



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

**DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS (DTDSE)**



<b>BEDS Code/DBN</b>	491700010000
<b>District</b>	Troy School District
<b>District Address</b>	2920 Fifth Avenue, Troy NY 12180
<b>Superintendent</b>	Brian Howard
<b>Date(s) of Review</b>	June 17, 2013
<b>Schools Discussed in this Report</b>	Troy Middle School and PS 2

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	PK-12	Total Student Enrollment	4483	% Title 1 Population	48.7%	% Attendance Rate	91.88%				
% Free Lunch	59.78%	% Reduced Lunch	7.85%	% Student Sustainability	NP	% Limited English Proficient	21.6%	% Students with Disabilities	19.12%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	.25%	% Black or African American	37.48%	% Hispanic or Latino	10.97%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.98%	% White	47.30%	% Multi-racial	2.02%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	Interim 2 years	Number of Deputy Superintendents	2	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	2.5	# of Directors of Programs	4				
% 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	9%	Average Teacher Absences in District	93.2%				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing	NP	Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District	1	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools		Number of Schools in Status	2		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	1				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	33%	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	38%	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	61%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	73.48%	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	82.56%		

<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA</b>			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino	X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics</b>			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino	X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science</b>			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective</b>			
	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	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 1:</b>			<b>D</b>	

**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><b>Tenet 1 - District Leadership and Capacity:</b> 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><b>Overall Tenet Rating</b></p>	<p><b>D</b></p>
<p><b>Statement of Practice 1.1:</b> 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><b>SOP Rating</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>Debriefing Statement:</b> The district has recruitment strategies and structures inclusive of external partners that lead to adequate personnel in all schools. The district’s plan for supporting school leaders guides the understanding of staff evaluation protocols, the importance of frequent feedback, and leads to the development of professional development (PD) that reflects on evaluation and feedback practices and results in high levels of staff retention.</p> <p><b>Strength:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District leadership reported to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that the district recruits and hires mastery level teachers. The district has an approved Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan and district leadership reported to the IIT that school and teacher leaders have received training in the evaluative process and APPR plan implementation. The district has developed strategies that transition effective classroom teachers to teacher leadership positions within the schools. The IIT also learned that the district negotiates salaries with the teacher bargaining unit and makes every effort to make salaries comparable to similar districts. The district reported it has a mentoring program for new teachers. Teachers at Troy Middle School and PS 2 confirmed that they participated in the mentoring program. Because the district implements a comprehensive personnel plan, the district’s ability to recruit and mentor highly qualified teachers is enhanced.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Statement of Practice 1.2:</b> 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><b>SOP Rating</b></p>	<p><b>D</b></p>
<p><b>Debriefing Statement:</b> While the district maintains structures for deploying resources that address the needs of the school communities, not all supports are available in key areas to support the full implementation of CCLS and to provide schools with relevant data support. The district responds to validated requests that promote school improvement and student success. However, while the allocation of resources includes consideration of the needs of the school community, the decisions are not always based on data.</p> <p><b>Area for Improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information</li> </ul>		

supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district makes an effort to attempt to allocate resources in an equitable fashion. Individual school leaders and department staff conduct needs assessments and meet with the district leadership cabinet to present school requests for resources. At these meetings, school leaders advocate for funding by informing the district how granting requests will improve student learning. The district schedules a series of meetings for building and department leadership to meet with district staff to discuss budget plans. The district has funds to support the implementation of kindergarten to grade five New York State (NYS) curriculum models and provides literacy coaches to support implementation of English language arts (ELA) CCLS. School leaders confirm they attend meetings at the district to discuss resource allocation. However, although the district is responsive to school petitions for funding, resources are not available for all key areas to support the full implementation of CCLS and to provide relevant data support. The IIT also learned that students do not have access to sufficient elective offerings in art, music and other areas to address their needs. So, although the district organizes and allocates resources to address some school needs, the allocations are not always based on data. Therefore, the district is limited in promoting school improvement and success for all students in all areas of need.

**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**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** Although the district has developed a theory of action based on increasing student achievement, it has not developed or implemented a plan to promote understanding and commitment to the district-wide implementation of this theory of action. The district disseminated its mission and goals to staff and school leaders and the school leaders have posted the mission and goals in the schools. However, the lack of robust communications and understanding of the theory of action, as well as a lack of understanding of the district mission and goals inhibit the establishment of school cultures that promote high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.

**Area for Improvement:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups, and from information supplied by constituents, the IIT found that the district has developed a new mission and vision and district goals focused on improving student achievement. The district has disseminated the mission to staff and district leaders report they provide support to achieve these goals. However, not all constituents interviewed by the IIT understood the mission and goals. District office personnel establish regular meetings with principals to build capacity to support new initiatives. The superintendent also schedules meetings with district office personnel to create action plans to support and communicate district and NYS priorities. Despite these meetings, not all constituents interviewed by the IIT clearly understood the district’s mission and vision or their role in acting on the plans at the school. District leaders did not make it clear on how school constituents were made aware of how the district’s goals were measured at the school level to determine student and school success. This lack of understanding of the district vision, mission, and goals inhibit effective implementation of actions to promote the overarching district message and support the

accomplishment of district-wide initiatives.

**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:** PD opportunities are available to staff through embedded PD within the school day, on specified PD days throughout the school year, and during the summer. However, the current written district PD plan is outdated and therefore limits the district's ability to be adaptive and to tailor the PD to the needs of all schools.

**Area for Improvement:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by district constituents, the IIT found that the district recognized that its PD plan needs revision. The district has an outdated PD plan that has not adapted fully to the changing needs of the district, or to meet the needs of each school. The district has funding and plans to revise the PD plan. The current district plan offers PD to school leaders and teachers throughout the school year and has PD embedded during the school day. School leaders track PD offerings and PD attendance electronically using the My Learning Plan program. The district provides PD on data-driven instruction throughout the year. However, the district reported to the IIT that they feel staff require additional PD and support in the areas of CCLS implementation and in the use of data. The district also reports that although the PD plan was somewhat sensitive to the expressed needs of school leaders, it was not driven by data, nor did it address all the needs of each school community. The PD committee conducts monthly meetings to discuss district-wide and school-specific offerings, but the district did not have a mechanism to monitor or evaluate the effectiveness of PD delivery or the effect of the PD on teacher practice to improve student learning. The use of an outdated PD plan which currently does not include timely monitoring and evaluation of PD limits the district's ability to adapt and to tailor PD to the needs of all schools, and ultimately, to affect improvement in their schools.

**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 is just beginning to develop some data-driven strategies in its schools. However, since the district is in the early stages of supporting teachers to use data, practices are inconsistent across schools. Consequently, consistent improvement in student achievement outcomes has not been realized.

**Area for Improvement:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various groups and from information supplied by

district constituents, the IIT found that the district has just started to train teachers to use data to drive instruction. At the time of the IIT review, the district was in the process of conducting data meetings three times a year in each school. The Response to Intervention (RTI) coordinator and a district leader for data driven instruction (DDI) met quarterly with school leaders to discuss data. The district is using a Systemic Support Grant (SSG) to train school leaders and teachers on DDI throughout the year. The district has RTI procedures for kindergarten through grade six reading, and works with a local Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) consultant to adhere to Race to the Top initiatives. The district provides data support to schools; however, the implementation of DDI is inconsistent in the schools observed by the IIT. Because the district lacks a fully functional data-driven culture, the district has not firmly established expectations for the use of data throughout the district. Since the district has just begun to train teachers on the use of data, the district has not established consistent DDI practices in schools and student outcomes have not improved.

<p><b>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions</b> 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><b>SOP Rating</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b><u>Strength:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From a review of documents and interviews with various groups in the schools visited, the IIT found that the district supports school leaders in the following ways: school leader meetings, meetings regarding curriculum and instruction, schools' request for resources, meetings to discuss budget plans and resource allocation, meetings to support new initiatives, PD on data-driven instruction, data support, and fostering of professional learning communities. As a result, the district staff are supporting school communities in a positive manner and are being receptive to the needs of the school leaders.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support</b> 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><b>SOP Rating</b></p>	<p><b>D</b></p>
<p><b><u>Area for Improvement:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district is in the process of aligning curriculum maps to CCLS. The district has revised the curricula for both reading and math programs at the elementary and intermediate levels, to support the CCLS. The district held PD for teachers to inform them about the CCLS. Teachers have begun to develop instructional units that support the CCLS</li> </ul>		

instructional shifts. School leaders stated that school staff developed PD on CCLS with assistance from the district staff. However, although PD is being provided to schools on the development of CCLS-aligned curriculum and instruction, there is a lack of integration of the arts and technology. Because the district is still in the process of providing support to schools on CCLS in all content and enrichment areas, students are not yet being provided rigorous curricula in all areas that are tailored to their needs.

**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:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that district leadership met with elementary teachers throughout the year to discuss teacher practices and intervention strategies for reading. The district held monthly grade-level meetings in both schools focused on goal setting, the APPR, student grouping and best practices. The district has adopted a “coaching” model through the addition of literacy coaches in every elementary and middle school. The coaches provide PD, additional student and teacher support, as well as collect and analyze some student data. District leaders are working collaboratively with schools to support teacher practice; however, the district has not created PD opportunities that focus on all school staff using student achievement data and teacher observation data to plan lessons that improve student performance. In addition, schools have not yet completed the implementation of CCLS supported curricula nor fully implemented the APPR and DDI protocols and practices. As a result, planning does not consistently include strategies and practices that lead to effective instruction that is informed by timely data, tailored to address student needs and goals, and designed to maximize levels of student engagement.

**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**

**Area for Improvement:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district has adopted the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program model in all elementary and middle schools and updates the Code of Conduct annually. In both schools visited (Troy Middle School and PS 2), the IIT learned through interviews with various school groups, that there are challenges related to maintaining a positive school climate, and that behavioral issues interrupt and reduce instructional time. Therefore,

although the district creates policies and procedures to work collaboratively with schools to introduce PBIS, the lack of a district-wide long-range comprehensive plan that includes sufficient PD to support all staff in meeting the social and emotional developmental needs of all students impedes the district's ability to establish school environments that are conducive to learning.

**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:**

- From a review of documents, interviews with various stakeholder groups and from information supplied by school constituents, the IIT found that the district does not have a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan. The district leaders report that individual schools hold parent and community activities. The IIT found that parent-teacher conferences occurred twice a year, and a Back-to-School Open House occurred annually in each school. Some schools had a parent partner who served as the liaison between the school and parents. The district superintendent and assistant superintendent report that the district revises the Title I parent involvement policy annually. The district has an on-line portal for parental access to student grades and auto-dialer systems to provide parents with important information on upcoming events. The district expects that each school have a parent organization that is expected to meet monthly to share information and to discuss school concerns with parents. However, schools implement parent policies inconsistently, and small numbers of parents participate in the schools. The lack of consistent implementation of a comprehensive family and community engagement plan hampers the efforts of schools and the district to establish and sustain a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, partnerships with community organizations, and as a result, parents are not actively empowered to advocate successfully for their students.

## **Recommendations:**

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:

- 1.2: Ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate staffing, in all key areas to support the full implementation of CCLS and to provide data support. Provide continued PD for staff in key areas (CCLS, Data). Increase elective offerings in art, music and other areas at all levels.
- 1.3: Create a plan to promote and continue support for the theory of action that prescribes high expectations for all students. Continue regularly scheduled meetings with school leaders to help them support new initiatives. Continue Superintendent meeting with district and school staff to create action plans to support school leaders. Assign district staff to work with schools on specific initiatives (e.g., parent involvement). Meet with teachers, parents, students to communicate the vision/goals and explain how they are used to promote student and school success.
- 1.4: Develop a plan for the implementation of CCLS modules at the elementary and secondary level that aligns instructional practices with instructional shifts and CCLS, particularly at the secondary level for all content areas. Create an evaluative tool (e.g., teacher survey) to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of PD.
- 1.5: Develop a PD plan that provides more job-embedded support to school leaders and teachers in the use of data in schools and in the classroom. The PD plan should be data-driven and based on school community needs. Establish expectations for the consistent use of data to inform instruction and ensure their implementation. Create more opportunities for all school staff to participate in PD, especially focusing on using data to inform instruction. Ensure the establishment of a district-wide data-based culture.

## **Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support**

- 3.1: Ensure that there is sufficient PD for CCLS for all school leaders and staff that include collaboration with and integration of enrichment areas. District and school leadership should make sure PD provided is implemented, monitored, and followed up so that students are accessing rigorous CCLS aligned curricula in all areas.

## **Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions**

- 4.1: Ensure that literacy coaches and school leaders provide more opportunities and supports for teachers that address use of student achievement data and teacher observation data so that instructional planning is more effective. Make certain planning includes student goals, student needs, and high levels of student engagement in order to provide students with rigorous learning opportunities.

## **Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health**

- 5.1: The district should prioritize the development of a comprehensive plan to teach and empower staff to understand, address, and meet the social and emotional development health needs of all students. This plan should also include structures to monitor its implementation and its effectiveness.

## **Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement**

- 6.1: Develop a comprehensive family engagement plan that includes data from a needs assessment of all school communities, PD on best practices in family engagement, policies, systems and procedures that promote a welcoming, positive environment for families, and a clear communication strategy to ensure that all information communicated to the entire school community is in all pertinent languages.