



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	500402060000
District	East Ramapo Central School District
District Address	105 S. Madison Avenue, Spring Valley, NY 10977
Superintendent	Dr. Joel M Klein
Date(s) of Review	June 4 -5, 2015

District Information Sheet					
Grade Configuration	K - 12	Total Enrollment	8485	Number of Schools	14
District Composition (<i>most recent data</i>)					
% Title I Population	46.8%	% Attendance Rate	94%		
% Free Lunch	73.1%	% Reduced Lunch	7.1%		
% Limited English Proficient	29.3%	% Students with Disabilities	19.7%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (<i>most recent data</i>)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	39.2%		
% Hispanic or Latino	50.4%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4.7%		
% White	4.8%	% Multi-Racial	0.9%		
Personnel (<i>most recent data</i>)					
Years Superintendent Assigned to District	5	# of Deputy/Assistant Superintendents	4		
# of Principals	14	# of Assistant Principals	8		
# of Teachers	684	Avg. Class Size	elem 24; secondary 25; AP secondary 28		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0		
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	10%	Average Teacher Absences	94.2%		
Teacher Turnover Rate – Teachers < 5 years exp.	12%	Teacher Turnover Rate – All Teachers	4.1%		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	14%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	15%		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	74%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	56%		
Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	80%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	68%		
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2013-14)					
4 Year Graduation Rate	60%	6 Year Graduation Rate	79%		
% of earning Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Des.	12%				
Current NYSED Accountability Status					
# of Reward Schools	0	# of Priority Schools	0		
# of Schools In Good Standing	8	# of Focus Schools	1		
# of LAP Schools	5				

District Accountability Status

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (indicate Y / N / N-A)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N-A	Black or African American	Y
Hispanic or Latino	N	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N
White	N	Multi-Racial	Y
Students with Disabilities	N	Limited English Proficient	N
Economically Disadvantaged	N		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (indicate Y / N / N-A)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N-A	Black or African American	Y
Hispanic or Latino	N	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N
White	Y	Multi-Racial	Y
Students with Disabilities	Y	Limited English Proficient	N
Economically Disadvantaged	Y		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (indicate Y / N / N-A)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N-A	Black or African American	N
Hispanic or Latino	N	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Y
White	N	Multi-Racial	N-A
Students with Disabilities	N	Limited English Proficient	N
Economically Disadvantaged	N		

DISTRICT PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE DISTRICT

- Improve graduation rate
- Improve student performance on local and state assessments, particularly for underperforming demographic groups
- Reduce dropout rate
- Match fiscal and human resources and professional development to schools with greatest need as evidenced by NYSED accountability status

Information about the review

- The review of the district was conducted by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE), a representative from the New York State Education Department, and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) reviews of one school in the district also informed the district review.
- During IIT school reviews in the district, reviewers visited 43 classrooms across the one school and IIT reviewers conducted focus group interviews with students, staff, and parents.
- District reviewers conducted interviews with district leadership, central office staff, and a focus group of principals.
- The district provided results of a student survey that 3116 (37%) completed.
- The district provided results of a staff survey that 462 (68%) completed.
- The district provided results of a parent survey that 339 (7%) completed.

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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:				X

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	resources for implementation.				
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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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>Stage 1</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>Stage 1</p>
<p>Overall Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems to recruit and evaluate staff are not sufficiently robust or effective to make sure that the needs of all students are consistently met. <p>Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review team found that the district does not have a staffing strategy that allows it to address student needs effectively. Layoffs caused by fiscal cuts in the recent past resulted in staff shortages in key areas such as department chairs and social workers. Reviewers found that while other staff take on more responsibility to cover for these lost positions, their roles in support of raising student achievement and promoting student social and emotional developmental health have become less effective. This means the district is not responding to the urgent need to improve student academic achievement, particularly for English language learners (ELLs) and to address the needs of the increasing proportion of economically disadvantaged students. While the district submitted evidence of the progress they have made in establishing bilingual Yiddish special education classes, only two percent of the ELLs in the district are Yiddish speaking, and the district did not provide evidence of how they are meeting the needs of the other ELL populations, including the 65 percent of ELL students that are Spanish speaking. District leaders are developing systems to provide more rigor in the recruitment and selection process and are working to attract more candidates. For example, the district has increased its advertising to attract a larger recruitment pool, proposed the implementation of a more thorough interviewing process, and stipulated a bilingual accreditation as part of the staff selection process, but there is limited evidence of the impact on these initiatives. Discussions with district leaders indicate that the district does not have an accurate system for evaluating school leaders. The review team found that there is a lack of inter-rater reliability within the cabinet when evaluating school leaders. For example, while the district shared they use the Multidimensional Principal Performance Review (MPPR) to evaluate school leaders, the review team found up to five tools are used across the district to evaluate school leaders. The district leader stated that too many district staff disregard data on student and school achievement in their analysis of school leaders’ effectiveness. The district leader also confirmed that school leaders adopt a similar approach when evaluating teacher effectiveness and data presented by the district indicates that teacher evaluations do not align to the student growth rates in schools across the district, as teachers 		

in the district are mostly rated effective while student achievement is low. In addition, school and district leaders state that the district has not established a consistent expectation about the level of actionable feedback provided to teachers, which hinders the development of teacher expertise and instructional practices. Although the district shared plans to update the APPR process in the summer of 2015, evidence of these plans were not available at the time of the review.

- District leaders state that the majority of staff has worked in the district for some time and there is little flexibility in recruitment, as the district still draws on a sizeable preferred eligibility list. Some effort is being made to explore other initiatives, such as developing partnerships with local universities, but these initiatives are new. While there have been changes at the school leadership level, members of the cabinet reported that some staff is resistant to changes implemented by these new school leaders, and the review team found that there is also little evidence of cabinet members helping schools to overcome this staff resistance.

Impact Statement:

- The district does not meet the needs of students because evaluative procedures are not rigorous enough for improving expertise in promoting student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- ensure that district leaders implement a consistent protocol for evaluating all staff that aligns to student achievement data.

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

Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- The district does not have a theory of action aligned to targeted strategies that address the needs of all students.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- District leaders confirmed that the district has not devised a theory of action that reflects the needs of the community. While student achievement is declining, and the proportion of English language learners (ELLs) is increasing, district staff stated during the focus group meeting that the district's goals have remained unchanged since 2009 and the district's website had the 2009 goals posted online during the time of the review. The district's improvement planning documentation states priorities that include addressing the low graduation and student achievement rates and reducing the dropout rate. The district cabinet reported that there are no specific and quantifiable goals or benchmarks to measure the district's growth in relation to these priorities. Cabinet members state that there is a large gap between student achievement results in the district when compared to state averages, but district leaders state that this has not been communicated with the community and parents state that

the district does not have high expectations for student achievement.

- Discussions with district and school leaders demonstrate that there is little clarity about the district’s vision for student success or alignment between school and district goals. Evidence from discussions demonstrates that while some school leaders establish school goals independently, they receive no district support in setting or meeting those goals. While the English as a new language (ENL) supervisor has set goals for ENL staff and students, the review team found that the district provides more support to elementary schools than secondary schools, and that there is a lack of district support provided for ELLs. Further, the New York State Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) monitoring report cited the district for a number of deficiencies in its work to support ELLs throughout the district, such as not providing many ELL students with access to bilingual programs, materials, appropriate instruction, and credits toward graduation. While the district submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to the review team to address these deficiencies, this CAP had not been approved by OBEWL at the time of the review. School and district leaders concurred that the district has failed to create a coordinated strategy to address the needs of ELLs. Although a bilingual program is now being piloted, the review team found that district staff does not monitor this program to ensure consistent implementation. During a visit to a school in the district, reviewers found that the bilingual program observed was not organized to meet the needs of all of the students it served. Further, district leaders state that there is some resistance from school staff in implementing ELL supports.

Impact Statement:

- The district does not effectively communicate its theory of action across the district, which hinders student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- identify and implement a comprehensive district improvement strategy based on challenging and quantifiable goals for raising student achievement; and
- hold staff accountable through regular monitoring and evaluation of activities for the achievement of these goals and for improving student outcomes and professional practices.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>Stage 1</p>
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Overall Finding:

- The district does not have a financial strategy to evaluate the impact of its limited resources.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- The district leaders report that the district has not implemented a robust financial planning strategy to ensure that its limited funds are used effectively. District leaders state that funds are allocated according to district leaders’ views, rather than on an analysis of the data available about the needs of

the schools based on student achievement and demographics. While district leaders shared that the district would be changing its reading program for 2015-16, the review team did not find evidence for why the program was being changed. Once resources are allocated, district leaders report that there is no system for evaluating the impact or outcome of the monies spent in bringing about improvements in professional practices or student outcomes.

- While the district invested grant money into a math program, there is little evidence that this has been effective over the last three years in significantly raising student achievement in the elementary schools and the district report card shows negligible impact. District leaders report that professional development (PD) is available for all staff, but state that the school leaders who are responsible for following up on the implementation of PD in classrooms are under no obligation to attend these PD sessions, which hinders their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation.
- The district has struggled with meeting students' programmatic needs through scheduling. For example, during a visit to a district school, reviewers found that students who have continuous education in Spanish are required to sit through a two-year biology sequence before taking the NYS Regents exam, rather than being offered the course in the ordinary one-year sequence. Several students interviewed also shared that they were not scheduled for appropriate courses. District leaders report that the needs of students with disabilities are assessed once scheduling has been completed, which limits the ability of the district to ensure student needs are met. In addition, reviewers who visited a school in the district found that there are limited integrated co-teaching (ICT) classes to allow for the placement of students with individualized education plans (IEP) in the least restrictive environment. While the district noted a CAP to address these issues, the CAP had not been approved at the time of the review.
- District documents show that the needs of the students with disabilities subgroup continue to rise each year and the district is unable to predict accurately the budget necessary to meet these students' needs. For example, while the district sets funding for this subgroup in the budget in the spring, the district waits until summer to evaluate new students, re-evaluate current students, and classify student needs in Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings and the budget does not reflect these CSE meeting outcomes or any new admits. In addition, district leaders state that the district has made no strategic response to improve financial management and to reduce the impact of these last minute adjustments to the budget allocation in other areas.
- While the district has made significant cuts to programs and to positions over the past several years, reviewers found that resources available were not being used in a strategic way to improve educational outcomes. Reviewers found a lack of clearly articulated priorities to guide the use of resources at both the school and the district level. In addition, reviewers found an absence of systems and structures to ensure that funds were being deployed effectively. For example, while the district relies heavily on consultants and in-house coaches, it has not established a system to evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, while the district offers PD, school leaders are not always knowledgeable about the content to adequately evaluate teacher implementation of the PD because they are not required to attend PD sessions. There are no expectations regarding the implementation of the PD to suggest that these funds have are being used effectively as 40 percent of teachers surveyed indicate that PD attended

does not help them better meet the needs of their students. District leaders shared that there is no PD to support school leaders in helping them know how to provide feedback to teachers. During a school visit in the district, teachers shared with reviewers that the feedback they were provided from school leaders was generally not helpful, and 38 percent of the teachers surveyed indicated that they do not receive instructional supports needed to teach students. Meanwhile, during a visit to a school, reviewers found that instruction was not engaging or challenging.

Impact Statement:

- The absence of a resource allocation strategy means that the district cannot account for the impact of its expenditure and valuable resources are being wasted because they are not having a positive impact on improving student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- implement protocols that require that district leaders to implement a robust resource allocation strategy that is based on analysis of need and clear expectations of the intended impact that serve as the accountability measures to secure value for money.

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

Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- There is limited evidence of a strategic district approach toward teacher PD or in holding teachers and school leaders accountable for the implementation of PD learned and the impact on improving student outcomes.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- District leaders state that the district curriculum and instruction team meet routinely twice a month to determine the PD priorities. While district leaders identify broad areas to support teachers, such as improving math instruction, there is little evidence of improvement in instruction or student achievement. Although district leaders cited changes in student enrollment and the length of time needed to improve instruction as reasons for limited student achievement, the review team found that the needs of all students are not being met and that student achievement remains low. The district makes a considerable investment in the service of consultants and other trainers to provide PD for teachers, but school leaders state that the district does not evaluate the impact of the training provided on student achievement. District leaders report that they evaluate the quality of the materials and the activities provided by trainers, but there are no procedures to analyze their impact in the classroom. This lack of focused evaluation is further replicated in the expectations that the district

has for the involvement of school leaders in learning the content of the PD and providing feedback to the district regarding which PD is working and which is not. For example, district leaders stated that although school leaders were under no obligation to attend training in new math strategies, they were responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of teachers in applying these strategies in the classroom. However, school leaders stated to the review team that they are not clear what evidence of PD implementation to look for when observing teachers and that the district does not clarify these expectations for them. Consequently, the district does not ensure that school leaders are sufficiently knowledgeable to support improved instruction.

- District leaders reported that certified ELL teachers are required to attend all provided training to help develop their knowledge and skills. However, there are no expectations that other teachers attend training appropriate to supporting ELLs. As a result, the district is not having an impact promoting students’ language acquisition because it is not holding all staff accountable for developing an equitable approach to effective instruction for all student subgroups. District leaders state that too many teachers avoid training all together by organizing other commitments at the same time that prevent their attendance. Documentary evidence also demonstrates the lack of coordination in the district PD strategy in relation to other district goals. For example, the district’s PD calendar lists four times as many PD activities for math, as literacy when literacy is one of the curriculum foci for the year.

Impact Statement:

- The lack of a coordinated approach to PD means the district is not having a positive impact developing teachers’ expertise for sustainable improvement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- ensure that district leaders establish rigorous procedures for identifying specific PD priorities which include clear measures to determine the impact of this training on improving instructional practices and hold school leaders and teachers to account for implementing effective PD that has a quantifiable impact on raising student achievement.

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	Stage 1
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Overall Finding:

- The district does not promote a data driven culture, so throughout the district staff do not use data effectively to make and evaluate strategic decisions.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- District leaders state that there are no consistent expectations about the use of data in measuring the

impact of strategic decisions at the school or district levels and no expectations posted as to how teachers should use data to drive instruction and curricula adjustments and planning. While the district's 2012-15 three-year plan lists some plans for data analysis, the review team found that procedures are not in place for school leaders and the district to work collaboratively to analyze data to identify trends and patterns in student academic data and identify areas of improvement by content area, grade level, or by different subgroups such as ELLs.

- Available data on the district report card indicates that ELLs perform poorly in math, but the district has not established a system to determine the cause of their difficulties and there is no strategy in place to address this need. District leaders report that reading specialists retain their own progress monitoring information, but there are no expectations that they share this data with teachers taking responsibility for improving students' reading skills in other areas of the curriculum. The district shared that it will evaluate the overall impact of ELL support and the reading program at the end of the academic year, but district leaders have already made the decision to change the reading program for next year. District leaders were unable to articulate how this decision was based on an analysis of data.
- Although the district's 2012-15 three-year plan lists Dignity for All (DASA) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies, the review team found that the district has not established expectations about the use of data to address student social and emotional developmental health. Family resource coordinators, appointed to fulfill the role of the social workers lost from the district, seek to address the needs of individual families in collaboration with community-based organizations once the need has been identified. However, the review team did not find prevention processes and procedures in place to proactively assess student social and emotional development needs. District leaders state that there are no expectations that these colleagues collate and analyze data to inform a district-wide strategy to address student needs.

Impact Statement:

- Too many activities in the district lack purpose and impact because district leaders do not place a high enough priority on using data to hold district and school leaders accountable for improved student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- establish protocols for monitoring and analyzing quantitative data that reflects the effectiveness of all areas of the district's work in relation to how well schools and students are performing. District leaders must respond quickly and effectively making timely adjustments in practice when they detect signs that progress is slowing. Any changes to policy must be monitored in a robust manner to ensure a positive impact.

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	Stage 1
<p>Overall Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district does not support schools in creating visions aligned to the district’s vision. <p>Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district does not effectively communicate a theory of action with all school leaders. School leaders state that there are no Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) district goals to help drive improvements in student academic achievement and that expectations about school leader accountability and reporting to the district are unclear, so school leaders instead rely on each other, create their own goals, or work independently. School leaders report that the district communicated intended measures for school success, such as a decrease in the dropout rate, but school leaders state that progress towards these targets is not monitored by the district. While school leaders submit data about student progress in the honors program to the district on a quarterly basis, this data shows a decrease in achievement and the district provided no evidence of any analysis of this trend in order to make any changes to the program. School leaders state that the district has not established clear expectations for the implementation of curricula across classrooms. Further, the district has not mandated training for school leaders on curriculum and school leaders say that as a result, they are unable to successfully monitor teacher implementation. Although the district is piloting a program for new students learning English for the first time, the district plans to expand the program next year without evaluating its effectiveness. <p>Impact Statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district’s guidance and assistance does not consistently empower school leaders to develop learning environments that meet the needs of the communities they serve. <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with school leaders to align their school visions to a new district theory of action with SMART goals; and establish effective monitoring procedures to hold school leaders accountable for achieving these goals. 		
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	Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- The district does not work collaboratively with the schools to ensure the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- While the district has provided schools with new textbooks for ELLs, school leaders report that there have been no corresponding checks on the effectiveness of these materials. Additionally, the district provided schools with expectations regarding interdisciplinary curricula, but has not provided school leaders with the support necessary to implement these expectations. Although the district leader stated that teachers would have common planning time in the next school year, the district did not provide teachers with time to meet to plan during the 2014-15 school year. As a result, school leaders report that teachers are not creating robust interdisciplinary learning experiences.
- District leaders report deficiencies in the implementation of the curriculum following the removal of department chairs due to fiscal cuts. Further, school leaders state that the district does not consistently evaluate the implementation of the curriculum across schools. School leaders and teachers state that while curriculum representatives from the district support content area teachers, they are not equipping teachers to use strategies independently of these representatives. While the district notes that they expect school leaders to use information from learning walks and meetings to ensure teachers use PD strategies independently, school leaders state that they are not clear what strategies teachers should be using. This limits the ability of school leaders across the district to ensure consistent implementation in classrooms.

Impact Statement:

- The lack of sustained support for the implementation of the CCLS means that the curriculum is not being used to meet the academic needs of students in the district.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- identify the impact of new curriculum initiatives; and
- work with school leaders to check the impact of these initiatives against success criteria on a routine basis and make appropriate adjustments during the academic year.

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

Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- The district does not work collaboratively with schools to provide opportunities to support teacher practices and student success.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- School leaders and teachers state that the district has not implemented a coordinated strategy for accurately identifying teacher PD needs. Additionally, school leaders report that they do not receive sufficient training on the implementation of the curriculum, which hinders them from successfully monitoring teacher implementation and providing staff with appropriate feedback. Further, 81 percent of teachers surveyed indicate that they have little influence in determining PD opportunities.
- The lack of communication between school and district leaders limits the impact of district provided PD opportunities. For example, although district leaders state that the PD calendar is adjusted based on school leader feedback during the school year, school leaders state that they have identified weaknesses in teachers’ questioning skills, but that this was not addressed in the district’s PD calendar. Additionally, school leaders state that the district does not support schools in meeting the needs of ELLs.
- School leaders and teachers state that there are limited mechanisms for assessing the impact of PD activities. For example, teachers state that they are not held accountable by the district for implementing strategies learned from PD and school and district leaders agreed that there was limited evidence of the impact of PD on student achievement or instructional practices. Although efforts have been made to improve teachers’ use of data to guide and inform instruction, teachers stated that they lacked confidence in using data in the classroom setting.

Impact Statement:

- The lack of coordinated PD activities between the district and schools hinders student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- implement a district-wide strategy for systematically evaluating instruction and assessing the impact of PD on student 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

Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- The district does not work collaboratively with schools to provide opportunities and resources that support student social and emotional developmental health.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- While the district states they have provided adequate training to school leaders and staff on student social and emotional developmental health, school leaders and support staff report that the district has provided limited training to support the ability of staff to address student needs. For example, although the 2014-15 districts’ PD calendar lists six sessions for social and emotional developmental health, there were 21 sessions listed for math. School leaders note that while there has been a reduction in suspension rates in some schools, they are unclear what program specifically brought about this decrease. Student survey responses indicate that fighting, bullying, and the availability of drugs in school buildings are a concern. School leaders state that a lack of consistency and district support in implementing the PBIS initiative over the last five years has affected student behavior. Although the district provides schools with limited social-emotional data, such as behavior incidents and suspensions, school leaders state that there are few expectations about how schools should use this information to foster student success. As a result, school leaders state that there is no system for identifying how individual student’s academic growth is impacted by social and emotional developmental health needs.
- School support staff report that the district employs a part-time attendance officer, but state that this position does not provide schools specific support needed to address issues with attendance and punctuality. Further, staff states there are no district-wide expectations about the ways in which schools gather and analyze student attendance and other social-emotional data in order to meet student needs. While the district notes that they monitor attendance, the review team did not find evidence for how the district uses data to meet student social and emotional needs.

Impact Statement:

- Students do not receive enough support to address their social and emotional developmental health because the district has not established effective systems to support schools in using data to understand and respond to student needs.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- stipulate expectations about the use of data to support student social and emotional developmental health needs.

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

Stage 1

Overall Finding:

- The district has not implemented a comprehensive system to assess the needs of the community in order to improve the quality of relationships between the district and the community.

Evidence/Information that Led to this Finding:

- District leaders state the district has not analyzed the needs of the community and it instead relies on school leaders and family resource coordinators to engage and support the needs of families. The parents who met with the review team were unaware of the district's aims or goals.
- District leaders report that neither IEPs nor report cards are currently available in students' home languages. Further, the district website is not translated and the phone line support that is available to Spanish-speaking families is only accessible during office hours. Parent survey responses indicate that the areas of greatest concern to parents are the lack of personalized attention their children receive in school and the lack of information families receive regarding the progress of their children.
- School leaders report the district does not build positive relationships with the families from subgroups, particularly the ELL population. Further, school leaders report that there has been inconsistent success in increasing the number of parents that access the parent data portal.

Impact Statement:

- The district does not effectively work in close partnership with schools to improve the relationships between the home and school in order to improve student success.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Stage 3 rating on the DTSDE rubric, the district should:

- implement a protocol for family resource coordinators to communicate with all families to collect data about the needs of the community; and
- work with school leaders to analyze this data in order to implement strategies to better engage with families in order to improve student achievement.