



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>	580109020000
<b>District</b>	Wyandanch Union Free School District
<b>District Address</b>	1445 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
<b>Superintendent</b>	Dr. Pless M. Dickerson
<b>Date(s) of Review</b>	April 8, 2013
<b>Schools Discussed in this Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milton L. Olive Middle School (MLO)</li> <li>• La Francis Hardiman Elementary School (LAH)</li> </ul>

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	PreK-12	Total Student Enrollment	2,444	% Title 1 Population	1 0 0 %	% Attendance Rate	94.4%				
% Free Lunch	80.2 %	% Reduced Lunch	5.2 %	% Student Sustainability	80 %	% Limited English Proficient	15 %	% Students with Disabilities	17.9 %		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0 %	% Black or African American	64 %	% Hispanic or Latino	35 %	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0 %	% White	1 %	% Multi-racial	0 %
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	4	Number of Deputy Superintendents	2	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	2	# 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	1.5 %	Average Teacher Absences in District	11.4 %				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District	2	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools	0	Number of Schools in Status	3		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	0				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	22 %	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	30 %	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	52 %	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	62 %	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	73 %		

<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		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	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		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science</b>			
	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		
<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 (PD) 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
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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	
<b>Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement:</b> The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.1	The district has a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan that states the expectations around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families.			X	

**District Review Narrative:**

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

**Debriefing Statement:** The district leadership has communicated a set of expectations; however, reactive measures to respond to specific areas are generic and limit methods that meet the needs of all constituents.

**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.

**Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The Wyandanch Union Free School District (WUFSD) has low staff turnover. The district follows its Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan to provide feedback for staff; however, the district does not have a specific plan to ensure school leaders are able to provide quality feedback and identify professional development needs.

**Area for Improvement:**

**The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The district has a comprehensive approach for recruiting, evaluation and sustaining high-quality personnel that affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.

- The district has a high rate of staff retention and maintains a preferred eligibility list (PEL) of teachers and staff members that have been excessed due to budgetary constraints. Vacant positions are posted internally for ten days and are made public through local newspapers for an additional ten days. The superintendent reported that teachers are given opportunities to be promoted to department coordinators and assistant principals as well as to other administrator level positions within the district offices. The district uses the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) system to support staff evaluation and provide feedback. The district offers a no-cost reciprocal certification program for teachers to become certified in special education or English as a Second Language (ESL). According to the district cabinet, the district provides a teacher mentor program to support teachers in need through coaching and planning sessions. However, during the district visit the district leader did not provide evidence to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that indicated the district has a plan for supporting school leaders in understanding staff evaluation or providing frequent feedback and professional development (PD). Consequently, although the district has strategies for recruiting and sustaining high-quality staff, the absence of a concrete plan of action to support school leaders around staff evaluation, feedback and PD limits the schools' ability to provide instructional leadership to support student success.

<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.	<b>Rating</b>	<b>E</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The WUFSD district superintendent serves as the district leader, facilitator, and provider of resources. The district has a process to identify areas of needs and align resources to address those needs and promote student achievement.

**Strength:**

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

- According to the district leader, final decisions regarding allocation of resources are made at the district level. The district leader reported that he employs a needs-based support strategy for deploying and using resources. In addition, the assistant district leader for pupil personnel services (PPS) facilitates numerous district “reconciliations” at strategic times throughout the school year, which help the district project staffing and resource needs. Based on an analysis of these reconciliations, the district allocates resources as appropriate. Most resources are allocated to schools based on data analysis at the district level. During an interview with the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), the district leader stated that during weekly, faculty and departmental meetings, central office administrators “discuss the PD needs of schools in the district.” During these meetings, various staff members garner feedback, opinions, and suggestions. The District Grant Coordinator, in collaboration with the Director of Support Operations, works with schools to ensure appropriate staffing levels. District administrators reported that the district has hired a librarian for the first time during the 2012-13 school year at the district high school in order to promote literacy growth. In addition, the district hired additional bilingual staff members and a bilingual director of language acquisition. The district used grants to hire new staff and to offer PD for school administrators and teachers. The district provides PD through programs such as Bridges and Success for All. In regard to parental involvement, the district provides for the continuation of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), which is a platform for the district to share goals and long term plans for parental involvement and engagement. Additionally, the district provides translators at school and district meetings, such as the Parent Teacher Association meetings and Board of Education meetings. As a result, of the resources provided by the district as well as the support provided for overall school-based needs, the district promotes school improvement and success.

<b>Statement of Practice 1.3:</b> 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.	<b>Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The district has not shared its vision on improving student outcomes with schools. This

lack of communication has led to schools that are independently working to improve student achievement without clear direction and support to make this goal a reality.

**Area for Improvement:**

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

- During the district visit, it was not evident to the IIT that the district has a shared vision for improving student outcomes through utilizing data. The district communicates goals and high expectations through monthly school leader meetings, increased visits to all schools by district staff, and the district PD plan. According to district staff, the district communicates its plan of action to increase student achievement through its website and newsletters, both of which are available in multiple languages. Individual district coordinators revealed that they have developed individual action plans with the school leaders and school staff they specifically work with; however, the district leader has not formally communicated a set of high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents. There was little or no evidence to suggest that the performance and success of high needs sub-groups, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs) are explicitly identified in the district’s plan for increasing student achievement. The district leader indicated that he communicated the district goals to individual building school leaders, and that the goals were communicated to teachers who attended district PD sessions and other district-offered programs. The communication of expectations is inconsistent and accountability measures for achieving goals have not been established, which impedes the districts’ ability to promote increased student success.

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

**Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The WUFSD has a professional development (PD) plan, which was shared during the visit. Although there is an established learning plan, the PD does not always respond to the specific needs of individual schools.

**Area for Improvement:**

**The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The district has a comprehensive plan to create, deliver and monitor PD in all pertinent areas that is adaptive and tailored to the needs of individual school.

- The district leader shared a learning plan with the IIT that included PD offerings. The district leader reported he encourages school leaders to attend the PD sessions offered by the district. According to the district grant manager, district PD focuses on the various grant programs that are being implemented at the school level. PD relating to the use of data in schools is provided at the

request of each individual school leader. Through district coordinator interviews, the IIT found that the district has informal systems in place to monitor and assess student progress; however, these systems were not described as including scaffolds and interventions that would address the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities. During the district visit, the IIT found no evidence that there is an established mechanism in place for providing follow-up support regarding PD sessions conducted. The district uses the “My Learning Plan” system to monitor PD activities desired by school staff and provided by the district. This gives teaching staff members a degree of choice when selecting PD topics. At the time of the visit, PD related to the introduction and implementation of CCLS was provided by Pearson. Additionally, PD on assessment development and design was also being implemented throughout the district by coaches from the Bridges organization. While district administrators have used methods, such as “Tools of the Mind,” to analyze the effectiveness of PD, there was little or no evidence during the visit to suggest that this analysis informs subsequent PD topics and sessions. The district has a PD calendar and plan for delivering PD; however, the PD was found to be generic with little emphasis on the specific needs of subject area teachers and sub-group populations. Consequently, although the district offers PD to enhance staff skills, it is not adaptive and tailored to specific needs of individual 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.

**Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The district has identified best practices concerning teacher use of data that informs how teachers instruct students. However, this identification has not consistently reached all teachers within the district. Many teachers have not received the support needed to effectively use data to promote higher levels of student achievement.

**Area for Improvement:**

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

- The district utilizes coaches to provide PD to teachers on using data to inform instruction. During the visit, district staff reported that all district and school leaders received a copy of “Driven by Data” for professional growth to acquire strategies for the use of data in schools; however, there was no evidence to illustrate the follow-up or support provided to make the strategies in the book visible in the schools. According to district staff, at the time of the visit, the district had begun to disaggregate state assessment data to identify targeted skills and strategies for improvement; however, there was limited evidence to suggest that this is an expected practice within the district, or that PD on how to carry out these activities has been planned. The district utilizes a program called DATAWAREHOUSE, which breaks down assessment data into various forms for school use, by class, by teacher and by classification. During the visit, there was little evidence provided to the IIT to suggest how classroom-based assessment results are generated and utilized. At the time of

the visit, the district was working with consultants from BOCES and Bridges to gather data and create reports for each school. According to district staff, the school leaders are charged with “data ownership.” The district data coordinator indicated that individual schools request data reports, and he provides such reports in specific forms according to school leader preference. The district leader referred to the use of data at the building level as an “on-going struggle.” Although multiple consultants and coaches from the district provide best practices regarding data use, the absence of clear expectations and accountability measures hinder progress in the use of data to increase student achievement.

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

<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>Strength:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The district invited school leaders to meet to discuss the deficiencies students have when they enter middle school and high school. Together, they were able to identify strengths and areas of concern in order to purchase a new curriculum to meet student needs and better prepare them from elementary school through the high school level. The middle school leader reported that the district provides training for school leaders regarding the implementation of new and on-going initiatives before training is made available to teachers. The district has supported the school visions of the elementary and middle schools by providing PD in the areas outlined in the vision statements, including school-wide goals, rigor in instruction, and college and career readiness. In addition, the middle school leader reported that the district provides funding for PD and programs in the school and provides targeted after school activities for ELLs and students with disabilities. As a result of the relationship, the district has forged with each school leader to encourage, consult and engage with the district, select support options have been implemented to meet specific needs within the school communities.</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>Area for Improvement:</b></p> <p>The school goals identified in individual School Comprehensive Education Plans (SCEP) are specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented and timely, as well as aligned to the vision. The district provides the school community with support in technology by providing Smart Boards and related training. There was no evidence provided regarding the district’s support of the incorporation of the arts in either of the schools. The district data manager communicates with the schools regarding data needs and uses. According to school leaders, the</p>		

district provides funding for progress monitoring and local assessments based on the APPR. The district has established open and reciprocal communication with the schools; however, there is no visible development of the incorporation of the arts to the CCLS. As a result, students are not being exposed to multiple points of access to learning to meet the standards.

**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 elementary school leader reported that the district and school communicate regarding the PD needs of teachers concerning instructional practices and decisions aligned to school data. The IIT found, through a review of documents, that the district provides teachers with learning opportunities that help teachers learn about best practices and strategies. According to one of the school leaders, in one of the two district schools visited, the district provides follow-up support for PD provided to teachers in some areas of instructional practice. According to teachers at the middle school, the district provides coaches that share and support instructional strategies that are tailored to the needs identified through data analysis. The coaches present data to teachers and work with them to utilize the data in planning for student needs. While the district provides a yearlong schedule of PD opportunities, the IIT found no evidence that the district provides follow-up regarding the PD provided. Although the district and schools communicate around PD needs, there is inconsistent follow-up provided to support the implementation and necessary supports regarding PD sessions, limiting improvement in instructional practices.

**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:**

- During the visit to the elementary school, the IIT determined from the school leader interview and vertical teacher meeting that the district delivers PD topics to school staff concerning student social and emotional development. During the vertical teacher meeting, staff stated that the district does not provide follow-up support for programs concerning students' social and emotional developmental health. In one of the two schools visits, one school leader stated that their school works with a program called Project Success established between the district and the BOCES. Project Success provides a social worker to visit and work with teachers around the social and emotional health of students and families and provides strategies that can be used in their classrooms. The district delivers PD topics to schools concerning student social and emotional developmental health needs; however, there was no evidence provided that the district has

established a protocol for collaborating with schools, which includes monitoring the implementation of effective supports, and providing follow-up guidance as needed to ensure that student social and emotional developmental health needs are met. As a result, the social and emotional needs of students are inconsistently met, and there is no standard in place to guide, monitor and evaluate schools toward effectively addressing student needs beyond academics.

**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:**

- The elementary school leader reported that the district has implemented a communication strategy in pertinent languages to community members that allows for exchange of information. School leaders reported that printed notifications are translated in all pertinent languages, with translation services provided by the district; however, a document review of a sample of printed notifications showed that only a limited number of notifications were translated into other languages. The IIT found that both schools visited by the IIT had a pamphlet listing numerous community partnerships offered to students and families. Schools and district staff individually and collaboratively identify partnerships that meet the needs of their specific student populations. However, the effectiveness of the partnerships and services in place is not consistently monitored or assessed. The district has implemented a purposeful communication strategy; however, it was found that the strategy is inconsistently implemented and notifications are not always translated in all pertinent languages. As a result, the exchange of student, school and district information is inconsistently shared in a way that allows all stakeholders to understand. This inconsistent practice hinders stakeholders’ ability to take well-informed steps to advocate for the needs of their children.

## **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: Communicate a concrete plan of action to support school leaders around staff evaluation, feedback and PD to assist them in effectively evaluating and supporting instructional staff members.
- 1.3: Communicate a set of high expectations for addressing the needs of all school constituents.
- 1.4: Create PD that is adaptive and tailored to the specific needs of each individual school.
- 1.5: Provide a set of clear expectations and accountability measures regarding the use of data to increase student achievement.