



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	461300010000
District	Oswego City School District
District Address	120 East 1 st Street, Oswego, NY 13126
Superintendent	William W. Crist
Date(s) of Review	June 4, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	Frederick Leighton Elementary

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	PK - 12	Total Student Enrollment	3953	% Title 1 Population	N P	% Attendance Rate		93%			
% Free Lunch	31%	% Reduced Lunch	6%	% Student Sustainability	NP	% Limited English Proficient	1%	% Students with Disabilities		NP	
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	2%	% Hispanic or Latino	4%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1%	% White	92%	% Multi-racial	1%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	NP	Number of Deputy Superintendents		0	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District		NP	# of Directors of Programs		3	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	0	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District		3%	Average Teacher Absences in District		NP		
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District		NP	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools	NP	Number of Schools in Status		1
							Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	NP	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	NP	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	NP	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	NP	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)			

NP = Not Provided

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
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	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
	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, 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:		E		

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:

<p>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.</p>	<p>Overall Tenet Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>Debriefing Statement: The district has established a system for hiring and sustaining new recruits for teaching positions. There are established deadlines for advertising, distribution, receiving of applications, screening, interviewing, and recommendations to the superintendent and board for final appointments. As a result, schools are able to recruit candidates that help to ensure successful student academic outcomes.</p> <p>Strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In documents reviewed by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), there was an outline for the hiring process, which the school district followed. The process of hiring new teachers showed the responsibilities of both the district and the school. The system included district-level prescreening of applicants, interviews to select candidates, and district rating of the candidates as highly recommended, recommended or not recommended. Candidate names rated highly recommended by the district were forwarded to principals and directors as available for hiring. The district leader and personnel director reported that all new teachers are monitored during their first year with funding from a grant. If a teacher needs additional support, they are mentored for an additional year. Occasionally a teacher may be mentored for a third year. The curriculum office maintains a large volume of information documenting staff development and attendance records. The district offers different types of professional development (PD) sessions that the district expects all teachers to attend. One type of PD is offered outside of the regular school day, after school or on Saturday. The next type of PD is a pullout during the school day, and the third type is schedule as superintendent conference days. The district has a rigorous recruiting and retention system. As a result, schools are able to recruit and retain qualified candidates that help to ensure successful student academic outcomes. 		
<p>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.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>Debriefing Statement: The district has a Mission Statement and Vision Statement that drives annual Board of Education and district goals as well as long range multi-year goals. Because district decisions are based on achieving the goals, the district is able to meet the demands for a high functioning learning community. The district is organized to empower all students to reach their potential.</p>		

Strength:

- The district has mission and vision statements that drive annual Board of Education and district goals as well as long range multi-year goals. District leaders reported to the IIT that the vision of the district is to provide all students with an excellent education that prepares them to become productive members of society. The district leader stated that there is a system of prioritizing district needs while considering available funding. The collaborative budget process that begins in November of each year considers the school needs, wants of administrators, and prioritizes funding. The administrative cabinet stated that there is a process to ensure adequate funding for priorities and emerging needs. The business official reports that funding through Race to The Top initiatives is used to implement such programs as Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPR), Core Curriculum and Data-Driven Instruction, and monitoring of capital improvements throughout the district. The finance officer reported that his department works with the school to provide resources, human and material, in such areas as providing substitute teachers, added reading materials and copies of curriculum modules used in the classrooms. The district has been able to align resources to meet its priorities and address the needs of its schools, in an effort to improve student achievement. Because district’s decisions are based on enacting the mission, vision, and achieving the goals, the district is able to meet the demands for a high functioning learning community. Consequently, the district is organized to empower all students to reach their potential.

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

E

Debriefing Statement: The district has a theory of action that drives the instructional practices to develop high expectations for all learners. The district understands the need to improve district-wide communication with all constituents, and the need to provide the resources to meet the needs of both teachers and learners.

Strength:

- The district leader has in place a series of regular meetings that facilitate the communication of district’s expectations and priorities. Curriculum staff spoke about the process of staff development focused on meeting the needs of all learners. The administrators interviewed stated that they hold regular meetings (cabinet, administrative council, curriculum council and building level) to assure that all levels of staff are aware of the district’s focus on all learners. District leaders have adapted the *Voyage to Excellence*, a model program to prevent students from dropping out of school. The program includes models that develop student engagement, high expectations, instructional best practices, and personal connections as tenets for addressing the educational needs for all students. According to the reviewed documents, extensive staff development is offered and tracked by the district. Teachers are encouraged to attend PD to increase their effectiveness. However, some PD sessions are non-negotiable and teaching and administrative staff are required to attend. Among these training sessions are Response to Intervention (RTI), Teaching Students in Poverty, Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and Differentiated Instruction. The IIT reviewers observed that the

district has a well- organized, specific manual for the implementation of RTI. As a result, the district understands the importance of district-wide communication with all constituents, and the provision of resources to meet the needs of both teachers and learners.

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

E

Debriefing Statement: The district has a professional development planning team that reviews and develops the Oswego Professional Development Plan (PDP). The plan is updated constantly to reflect effective best practices. Because of the variety of topics presented, instructional staff has PD that is tailored to address the needs of all students.

Strength:

- The district has a professional development planning team that reviews and develops the Oswego Professional Development Plan (PDP). This plan is constantly being updated to reflect current understanding of effective best practices for teaching and learning. The PDP also provides support for teachers to deliver the ever-changing literary courses offered in the district. The PDP team is made up of representatives from each grade level as well as district personnel, and they create, deliver and monitor PD for the district. The district leader and staff offers PD on superintendent conference days, during the summer, and in pullout sessions during the school day. Staff reported that the topics chosen for PD are driven by student learning needs at the district and building levels as well as SED priorities. The schedule of PD offerings is publicly disseminated in the schools. Curriculum staff stated that State priorities and teacher identified needs in conjunction with the student data for each school drive the staff development. In review of documents provided to the IIT, there is a PDP outlining the process involving all stakeholders for each grade level in each school within the district, to form a team that works on producing plans based on data analysis, prioritizing needs, setting goals and objectives, planning development activities, , and evaluating and modifying plans. Professional developmental needs of teachers are being met through the staff development offerings which drive student achievement in this district.

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

D

Debriefing Statement: The district uses data for some of the programs initiated in schools. The Curriculum Council also prepared manuals for the district and expected all schools to follow the protocols uniformly. Consequently, all schools are working on following the same guidelines.

Area for Improvement:

- The district uses data for some of the programs initiated in schools, such as Response to Intervention (RtI), *Voyage to Excellence*, and student placement at the appropriate grade level. The Curriculum Council prepared manuals and delivered them to all schools in the district. The manuals provide

schools with guidelines to follow so that services may be provided uniformly. The district has a RTI process and is piloting “Link IT” that does an item analysis of common assessments at grades seven and eight. It is also used to prepare Student Learning Objectives for science and social studies. The district process for Rtl is implemented according to a plan with multiple steps and checkpoints, and data teams meet at the schools to review student progress. While the IIT observed some of these meetings, and district documents show schedules and reports that reflect these meetings, the IIT found that school staff and teachers reviewed data but did not consistently enact the plans. IIT Reviewers noted that the curriculum office provides PD sessions for staff to learn how to collect and use student data for instructional purposes; however the IIT also found that teachers were not differentiating daily instruction. As a result, academic progress is not enhanced for all students.

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><u>Strength:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leader stated that she is in constant contact with district personnel for assistance in getting priorities accomplished. The school staff reported that the district leader visits the school frequently and sits in on classes chosen at random. According to documents reviewed by the IIT, the curriculum department is in daily contact with the school through memos, provision of PD sessions, mentoring of new teachers, and by holding meetings. In addition, the curriculum department developed a spreadsheet with student scores for each school, and compared these scores with data from other schools in other surrounding districts. Because the district curriculum department works closely with the school leaders to provide support, school leaders are able to develop nurturing school environments conducive to student learning and success. 		
<p>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.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p><u>Strength:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum department at the district office works collaboratively with school leaders to roll out curricula that reflect the CCLS. This department is responsible for the training of teachers in each of the schools using a turnkey strategy. The curriculum council is comprised of teacher leaders from 		

different schools in the district and these teachers make frequent presentations to their peers. Reviewers noted that the district recently moved to a standards-based report card for the elementary schools that is aligned to its new standards-based curriculum. All the subjects taught, including arts, technology, and enrichment subjects are listed on this new report card. In addition, the report card was designed to help parents better understand how CCLS is used to enhance learning in the classroom. Because the school works in partnership with the district, students have access to an enriched curriculum.

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

E

Strength:

- The school district has provided training for all school leaders and has created an action plan to address the needs of individual school leaders. The district leader established a system where school leaders are able to meet with him on a monthly basis to form a learning community of practitioners. In addition, the district has established a protocol that provides all teachers and school leaders, tenured and untenured, with annual performance reviews. The APPR for teachers and school leaders is aligned with the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* (2011, Revised Edition), and has the support of the local unions. District staff reported that they work collaboratively with each school, depending on the needs of and the school goals, to provide workshops for some teachers, and provide the means for other teachers and school leaders to attend PD sessions, both within the district as well as outside the district. According to the Comprehensive District Plan, some examples of topics addressed were literacy, mathematics, standards and assessments, technology, teaching, and learning climate. The review of documents showed an outline of a mentoring program called *Shoulder to Shoulder Mentoring* and how new teachers can be successful in planning for teaching. The district is working collaboratively with schools, which improves the learning opportunities for all students in the district.

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 is beginning to focus on student social and emotional developmental health (SEDH.) The district encouraged school based intervention teams to establish referral and support systems. In addition, programs offered by AmeriCorps are available to schools within the district. However, there is no specific district policy for SEDH, and schools are allowed to promote partnerships independently to enhance connections to services found in schools as well as from community service agencies. Eric

Jenson's *Brain Based Learning Strategies* were observed in one school and staff reported that the district's curriculum department supported this effort. Therefore, although some schools are developing strategies that enhance student social and emotional developmental health, and the district is willing to support schools, there is no consistent, system-wide district policy. Consequently, district-wide, there are uneven supports for student social and emotional developmental health needs.

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

D

Area for Improvement:

- There is no comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan promoted by the district. The district encourages parents and community input in such areas as the district annual budgetary process and CCLS initiatives. District staff noted that there are some avenues for communication with parents and the community, such as district communication delivered to the public media, district publications, parent handbook, and communication strategies developed by individual schools. The district leader noted that parents are free to attend monthly board meetings and to express their concerns about school issues, however the IIT did not hear about many opportunities for reciprocal communication. According to documents reviewed by the IIT, there is an initiative in the district called "Driving Books Home." The district supported the delivery of books from a bookmobile to about 15 sites throughout the district last summer. This was made possible because members of the school community volunteered their services. The volunteers delivered 3,424 books over an eight-week period. While the district reported working with a consultant to establish a comprehensive family and community strategic plan for 2013-14 school year, the district does not yet have policies and plans in place. Consequently, the district does not yet benefit fully from family and community engagement.

DISTRICT LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tenet 1: District Leadership and Capacity

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

- 1.5: Monitor the APPR system and establish clear monitoring guideline for the use of student data throughout the district.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Developmental Health

- 5.1: Form a committee of school and district personnel along with community agencies to establish a system with protocols, that provides support for students' social and emotional developmental health.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement

- 6.1: Provide opportunities for all parents to have more open dialogue with district personnel. In addition, provide opportunities for parents to learn more about student data and how they can assist in the learning process for all students in the district.