AIMS Web assessment software, to inform instruction. However, through documents reviewed and staff interviews, the IIT found that there is insufficient PD specifically related to instructional strategies for the economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities subgroups, as well as for the social-emotional development that impacts learning. The district asserted that it analyzes teacher and student data to develop PD and to allocate resources. However, the IIT determined there was a gap between the district expectations for instructional practices and the delivery of instruction in the schools. For example, at the time of the visit, the instructional feedback based on data was provided to school leaders to share with their staff but the communication did not appear to translate into the classrooms visited by the IIT. The gaps in PD and feedback to inform curricula development and modification, hinders the necessary pedagogical change and communication of a focused action plan for improvement, negatively affecting student achievement outcomes.

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

D

Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district has a plan to create, schedule, and follow up on the professional development needs and opportunities for all staff. The administrative team shared and documents confirmed that PD opportunities focus on best practices and instructional strategies. Although the district provides early release days so that teachers can analyze performance data by grade levels and align curriculum horizontally and vertically, it was not evident to the IIT that the early release time was resulting in substantial improvements to the curriculum based on reviewers' visits to classrooms and their review

of lesson plans. In addition, school leadership stated that PD was not based on student performance data or staff observations. It was not evident that the district conducted analysis of the influence the PD sessions had on improving instruction or student outcomes. However, the superintendent explained that employee improvement plans are developed on an as needed basis. The district has not fully developed its ability to provide professional development that will result in significant improvements in instruction, which limits student progress.

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: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district supports several initiatives and programs for the schools through partnership agreements, funding allocations, and grant applications. These include Essex County Mental Health Clinic, Olweus, Girls Run, and Reflections Program. However, the district provides limited PD topics to all school staff with regard to students’ social and emotional needs. School staff reported that the district provided one PD session on teaching students in poverty. In addition, it was not evident that the district conducted analysis of the PD sessions impact on student learning experiences. There was no evidence of the district providing follow-up support to address the ability of instructional staff to implement developmental health strategies to ensure academic success. The absence of a comprehensive action plan that expands the district’s PD program limits the ability of staff district-wide to understand ways in which they can build their capacity to achieve positive student academic and social-emotional outcomes.

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

E

Strength: The district has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice.

- The district has multiple methods for communicating with families. Beyond the website, the district provides a newsletter, and the district recently began using social media (e.g. Facebook) as a communication tool to engage families and share school and/or district information. The IIT reviewed samples of reports that are sent home to families, such as five-week progress reports, quarterly report cards, and annual Parent Reports that contain the Individual Student Report (ISR). The IIT determined that the district provides families with the resources to understand their child’s progress and be equipped to support their respective schools’ improvement efforts. Many stakeholders felt the district supports their needs. For example, the human resources department asserted that the district has an “open door policy” that promotes partnerships with community organizations and

families. A culture of communication around student progress and needs provides a large number of students and families with a sense of partnership that augments learning.

DISTRICT LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tenet 1: District Leadership and Capacity

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

- 1.3: Develop a written PD plan that is visible and offers opportunities that communicates the expectations for a cohesive understanding of professional practices to meet the needs of all constituents, and continues to support the needs of economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and/or any other at risk student group.
- 1:4: Provide multiple PD opportunities on instructional strategies to address the needs of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities. Include PD sessions on strategies to address student social and emotional needs in the classroom. Conduct analysis on the impact of the various PD sessions on improving instruction and student outcomes. Within the follow-up system, add a method to communicate with school-level staff periodically, to communicate explicitly the instructional and achievement expectations, so staff are accountable for instructional practices necessary to improve student engagement, learning experiences, and outcomes.
- 1.5: Develop a written plan that defines the expectations for a data-driven culture. Connect the instructional strategies to best practices, and hold staff accountable to align the use of data to instruct all students and plan for their needs.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support

In order for the district's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 3, the district should:

- 3.1: Develop a focused written plan to operationalize the approach to assess and share district-wide practices that incorporate the various expectations for each school within and across the district. Ensure each school leader receives the plan, as well as training on the implementation of the plan. Incorporate these school-level data communication sessions into the PD tracking system and include a method to assess the impact of PD attendance on student learning experiences and outcomes.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions

In order for the district's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 4, the district should:

- 4.1: Develop a PD calendar with opportunities for teachers and school leaders to share in best practices on aligning instructional strategies to student performance data. Create a monitoring protocol for school leaders to require immediate change to instructional practices based on PD participation.

Tenet 5- Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

In order for the district's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 5, the district should:

- 5.1: Assist schools with creating strategies to develop and sustain student support resources that connect all students' social and emotional developmental health needs with the district-wide and respective school-wide academic goals. Ensure that school leaders understand how to facilitate these strategies with or without funding. Provide multiple PD opportunities on instructional strategies to address student social and emotional development needs across all grades and subject areas. Ensure all schools in the district use data in a manner that promotes continuous student improvement connecting areas of academic and student social and emotional developmental health needs.