



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	580513030000
District	Central Islip Union Free School District (UFSD)
District Address	50 Wheeler Road, Central Islip, New York 11722
Superintendent	Dr. Craig Carr
Date(s) of Review	May 14, 2014
Schools Discussed in this Report	Marguerite L. Mulvey Elementary School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	K-12		Total Student Enrollment	6789	Title 1 Population	77%	Attendance Rate	95%			
Free Lunch	65%	Reduced Lunch	10%	Student Sustainability	90%	Limited English Proficient	27%	Students with Disabilities	10%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	22%	Hispanic or Latino	69%	Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	2%	White	6%	Multi-racial	0%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/Appointed to District	7		Number of Deputy Superintendents	3	Average Years Dep. Superintendents in Role in the District	7		# 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	1%		Average Teacher Absences in District	15		
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing			Focus District	X	Number of Focus School Identified by District	4 - Focus 1- Priority	Number of SIG Recipient Schools	5	Number of Schools in Status	5	
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	13%		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	9.9%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	64%	4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	69.5%	6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	74.4%	

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	x	Black or African American
x	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
x	White		Multi-racial
x	Students with Disabilities	x	Limited English Proficient
x	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	x	Black or African American
x	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
x	White		Multi-racial
x	Students with Disabilities	x	Limited English Proficient
x	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
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		All Students
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.2	The district leadership has a comprehensive and explicit theory of action about school culture that communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.3	The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that aligns appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 1: INEFFECTIVE					I

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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(s) to ensure CCLS curriculum that provide 21st Century and College and Career Readiness skills in all content areas and provides fiscal and human resources for implementation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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 and addresses effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

District Review – Findings, Evidence, Impact and Recommendations:

<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>I</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>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>I</p>

Debriefing Statement: The district approach to the recruitment and evaluation of staff, while systematic, does not provide frequent or high-quality actionable feedback in order to improve practice.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district faces challenges in recruiting staff and using feedback to improve practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- The district leader stated that the district hires staff using a preferred eligible list (PEL), which originated from a collective bargaining agreement that included staff reductions during prior district budget cuts. Through this PEL, teachers are rehired and reinstated with full tenure based on when their previous position terminated at the end of the 2009-10 school year. The district leader reported that the district provides a one semester-length mentoring program for returning teachers. All recently filled positions, aside from two specialists, are from the PEL, which limits the schools’ ability to recruit effectively from a larger pool of candidates. In addition, the district has seen its number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch increase significantly in the past six years. The constraints of being restricted to the PEL limit the district’s ability to ensure that they are able to recruit and hire staff that have skill sets best suited for the district’s current student population.
- The district leader stated that the teacher observation process involves low-inference observations that include descriptions of teacher actions during instruction. The review team noted during the school review that while teacher observation documents did include descriptions of teacher actions observed in classrooms, these observation notes did not focus on determining the level of student achievement during instruction or include actionable feedback to teachers. Instead, observations focused on the ease with which teachers delivered a pre-determined set of observable actions, the level of student compliance during instruction, and how teachers responded to non-compliant

students, but did not focus on student learning.

- The district leader reported that school leaders may not stay in classes longer than three minutes during informal classroom visits, and they may not write anything down during these visits. Further, the district leader shared that school leaders are not allowed to provide tenured teachers with written or verbal feedback based on informal observations or walkthroughs. School leaders may only use formal visits to give teachers feedback, and this is limited to two full-class sessions at pre-arranged times. This limits the ability of school leaders to provide teachers with quality feedback and to ensure that school leaders address teacher needs through frequent observations.

Impact Statement:

The lack of effective recruitment, feedback, and evaluation systems limit the district’s ability to staff schools with high quality personnel who effectively address student needs.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Examine and modify its current approach to recruitment to ensure that it is attracting the quantity and quality of applicants with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to provide its schools and students with high quality school leaders and educators to improve the achievement of all students, especially those from struggling subgroups.
- Evaluate and modify its protocol for providing teachers with feedback to ensure that feedback encourages teachers to focus on student learning and has a positive impact on student achievement. Teachers and school leaders should have options that allow frequent short informal observations focused on giving specific, non-punitive feedback. These informal observations should support teachers in adjusting instructional practices to meet the needs of all subgroups of students and improve student learning and achievement.

Statement of Practice 1.2.: The district leadership has a comprehensive and explicit theory of action about school culture that communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: The school district does not promote a culture leading to high expectations and does not advocate for an array of best staff practices that meet the needs of its constituents.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not communicate high expectations or promote a theory of action about school culture for improving student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- Although a district goal was to train coaches to turnkey professional development (PD) on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to staff during PD periods, there was no evidence that the district evaluated the understanding of coaches or ensured the fidelity of the turnkey strategy in delivering the information to teachers. Further, an assistant district leader supervises all coaches rather than school leaders, even if those coaches serve only one school. Additionally, the district did not have a monitoring plan to ensure that teachers understood or enacted any of the PD with fidelity, or if the PD addressed student needs.
- While the district described a newly designed system for teachers to analyze formal student writing, there was no evidence of an action plan for using this system to increase student achievement or the system’s role in supporting the CCLS.
- School stakeholders are unable to get Board of Education meeting minutes without a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request. This process limits stakeholder access to pertinent information and their ability to understand the district expectations for addressing the needs of constituents and the plans to increase student achievement.

Impact Statement:

The school district does not have a theory of action with a clear implementation and monitoring plan that communicates high expectations for student achievement to all stakeholders. .

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Create expectations in all areas of school and district operations, including systems for ensuring that clear and specific action plans align with the district’s theory of action. Ensure that these action plans contain details concerning the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, as well as timelines for the assessment and adjustment of plan goals.

Statement of Practice 1.3: The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that aligns appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: The district allocates resources that only address the needs of some parts of the school community and there is no clear evidence to demonstrate school improvement or success.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not have a system for allocating resources that would inform the district and school leader decision-making processes.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- The district business manager, not the district leader, handles the details of the budget process. The district leader stated to review team that there is no written policy in regard to how the district prioritizes financial decisions, whether those financial decisions supported the district mission and vision, or what systems the district has in place for district or school-level budget oversight.
- While some central office staff shared that school leaders are very involved in developing a budget for their own schools, which they bring to the central office for approval, a school leader stated that the school leaders are provided with a line-by-line budget from the district, in which they have little input. School leaders stated during school reviews that all decisions for staff deployment are made at the district level and school leaders are informed after the fact. While school leaders indicated they advocate informally for staffing changes, they had little input at a formal level, especially if the school required a change in staffing structure during the school year. This perceived lack of input limits school leader ownership for staffing or other finance-based decisions. While the district has procedures for communication of budgets to the school board, it is not clear how district and school leaders communicate formally with each other on financial and staffing decisions to support student success.
- The State Comptroller's Office published the results of an audit into the district's budgeting practices in March 2014. According to the audit, "the District's unexpended surplus funds exceeded the statutory limit over the last three years," and during this time, "district officials continued to increase the real property tax levy." The Comptroller's Office went on to conclude that, "had District officials used more realistic budget estimates, they could have avoided accumulating excess unexpended surplus funds and reduced the real property tax levy. Instead, the levy increased by more than \$6.6 million, a 9 percent increase. As a result, District officials levied and collected more taxes than necessary to fund District operations."

Impact Statement:

The resources in the district are not administered effectively to promote school improvement and success.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Ensure the district allocates resources in a way that promotes transparency and sets priorities for financial decisions. Ensure the district's budget development process aligns its specific theory of action

to the district vision, mission, and associated SMART goals, and supports increased participation of district and school leaders.

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.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: There is limited evidence that the district has a comprehensive plan to deliver and monitor PD that promotes teacher effectiveness in order to improve student achievement.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not have a systematic approach to planning and implementing PD that meets the needs of staff and improves student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- Much of the PD provided is planned and approved months advance, but it is not revised based on student assessment outcomes or staff needs. The student support team (SST) and the PD team shared that much of the PD provided to staff is a result of the availability of training programs in the immediate geographic vicinity. Further, the review team found that there is no strategic plan for PD for district level staff or follow up with staff who have attended sessions to see if the strategies learned are being implemented. This lack of foresight or follow up minimizes the effectiveness of PD attended. The district PD plan and calendar contains minimal information on training sessions related mainly to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process based on the Danielson Framework. While the district submitted a 2014-16 PD plan, there were no SMART goals or objectives. The district has developed a PD mission statement, defined guiding principles, and described a structure for the district and schools to address needs assessment and data analysis, but there are no specific plans or protocols for how the group will proceed beyond examining data. While the document also contains targeted student objectives, there is limited evidence for how these will be monitored for progress. While the district has an extensive list of PD topics, it is not clear how these topics or activities are prioritized, targeted, or strategically delivered and monitored based on staff or student needs.
- The district instructional coaches do not receive PD on working with English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities, thereby limiting their effectiveness in working with teachers serving these subgroups of students. Teachers assigned to work specifically in push-in or pull-out programs, especially with ELL and students with disabilities, indicate that while district leaders send them e-mail notifications of PD opportunities outside the district, they must choose their own PD and apply for financial support from the district. Moreover, since virtually all teachers in the district work with low-performing subgroups of students, there is no specific PD for all teachers to improve their practices in

helping these students improve academically or socially.

- The special education director does not have a PD plan for district and school staff and lacks a strategic approach toward PD based on data-driven student and staff needs. The special education director supervises the social workers, school psychologists, and other support staff. The school psychologist and social workers are encouraged to seek out their own PD, as there are no district-wide initiatives in this area. The district communicates upcoming trainings via email to members of each school support team (SST), but it is up to individual SST members to apply and attend PD. There are no SST members on the district PD team, which hinders efforts to ensure that district and school-level staff are trained in meeting the needs of all students. ELL and special education teachers are not systematically provided training, and the general education staff has inconsistent PD from school to school, which hinders staff across the district in understanding and developing strategies, supports, and resources that meet student needs.
- According to the members of the PD team, the PD team does not employ protocols or strategies to measure the effectiveness of the PD plan as it pertains to teacher improvement or increased student achievement. This limits the district's ability to modify or improve its plan to meet the needs of staff and students.

Impact Statement:

The lack of a specific and targeted PD plan limits the district's ability to train its staff systematically to best meet the needs of its students.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Develop and enact short- and long-term plans for district and school PD, considering all student performance data and surveys, as well as teacher observation data, and input from all school stakeholders, including outside community partners. Ensure each aspect of the plans include systems for monitoring that clearly addresses how well each responsible staff constituency is enacting its part of the plan, and whether the PD is ensuring growth and improvement in student academic performance and social-emotional developmental health.

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.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: Stakeholders are unable to articulate a common understanding for the use of data to drive school- and district-wide initiatives.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not systematically use data to ensure best practices facilitate school improvement leading to increased student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- There is no district-wide systematic approach to the use of data to make strategic decisions. Not a single stakeholder interview group could speak to a uniform approach for making decisions in the district based on data, or could provide evidence to support whether programs or initiatives were working.
- There is no district-wide systematic approach for teachers to use data to modify curriculum or instruction. Though several individuals interviewed could speak about the use of data to drive curricular and instructional change, the review team found little evidence that this is being done systematically, as there are no district-wide expectations surrounding this initiative.
- Though the school has an interim assessment administered through Discovery Education three times a year, no interview group could speak to the latest data set or speak to any progress to determine if initiatives are working.
- Though some staff shared that school leaders conduct classroom walkthroughs, data from these visits are not tracked to inform trends, PD needs, or gaps in programming. Neither strategies nor programs are being documented to ensure that they are being implemented with fidelity to meet all learner needs and to improve teacher practice.
- A grade six academy began this school year, and the district plans to continue expanding this structure for the next several years. During the first year of implementation, attendance has risen, violent acts have been reduced from 66 to 36, and suspensions have dropped from 106 to 80. While suspension rates across the district have declined considerably during the district leader's tenure, this has not been followed with corresponding increases in student achievement.
- The district has shifted students and staff within the district; however, no evidence was presented to indicate that these adjustments have had their desired impact and resulted in improved student outcomes. This year, enrollment shifted so that grade five students remain in their neighborhood elementary schools instead of beginning middle school. In addition, seven of the eight school leaders in the district have been reassigned with the intention of reviving practices in each building, and over 40 percent of staff has moved to new positions. However, the review team found low-levels of instruction in its visit to a focus school in the district.

Impact Statement:

District stakeholders do not use student achievement data to adjust instructional practices and meet student needs, which hinders student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Using a collaborative approach, establish a district philosophy for data usage at all levels, including district, schools, and classrooms. Establish protocols for using data with coherent strategies for gathering and analyzing data that leads to implementing data-driven instructional decisions. Develop a system to evaluate the use of data at the classroom, school, and district levels to inform the PD planning process.

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

Statement of Practice 2.1 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: 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.	Tenet Rating	I
--	---------------------	----------

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not provide the schools with effective resources and supports to develop and implement school-wide improvement plans.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- The district does not provide schools a full opportunity to develop their budgets and submit them to the district. Although district leaders stated that the budgets are developed in schools first and then submitted to the district, the school leader of the reviewed school stated that she was provided a line-by-line budget developed by the district, which was the budget the district submitted to the Board of Education. School leaders stated they have little input on staffing based on student needs as all decisions for staff deployment are made at the district level and school leaders are informed after the fact. While school leaders stated they advocate informally for staffing changes, they have little input at a formal level.
- The district leader shared that school leaders do not participate in the development, delivery, implementation, or monitoring of PD. School leaders have responsibility for two formal classroom observations for tenured teachers per year, and this is the only means that school leaders may use to

evaluate teacher performance. Teachers are not mandated to invite coaches into their classes to offer feedback, which limits the ability of coaches to help teachers improve instructional practice.

- The PD team stated that tenured teachers do not need to write lesson plans, which hinders the ability of district leaders, school leaders, and coaches to ascertain the quality of lesson planning and the implementation of the CCLS. Further, the limited number of classroom observations hinders the school leader’s ability to evaluate the consistency of the instructional shifts being used during instruction.

Impact Statement:

The district structures and coaching support model limits the school’s ability to communicate and plan for school improvement effectively, and to improve teaching and learning.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Provide support to school leaders in order to foster their ability to consistently monitor teacher instructional practices to improve student achievement.

Statement of Practice 3.1 - Curriculum Development and Support: The district works collaboratively with the school(s) to ensure CCLS curriculum that provide 21st Century and College and Career Readiness skills in all content areas and provides fiscal and human resources for implementation.

Tenet Rating	I
---------------------	----------

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not provide schools with the support, resources, or guidance necessary to implement the CCLS and the instructional shifts.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- School leaders and staff reported that the district has not developed a curriculum with its schools, though it purchased the Journeys program for English language arts (ELA) and Go Math program for math, which are CCLS-aligned. The district PD team shared that there is no plan in place to monitor teacher implementation of the curriculum to determine the consistency of the implementation or to ensure that the curriculum meets student needs.
- The school leader and staff stated that the district provided the school with limited support for the implementation of the CCLS. The coaches shared that their support for teachers in implementing the CCLS is limited to supporting the ELA and math programs purchased by the district. Coaches deliver information during a weekly PD session at each school, but only support individual teachers if the

individual asks for assistance. However, the coaches noted that few teachers ask questions or ask for any formal assistance beyond the dedicated PD time. The lack of structure to support teacher implementation of the CCLS hinders student achievement.

Impact Statement:

While district has supplied the school with teaching materials for ELA and math, the lack of a cohesive plan to monitor and support teacher implementation of CCLS-aligned curricula hinders student academic achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Develop a plan to monitor the implementation of CCLS-aligned curriculum and to support teachers in utilizing this curriculum to meet the needs of all students in order to improve student success.

Statement of Practice 4.1 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices and addresses effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.

Tenet Rating

I

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not provide schools with adequate or targeted support to improve the instructional practice of teachers.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- The school leader reported that the district provided her with limited support for the implementation of an effective PD plan. Discussions with the school leader demonstrated that though the school has instructional coaches, there was no system for how these coaches provided support to teachers beyond the weekly PD session. School leaders shared that data from assessments and from district-conducted walkthroughs are not used to strategically target PD for teachers.
- Though each school has instructional coaches to support teachers in the classroom, the district leader stated that their effectiveness depends on the coaches’ relationship with the teachers. There is no mandate that teachers invite coaches into their classes to offer feedback, which limits the ability of coaches to help teachers improve their instructional practices.
- A review of the district PD plan demonstrated that the plan was generic and did not contain a rationale or details regarding the specifics of PD. Similarly, the review team found the PD calendar was sparse, and only noted ongoing events, such as “Danielson training” for teachers, “coaches meetings,” and “all principals meetings.” There were no references on the PD calendar to the CCLS, data, the NYS

modules, or instructional strategies to improve classroom practice.

Impact Statement:

The school district's lack of systematic and data-driven support significantly limits the ability of school leaders and staff to provide students with consistent, rigorous learning opportunities.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Develop a PD plan that aligns with the district and school priorities to support teachers in improving instructional practices in order to increase student academic achievement.

Statement of Practice 5.1 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students' social and emotional developmental health.

Tenet Rating

I

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district lacks systematic processes to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the referral process for students and to ensure that lessons are modified for to meet student needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- School staff shared with the review team that there is no specific PD plan for the special education staff. While there is a referral and identification process in the handbook, school leaders confirmed there is no district mandate for schools to provide training on this process. The lack of a formalized identification and referral system in which all staff is trained severely limits the ability of district and school staff to provide appropriate services to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of students.
- School leaders stated that there is no systematic district-wide approach to behavior expectations. According to the district leader, schools decide what Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) they will utilize with no guidance provided by the district.

Impact Statement:

The lack of a formalized identification and referral process limits the ability of the school and district to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the

district should:

- Develop a social and emotional support plan for students with clearly defined roles for stakeholders. Provide data-based training to ensure that schools are able to plan for and meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students.

Statement of Practice 6.1 - Family and Community Engagement: 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.

Tenet Rating

D

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The school district does not have a systematic plan for reciprocal communication with families to promote enhanced school support at home as well as social, emotional, and academic support for students and their families.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: *(Note: the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) gathered evidence from a review of documents and interviews with district leaders, principals, staff, parents and students.)*

- The school district does not have a plan of action, systems, or protocols, which detail appropriate expectations for communication between the district, schools, and homes. Additionally, the school district does not administer a survey to families to determine if the quality of communication or services provided by the district meets the needs of its stakeholders. The lack of strategic planning to engage stakeholders severely limits the ability of the district and schools in developing a reciprocal relationship with families in order to improve student success.
- Discussions with staff and parents demonstrated that communication systems between home and school are still developing. Discussions with parents demonstrated that the school uses a variety of ways to keep them informed, such as texts, emails, letters, and the website. However, some parents interviewed at the school stated they were confused with the school’s practices, procedures, and formal partnerships. For example, some parents stated that they were unclear about which community agencies provide support to children and families in the school and community. This lack of clear communication at both the school and district levels limits the ability of families to work in partnership with agencies that may provide support to their children.
- During interviews, parents stated that while they volunteer their services when their children go on field trips, additional involvement at the school is limited. Parents stated that district-presented after-school workshops and events are held at the school, but provide limited information on how parents can support student success. The school leader stated there was no specific district plan to support schools in developing family outreach. The district leader reported he received “very few calls on the CCLS,” and that he did not believe that families want information on this subject. The lack of

engagement from the district to support schools in developing the home-school partnership hinders student success.

- The district leader stated that he was not satisfied with the reciprocal communication that existed between the district and homes and was looking at ways in which to increase it. As a result, the district ran some adult education programs at night to teach family members English. This was also the fifth year that the district ran a health fair, with the goal to help stakeholders understand how to improve their family's health. The district leader estimated that over 500 people attended. However, the school district does not have a system in place to effectively monitor and evaluate its family communication outreach.

Impact Statement:

The lack of a systematic and strategic process for developing partnerships between the district, its schools, and parents, limits reciprocal communication between the home and school and hinders student success.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- Develop a long-term school and district plan for community engagement that includes goals that will be monitored to increase reciprocal communication between the home and school in order to improve student success.