

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



DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	472001040000
District	Richfield Springs Central School District
District Address	93 Main Street, PO Box 388 Richfield Springs, NY 13439
Superintendent	Robert Barraco
Date(s) of Review	May 3, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	Richfield Springs Central School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	PK-12	Total Student Enrollment	534	% Title 1 Population	28%	% Attendance Rate	92%				
% Free Lunch	43%	% Reduced Lunch	21%	% Student Sustainability	N/A	% Limited English Proficient	1%	% Students with Disabilities	16.6%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	1.3%	% Hispanic or Latino	1.75%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.5%	% White	95.5%	% Multi-racial	0%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	10	Number of Deputy Superintendents	0	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	N/A	# of Directors of Programs	0				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	0	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	2%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District	3.8%	Average Teacher Absences in District	14				
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	1	Number of Schools in Status	1		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	0				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	49%	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	55.5%	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	86%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	72.7%	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	81%		

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
X	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 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.

#	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:				X

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>TENET Rating</p>	<p>I</p>
<p><u>Debriefing Statement:</u></p> <p>The District does not have formalized systems and structures in place for the collection, monitoring and consistent use of data. This limits the District’s capacity for data-driven decision-making. Communication of information is not inclusive of all stakeholders and the District has not successfully facilitated a positive community-building dialogue to bring stakeholders together to establish priorities and a clear direction that promotes work toward increased engagement, achievement, and success for all students. The lack of district-wide clear expectations and direction impedes the school’s ability to respond to their community and ensure student success.</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>D</p>
<p><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the district recruits personnel by posting positions locally, it does not have a comprehensive approach for the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. District leadership reported to the integrated intervention team (IIT) that because salaries for administrators and teachers are low as compared to the rest of the State, the district does not attract a large number of applicants. Even though the district has struggled to recruit high quality applicants, teaching staff retention is high. The new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) has been approved and is being implemented to ensure evaluation and support of teaching staff. However, district leaders reported to the IIT that school leaders had requested more professional development in the APPR process. While the district is beginning to implement the APPR process to evaluate teacher practices, the lack of a comprehensive approach for ensuring that high quality staff is recruited and retained limits the schools’ ability to meet the needs of their communities. 		
<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>D</p>
<p><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by constituents, the IIT found that the District has a process determined by the business manager 		

that uses a zero-based budget process, but does consider the allocation of resources requested and justified by the school. However, the IIT found no coordination of resource allocation with the goals of the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) or the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). There was also a lack of evidence that the district provides support to the school concerning the use of resources. The school leader serving the prekindergarten through grade twelve staff and students has leadership responsibility for district and school hiring and fiscal and programmatic management. However there was no evidence that the district provides support for the school leader in this area. During the IIT review of documents showing resource allocation, and during classroom visits, the IIT found instances where human capital and other resources were not being used to support optimal student growth. While the District considers the requests of individual schools when allocating resources, the lack of a coordinated decision-making process that ensures appropriate levels of support to address school and district goals, limits school improvement and success.

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

Areas for Improvement:

- The district does not have a comprehensive theory of action about school culture that is widely communicated. From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by school constituents, the IIT did not find a clear district vision or plan that is communicated to all constituents and continuously monitored for achievement. There is no established theory of action and the district has not established high expectations or action steps to guide and monitor increased student achievement. District leaders reported that communication with constituents is most often conducted through informal discussion or notification. In addition, communication does not consistently include all stakeholders. The IIT found through interviews that school staff were aware that the district was in accountability status, but were not able to articulate the reason for it or the plan for improving student achievement. Because of a lack of communication, not all stakeholders take advantage of opportunities offered by the district. The lack of a district theory of action that includes action steps impedes the establishment of school cultures that foster high expectations for student success.

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

I

Areas for Improvement:

- The district does not have a plan for delivering and monitoring PD to meet the needs of the school community. From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district has no comprehensive

plan for creating, delivering or monitoring targeted professional development (PD) to address school improvement or student goals. In interviews with the IIT, constituents reported they were not aware of a formal plan for professional development (PD), but expressed a need for more PD to improve individual and school-wide instructional practices. The lack of comprehensive planning impairs the district’s ability to tailor PD to address the schools’ improvement needs.

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

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district has not adopted a data-driven culture. Use of data sources in the school is limited, and there is no expectation and no formal structure for continuous usage of data to inform teaching and learning. The primary sources of data for screening and placement purposes are the New York State Assessments and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS.) The IIT found no specific district expectations for deep analysis of multiple sources of data or expectations for the use of common strategies articulated with timelines for monitoring and completion. The IIT also found that the school is not using CCLS-aligned formative and interim assessments and databases thus limiting teachers’ ability to assess student progress as well as to inform instructional planning to promote student participating in their own learning.. Because the district has not established, communicated, supported and monitored the use of explicit expectations around best practices for data-driven instruction (DDI), the district does not hold the school accountable for DDI, resulting in the limited use of data to promote student and school success.

This section provides a narrative that communicates how 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

D

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that all stakeholders expressed a desire for a strong school community. However, there was limited evidence showing clear district leadership, collaboration, planning, and direction on how to promote a school environment that is responsive to the needs of all constituents. Through a review of the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) and School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), the IIT noted that neither plan contained mechanisms

to monitor progress toward school and district goals. Given the limited collaboration between the district leadership and the school leader, the school is unable to ensure that the school environment is consistently responsive to the needs of the entire 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

I

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents and gained through classroom visitations, the IIT found that the district and school leaders have not ensured the development and implementation of curricula aligned with the CCLS. Although a few teachers told the IIT that they find time to meet on their own, schedules provide no structured time to collaborate on writing unit and lesson plans that support the CCLS as well as to incorporate the arts, technology, or enrichment subjects into the curriculum. Teachers interviewed by the IIT explained that they are free to develop their own curricula, and choose the books they use for teaching. Teachers further stated that there are no specific expectations for the collection or review of units or lesson plans. Teachers and school leaders reported to the IIT that they did not have a data team that reviewed district and school data regularly, and that the school lacked structures and protocols for using data for assessing and identifying needs of students and strategic action planning. The lack of district collaboration with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teacher in data use and planning, limits the school’s capacity to develop and implement comprehensive curricula that include the arts, technology and enrichment subjects in a data-driven culture.

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

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups, and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district does not have a current PD Plan and does not work collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to ensure best practices and strategies in classroom instruction. For PD that is provided, there is no follow-up. In interviews with the IIT, teachers indicated they needed PD to increase their knowledge to use formative and summative assessments to inform their practices for teaching and learning. Teachers

in grades kindergarten to four reported they are at the beginning stages of using assessments to monitor student progress. Teachers reported that there is less data generated to inform instruction for students in grades five to twelve. School leaders reported to the IIT that they do not collect or review unit and lesson plans and that staff use a variety of formats for instructional planning. Staff also indicated to the IIT there were no articulated expectations for unit or lesson content or format. Because of the lack of consistent and focused PD and the lack of expectations regarding best practices in unit and lesson plans, data use and teachers' instructional planning, teachers are not consistently developing appropriate plans and implementing strategies to promote student engagement and success.

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

I

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district has not developed a vision, policies, or systems to support students' social and emotional developmental health. The district has not established a collaborative process to identify and provide opportunities and supports to address school and student needs in this area. Student support staff interviewed by the IIT expressed a concern that data systems are not in place for guidance counselors and while the Committee for Special Education (CSE) chair had binders of data reports, there was no formalized system for accessing or analyzing student data. From documents reviewed, the IIT found that the District has not implemented a school-wide formalized system for referrals and for providing comprehensive wrap-around services for students and families. Because of the district's lack of vision and guidance to support student social and emotional developmental health, the school is not well equipped to meet all the needs of 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

D

Areas for Improvement:

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and information supplied by school constituents, the IIT learned that the District does not have a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan. The IIT also found that there is a mixed view of the district's central school by the school community. A majority of the families interviewed by the IIT and the majority of family respondents to the DTSDE survey indicated negative views of the school as it

related to being a welcoming environment or developing a feeling of trust. Most respondents perceived the school to be welcoming in the primary grades, but not at the intermediate, secondary or district level. Parents interviewed by the IIT said they are not involved in school planning and estimate only 50 percent of parents are involved in supporting the school and their child's education. Families interviewed by the IIT identified a lack of reciprocal communication as problematic. They reported they do not receive timely and open communications. Parents indicated they did not know why the school was identified as a Priority School and Focus District. School partners and agencies provide temporary and sporadic PD and their involvement with the district is generally to provide awareness and information to the community. An average of ten parents attended these informational sessions. The school has partnered with the Zone Community Center and provided transportation to the Center where students attended after-school for homework help and some students attended the Center to complete community service requirements. A partnership with Leatherstocking provides a College for Every Student mentoring program for college awareness for grades five and six. Head Start and a Little Lambs Pre-K program also partner with the school. However, limited community resources inhibit the establishment of extensive partnerships with community organizations to support student and family needs. Because the District does not have a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan, the school's capacity to create and sustain a welcoming environment for families and ensure reciprocal communication are limited.

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: Fully develop and implement strategies for supporting school leaders that lead to an understanding of staff evaluation, frequent feedback, and PD that supports improved instructional practice. Ensure that these strategies are included in the DCIP.
- 1.2: Fully develop within the DCIP, strategies to ensure that resources are adequately allocated throughout the District to meet the needs of students, parents, and staff.
- 1.3: Establish a clear District vision and ensure that the theory of action and associated expectations and action steps are shared and understood by all District constituents.
- 1.4: Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to create, deliver and monitor PD in all pertinent areas that is adaptive and tailored to the needs of individual schools. Establish a calendar of PD opportunities that provides staff with PD to address district, school improvement and student goals as outlined in the school SCEP and the DCIP.
- 1.5: Establish a District-wide data-driven culture and ensure that the District communicates expectations for how data are to be used by staff members and best data-driven instructional practices to support and establish goals for students.

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

- 2.1: Ensure the establishment of a vision to create, nurture and sustain a school community that is responsive to the needs of its constituents. Establish regular meetings between the superintendent and the school leader to maintain an ongoing dialogue.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

- 3.1: Provide support for the instructional needs of teachers in the district and their use of CCLS curricula that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects. Establish procedures for using assessment and accountability systems to assess school-wide effectiveness, monitor school progress, and determine patterns in student learning, and share the findings with the schools.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

- 4.1: Establish procedures for identifying PD needs of teachers regarding instructional practices and decisions aligned to school data. Provide teachers with PD opportunities so that teachers can identify and use best practices and provide systematic follow-up support.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health (SEDH)

- 5.1: Convene a group of key stakeholders that includes school and district staff, parents and community members to create a district-wide vision for student social and emotional developmental health. Provide PD

to staff on the use of data to identify areas of need and establish processes and procedures for the provision of services to address identified needs. Establish monitoring mechanisms to determine the efficacy of procedures and practices in meeting student needs and revise when necessary.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

- 6.1: Create a district-wide community and family engagement plan, in collaboration with school and community stakeholders, which states expectations for all stakeholders around the creation of a welcoming environment, mechanisms for reciprocal communication, and the creation of partnerships in order to meet the various needs of the school community.