



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

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



<b>BEDS Code</b>	021601040004
<b>School Name</b>	Friendship Central School
<b>School Address</b>	46 West Main Street, Friendship, NY 14739
<b>District Name</b>	Friendship Central School District
<b>School Leader</b>	Donald Putnam
<b>Dates of Review</b>	April 26-27, 2016
<b>School Accountability Status</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
<b>Type of Review</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

### School Information Sheet for Friendship Central School

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	Pre K-12	Total Enrollment	366	SIG Recipient	No
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	3	# SETSS	4	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	0
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	5	# Music	7	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	6	# Dance	0	# CTE	6
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	70	% Attendance Rate	95		
% Free Lunch	60	% Reduced Lunch	1		
% Limited English Proficient	0	% Students with Disabilities	28		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0	% Black or African American	0		
% Hispanic or Latino	0	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0		
% White	98	% Multi-Racial	2		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	10	# of Assistant Principals	0		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0		
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	4	Average Teacher Absences	13		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	11%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	14%		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (Grade 4)	86%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (Grade 8)	50%		
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	56%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	56%		
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4	67%	US History Performance at levels 3 & 4	91%		
4-Year Graduation Rate	95%	6 Year Graduation Rate	94%		
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation	22%	% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures	40%		
Overall NYSED Accountability Status					
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan			
Priority School		Focus School	X		
<b>SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:</b>					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of students graduating with a Regents Diploma from 70% to 80% by 2015.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of students achieving proficiency on all New York State Assessments to 80% of all students by 2015.</li> <li>3. Submit at least one positive article to local newspapers per quarter.</li> <li>4. Decrease discipline referrals by 2% per year through 2015.</li> <li>5. Increase number of grants sought and secured.</li> </ol>					

School Identification Status		
The school was identified for <b>not meeting</b> the subgroup performance minimum cut point for the following subgroups in 2014-15:		
Subgroup	School's Performance	Minimum Cut point
Economically Disadvantaged	54	64

## Purpose of the visit

This school was visited by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) because of its low performance.

The purpose of this review is to provide the school with feedback regarding the practices across the school and to provide a number of actionable recommendations to direct the school's work in the immediate future.

This report is being provided as a feedback tool to assist the school and to help identify areas for improvement. These areas can address the subgroups identified or they may be broader and cover additional subgroups or the entire school. NYSED recognizes that there are dedicated staff members at the school committed to the success of the students. The report below provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

## Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from NYSED. The team also included a district representative and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative.
- The review team visited a total of 61 classrooms during the two-day review.
- The OEE visited eight classrooms with the school leader during the review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.

The Review Team concluded that the school's current systems and practices most closely align with Stage One on the DTSDE Rubric.

### SUCSESSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BUILD UPON:

1. The school leader has established positive relationships with many families through an open door policy. Parents reported that they are welcomed into school and enjoy many opportunities, especially in the elementary and middle school, to find more out about their children's work and education.
2. The school developed systems to manage attendance. This has resulted in most students attending school regularly, and the attendance rate is 95 percent.
3. The school introduced a program to bring students to visit colleges. Students stated that, as a result, they feel that attending college is more of a possibility for them.

**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.

**Recommendation for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions:**

- By May 9, 2016, school leaders should carry out daily walkthroughs and provide actionable written and verbal feedback to teaching staff. They should also monitor lesson planning on a weekly basis. During walkthroughs and weekly monitoring of lesson planning, they should check that teachers are implementing the school’s priorities.

**Rationale that led to the recommendation:**

- School leaders reported that they established school priorities of teacher use of student data and ongoing assessment to plan for instruction, incorporation of higher-order questioning in lessons, and improved use of learning objectives in lessons. The school leader informed reviewers that he provides teachers with daily planning time and regular opportunities for groups of teachers to organize their own professional development (PD) through Learning Clubs. The purpose of the PD is for teachers to develop the skills to incorporate the school priorities into their planning and instruction. However, during lesson observations, the review team saw little evidence that teachers were implementing the school priorities in the classroom. Reviewers found that most teachers planned the same lesson for all students regardless of prior assessment information, and they rarely asked higher-order questions. When asked by reviewers, students were frequently unable to explain or understand the learning objectives of the lesson.
- School leaders acknowledged that although they go on walkthroughs, they do not do so on a daily basis. Teachers reported that the verbal feedback provided by school leaders following walkthroughs was sometimes useful in giving them ideas for improvement. However, during a document review, the IIT found that written feedback following walkthroughs was not specific enough to guide teachers on how to improve their practice and did not sufficiently focus on school priorities. The feedback examined by reviewers typically included encouraging and supportive comments, but only highlighted general areas for improvement. During lesson observations, reviewers saw little evidence that teachers were providing high quality instruction.
- During discussions with the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), school leaders reported that they do not regularly monitor teachers’ planning to see that teachers use formative and summative data to adapt the curriculum to meet student needs or identify higher-order questions to ask in lessons. Additionally, school leaders indicated that they do not regularly check that teachers are clearly explaining learning objectives to students. The school leader acknowledged that he does not check the impact of planning on instruction daily. The review team concluded that teachers do not benefit from frequent, actionable feedback on how to address the school’s priorities.

**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.

**Recommendation for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support:**

- By May 9, 2016, during common planning time, teachers should use student data to plan English language arts (ELA) and math activities that are matched to the levels at which students are working.

School leaders should attend planning meetings on a daily basis and visit Learning Clubs on a monthly basis to guide the planning process.

**Rationale that led to the recommendation:**

- School leaders reported that teachers do not consistently use data to inform planning in ELA and math. The IIT’s examination of planning documents confirmed this. Reviewers saw few examples of teacher use of data to guide instructional planning, with the exception of grouping of students for reading in grades three to five.
- The IIT learned from a document review and interviews with school leaders’ interviews that teachers often use commercial unit plans without adapting them to meet students’ needs. In most reviewed lesson plans, teachers provided students with the same activities with the same level of support regardless of information from previous assessments. In observed lessons, the review team noted that these tasks were too easy for some students and too difficult for other students. Reviewers noticed that some students struggled to finish their work or could only produce superficial answers. Students told reviewers that they preferred the few lessons in which they had individual projects to do.
- Data indicated that students with disabilities comprise 28 percent of the student population and that this subgroup of students is not making adequate progress. A document review showed that each student has her/his own Individualized Education Program (IEP) containing goals tailored to the student’s needs; however, the IIT found limited evidence to show that teachers adjust the curriculum to account for these students’ respective achievement levels and individual goals.
- School leaders reported that they do not regularly check that planning takes full account of assessment data, and they do not attend planning meetings and Learning Club sessions to help guide teachers’ planning. The IIT concluded that while school leaders provide planning time and PD opportunities, they do not provide enough practical guidance at regular planning and training events to help teachers transform theory into practice.

**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.

**Recommendation for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions:**

- By May 2, 2016, school leaders should check that instruction contains:
  - a learning objective that focuses on the skill or content to be learned and is presented to students in a way they understand;
  - higher-order questions to deepen students’ understanding of their learning; and
  - assessment of student learning throughout the lesson.

**Rationale that led to the recommendation:**

- In lessons observed by the review team, teachers frequently presented learning objectives quickly, without checking that students understood them. Reviewers also noted that teachers sometimes expressed learning objectives in terms of activities rather than content or skills. During class visits,

several students told reviewers that they did not understand the purpose of their learning and were not clear about the skills they needed to develop.

- The review team noted that teachers rarely asked higher-order questions in their lessons, which limited opportunities for students to learn at a higher level. Reviewers found that when teachers did ask challenging questions, they rarely built upon students' answers to encourage students to think at a high level or they did not provide sufficient wait time for students to respond. During joint lesson observations, the school leader noted that only a few students responded to the questions asked by teachers because teachers provided insufficient time for students to reflect.
- The IIT saw few examples of teachers checking for student understanding and adjusting instruction to provide extra support or challenge for students. In discussions with reviewers, comments made by many students indicate that they had insufficient context or understanding to complete the work and they had become disengaged. The review team found that because teachers did not check on student learning, teachers were not well prepared to plan the following lesson.
- Reviewers saw only a few examples of teachers providing verbal feedback, assessment criteria, and checklists to help students improve their work, which did not position students well to self-assess, develop independence, and check their work. During a document review and discussions with students, reviewers saw a few examples of written feedback provided after students had taken tests; students said such feedback was helpful to them but was not typical.
- School leaders acknowledged that they needed to conduct walkthroughs daily to check that teachers are explaining the learning objectives in ways that students understand and are asking higher-order questions to encourage students to reflect deeply. School leaders also reported that they recognize that they need to provide more guidance to teachers, on a daily basis, about how to assess student progress throughout the lesson and provide useful feedback to students during instruction.

**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.

**Recommendation for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:**

- By June 1, 2016, the Response to Intervention (RtI) team should plan the re-implementation of the RtI process to be presented to teachers during a scheduled training. The event should provide guidance to teachers on managing challenging behavior in the classroom and collecting information about students for RtI referral in an efficient manner. In addition, the director of pupil personnel should monitor data collection and progress monitoring of individual students referred to RtI and provide feedback to teachers on how to present and manage the process more effectively.

**Rationale that led to the recommendation:**

- Discussions with teachers, students, support staff, and parents revealed that some students exhibit challenging behavior in class that disrupts learning. School leaders stated that although they have provided advice to individual teachers, there has been no training for the whole staff on how to manage challenging behavior in the classroom. Many teachers, support staff, and school leaders expressed the perspective that a number of students whose behavior slows learning are not receiving

the social and emotional support they need.

- While the school has established mechanism to refer students for support, the IIT found limited evidence that staff consistently implement and monitor the referral process. School leaders reported that when teachers feel that students need more support beyond what the teachers can provide, the process is for teachers to collect information about student progress and behavior and present this information at the Rtl meeting, where group members decide the levels of support students need. Support staff and school leaders reported that many teachers were reluctant to collect and present this information as teachers found it time consuming. School leaders and support staff reported that they felt this responsibility is appropriate for teachers. However, they also stated that they have not yet trained teachers to do this in a time-efficient way. The school leader indicated that the director of pupil personnel chairs the Rtl meeting, but no school leader is monitoring and providing feedback to teachers on how they collect and present data on the students that they refer to Rtl or on how they monitor their students' progress.

**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.

**Recommendation for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement:**

- By June 1, 2016, the school leader should create a team to revise the quarterly student progress reports linking them to state standards and testing. A new reader-friendly format should be developed and presented and explained to teachers, students, and families and implemented at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

**Rationale that led to the recommendation:**

- In discussions with reviewers, school leaders revealed that the school's student progress reports are in need of review. They stated that the current reports for students do not provide useful and understandable data about student achievement linked to state standards and testing. In addition, they said that the reports do not provide parents an accurate picture of how well their children are doing in relation to other children in the state.
- Parents informed reviewers that the format of the reports is not reader-friendly. Parents stated that other parents told them they did not understand the grading system, as the reports do not explain how the current grading system works.
- A document review by the IIT showed progress reports to be of limited value in providing information about students' academic performance. The school leader acknowledged that there is little correlation between the students' grades in the reports and their performance on state assessments, and the school's report cards give parents an inaccurate view of their children's academic progress. The IIT found that the reports give no indication of the skills the students have gained in relation to the core curriculum and the areas they need to develop further, making it difficult for parents to support their children's learning at home.

**ADDITIONAL AREAS TO ADDRESS**

- School leaders report that they do not analyze and use data to inform schoolwide decision-making. In the future, school leaders should implement a system for regular, in-depth analysis of the impact of

their actions on student academic achievement and social and emotional development to inform schoolwide decision-making.

- School leaders acknowledge that the school does not currently have a program that meets all students' social and emotional developmental health needs. In the future, the school leader should work with the student support team to develop a social and emotional developmental health program that includes all grade levels.
- The school does not have a written plan that identifies its priorities and provides step-by-step information about how, by whom, and when these priorities will be achieved. The school leader has not identified specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals linked to priorities that could be used to monitor the impact of such a plan. In the future, the school leader should identify a team to coordinate the development of such a plan with input from teachers, school staff, parents, students, and community partners.