

Office of Accountability

DTSDE Frequently Asked Questions

NYSED / P-12 / [Accountability](#) / [ESEA Waiver](#) / [Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness](#) / [DTSDE FAQs](#)



Topics:

[Frequently Used Terms](#)

[A. Overview of the School and District Review Process](#)

[B. The DTSDE Process](#)

[C. Models and Exemplars](#)

[D. Outside Educational Experts \(OEE\)](#)

[E. RBERNs and SESIS](#)

[F. Surveys](#)

[G. District-led Reviews and School Reviews with District Oversight](#)

[H. Report Writing](#)

[I. DCIP and SCEP](#)

Frequently Used Terms

SOP:	Statement of Practice
CAT:	Calibration Assurance Team
IIT:	Integrated Intervention Team
OEE:	Outside Educational Expert
HEDI:	Highly, Effective, Developing, Ineffective
DTSDE:	Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness
DCIP:	District Comprehensive Improvement Plans
SCEP:	School Comprehensive Education Plan
SED:	New York State Education Department
NYSED:	New York State Education Department

[Back to the Top](#)

A. Overview of the School and District Review Process

A.1. What types of reviews are conducted in Focus Districts?

There are three types of reviews conducted in Focus Districts:

Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) Review : An on-site review led by NYSED and a NYSED-provided Outside Educational Expert (OEE) will be carried out by an Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) composed of representatives from NYSED, the district, in addition to Special Education and English Language Learner specialists, when applicable. School reviews will take place over a period of two or three days. The length of the review will depend on the size of the school. District Reviews will take place over a period of two or three days. More information about on-site school reviews can be found at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/diagnostic-tool-institute/DTSDEHandbook.html>

District led-review using the DTSDE protocol: A District-led review using the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) protocol consists of a district-assigned lead reviewer as well as a team of individuals who will be responsible for conducting the school review. The district lead reviewer is expected to be a person who has participated in the NYSED-mandated DTSDE training or has otherwise been certified by NYSED. Other district reviewers, such as content specialists, may participate after receiving appropriate turnkey district training.

School review (focused on the Common Core Conceptual Frame) with District

Oversight: This school review with district oversight is focused on the [Common Core Conceptual Frame](#). The school principal, in collaboration with any school-based management-shared decision entity authorized by the district pursuant to Part 100.11 of Commissioner's Regulations to participate in developing a school comprehensive education plan, completes the [DTSDE School Self-Assessment document](#). The instructional leader and others with instructional expertise conduct classroom visits using the appropriate [DTSDE Classroom Visitation Tool](#). The instructional leader and designated staff also use the Tools to Guide the Collection of Evidence of Shifts in Practice, which can be found under Downloadable Resources at <http://engageny.org/resource/tools-to-guide-the-collection-of-evidence-of-shifts-in-practice> and [the Tristate Rubric](#), to determine the school's progress in alignment of its curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the implementation of instructional practices that reflect the six Common Core Shifts. The school then summarizes the results of its review using the [Common Core Conceptual Frame rubric](#).

A.2. How often do districts get visited?

The NYSED IIT reviewers intend to visit each Focus District once a year during the three-year period of identification. Smaller districts may only be visited twice during the three years.

A.3. How often do schools get visited?

Focus and Priority Schools will be reviewed EVERY year. In most instances, the review team will be from the district. During the three-year identification period, the NYSED IIT will visit all Priority Schools at least once and a sampling of Focus schools during that time.

A.4. Do all Focus Districts receive funding for implementation?

All Focus Districts that receive Title I funds are eligible 1003(a) School Improvement Grants (SIG).

A.5. Who leads the IIT review, the District-led Review using the DTSDE Protocol, and the School Review with District Oversight?

The NYSED Lead Reviewer and the NYSED-supplied Outside Educational Expert are co-leaders for the State-led IIT review. For the district-led review, the lead is whomever the district assigns as its District Lead Reviewer. The District Lead Reviewer must have participated in the SED mandated DTSDE training or be otherwise certified as a District Lead Reviewer. A district may use an OEE to lead its district-led reviews. When the district is identified for the students with disabilities subgroup and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SE SIS) is a member of the team, the SE SIS may not be assigned the responsibility of leading the district-led review.

School self-reviews are led by the principal in collaboration with any such school leadership team and/or school based management/shared decision-making team as may have been established pursuant to Part 100.11 of Commissioner’s Regulations and tasked with participating in the development of the SCEP. District oversight is provided by a person selected by the district who has been trained in the DTSDE protocol.

A.6. Who serves on the review team for IIT reviews?

The IIT will be comprised of one SED lead reviewer, one Outside Educational Expert (OEE), one district representative, and possibly one district-supplied OEE, one Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) staff member and/or one Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center (RSE-TASC) staff member depending on the reason for the district's identification as a Focus District and the performance of the school's English language learner (ELL) and student with disabilities subgroups. If students with disabilities are one of the accountability subgroups, a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) from the RSE-TASC will participate on the IIT as a subgroup specialist.

The SED reviewer will coordinate the visit in advance of the team’s arrival. The OEE will lead the review on-site and conduct interviews, focus group meetings, and classroom visitations and participate in the various school visit events.

There are no district representatives or district-supplied OEEs on the IIT reviews of Focus Districts.

A.7. What is the number of recommended district staff who should participate on the IIT?

The composition of the IIT permits one district representative and, if desired, one district-supplied Outside Educational Expert.

A.8. Can building level administrators (principals) be on the IIT or District-led review team?

Principals may not be the district representative on the IIT or District-led review team that will review their school. They may participate on an IIT or District-led review team that reviews another school in the district.

[Back to the Top](#)

B. The DTSDE Process

B.1. What documents need to be provided in advance of a DTSDE Review?

The initial email to the principal, sent six weeks prior to the review, will outline the documents required to be submitted in advance.

B.2. Should the school prepare binders for each Tenet for the review team to look at while on-site?

No. NYSED provides specific guidance on documents to have available on-site. The school is welcome to provide additional documents, especially if they illustrate the impact specific actions have had; however, schools should also recognize that additional documents may divert attention from documents critical to the reviewers' assessment of the school. The DTSDE review is not intended to be a compliance audit or desk audit. Reviewers will need to see practices and meet with stakeholders throughout their time at the school to ensure that they have an accurate understanding of the school.

B.3. What does SED mean when they ask for "evidence of impact"?

NYSED recognizes that schools are working hard, and that there are dedicated employees throughout the state. To best understand what is working at the school and what is not working at the school, the review team will look closely for "Evidence of Impact," as opposed to just looking at "Evidence of Effort." Evidence of impact refers to the evidence that the school can provide that indicates that the ideas that are being tried are working, and are adding value to the educational experience of the students. Schools should be prepared to share the evidence they have collected to show whether or not the choices they have made have been successful.

B.4. Are there specific questions asked of teachers, school leaders and students during the IIT review? Do you have samples?

There are sample questions for all of the interviews that are to take place during the school review. Those sample questions can be found in the DTSDE interview templates that are posted on-line at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/diagnostic-tool-institute/DTSDEHandbook.html>.

Please note, that the best questions during the course of a review are school-specific questions based on the reviewer's insight into the school, along with follow-up questions that are asked to dig deeper based on an interviewee's response. The lead reviewer should be prepared to ask follow-up questions and should be prepared with school-specific questions in order to obtain the best understanding of the effectiveness of the practices at the school.

B.5. When should schools and districts expect to be notified about their reviews?

The schedule for the reviews is typically established during the summer before the start of the school year. NYSED will reach out to superintendents with the dates identified, and provide a limited window to allow for changes to the schedule to be made. Because of the number of reviewers involved in an

IIT visits and the commitments they have already made elsewhere, it is difficult to make changes to the schedule after the initial window closes.

Principals and Superintendents should expect to receive their initial communication with the review team SIX weeks prior to the start of the review.

B.6. How will the review team interact with the school prior to the visit?

The initial notification email to the school will arrive six weeks prior to the visit. This notification will identify the members of the review team and documents that will need to be submitted in advance.

All members of the review team will be copied on the initial notification. To ensure that all team members are included on all subsequent emails, Principals and Superintendents should "REPLY ALL" when sending correspondence concerning the review. To help ensure that the pre-review documents are easily accessible to those on the review team, Principals and Superintendents SHOULD NOT change the subject line when corresponding with the review team.

In addition to the string of emails that will take place between the NYSED reviewer and the school or district leader, the NYSED reviewer will also conduct a conference call approximately four to five weeks prior to the review.

B.7. What is shared with the principal at the conclusion of a review?

At the end of the IIT school visit, the review team will share actionable recommendations written with the hope that they can be started immediately. The findings and evidence generated by the review team will undergo a quality assurance process before ratings and the school final report are shared with the district and made public.

B.8. Will the HEDI ratings and the reports be made public?

Yes, the final school and district reports from all IIT reviews will be made public. These reports will be posted on the [NYSED Office of Accountability website](#).

[Back to the Top](#)

C. Models and Exemplars

C.1. Can you provide an exemplar of a DTSDE report?

The reports generated following a review are intended to be school-specific and should capture what is working within the school, and what areas need more attention. This looks different at each school.

As such, NYSED does not provide an exemplar report. Those interested in seeing sample DTSDE reports are encouraged to browse the [reports posted on the NYSED Office of Accountability website](#).

C.2. When creating the model, did NYSED look at exemplary schools to come up with the process?

Several research based documents and resources were consulted to develop the DTSDE process. Please refer to the [crosswalk](#) for a more detailed outline of the sources used.

C.3. Can NYSED share the names of model districts and schools we can look at for guidance?

Each year NYSED identifies high-achieving and high-progress Reward Schools. More information can be found on the [Office of Accountability's ESEA Waiver page](#).

[Back to the Top](#)

D. Outside Educational Experts (OEE)

D.1. What is the role of the District-supplied OEE?

The District-supplied OEE is an optional member of the NYSED IIT for school reviews. The districts may determine that an outside consultant will be able to provide an important perspective to the review and may be able to assist the school in the district following the review. The District-selected OEE is also eligible to conduct District-led reviews. All District OEEs are expected to attend required DTSDE trainings.

D.2. How do District-selected OEEs get approved?

Districts are required to submit applications for those they have identified as potential District-selected OEEs. The 2015-16 application materials are in development. Please, continue to monitor the New York State Education Department DTSDE website at the link below for updates and details on the Outside Educational Expert application process. <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/forms.html>

D.3. When and how will OEEs be notified that they have been approved?

NYSED will notify districts if the OEEs they recommended have been approved to participate in DTSDE reviews. Districts are responsible for informing OEEs of the determination made by NYSED.

D.4. Are we required to have an OEE?

No. The use of an OEE is optional and at the district's discretion.

D.5. What if an OEE cannot make a training session due to illness or family commitment?

There is an expectation that District-supplied OEEs attend all training sessions. If an OEE cannot make a training session due to illness or a family commitment, SED should be informed. Inability to attend subsequent trainings may result in SED denying the district's use of 1003 (a) funds to pay for the District-supplied OEE.

[Back to the Top](#)

E. Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBE-RNs) and Special Education School Improvement Specialists

E.1. Are RSE-TASCs and RBE-RNs part of the district-led review process?

RSE-TASC will participate in all SED-led reviews for districts identified for the subgroup of students with disabilities. RSE-TASC will participate in district-led reviews of schools for districts identified for the subgroup of students with disabilities as resources permit as determined by the RSE-TASC Coordinator.

RBE-RN staff be a part of the district-led school review if the school has high percentages or high numbers of students with disabilities or English language learners who are not proficient. In particular, in districts that have been identified for the performance of the ELL or students with disabilities subgroups, the RBE-RN coordinator or designee will participate in the district (tenet 1) review, as capacity and scheduling allows.

E.2 What is the role of the SESIS and RBERN members on the IIT?

The RBERN and SESIS representatives will provide their expertise to examine the practices at the school as they relate to English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities. RBERNs and SESISs provide a critical perspective during the review process. They will be permitted to participate in focus group meetings and classroom visits throughout the review.

In addition, SESIS members will be expected to conduct an instructional walkthrough prior to the review. This walkthrough will provide the review team with potential lines of inquiry to pursue during the on-site review.

E.3. In the school review timeline, when will SESIS walkthrough data be completed?

The RSE-TASC instructional walkthrough review should be completed and summary results submitted to the district or school administrator prior to the on-site review.

F. Surveys

F.1. Are surveys a mandated part of the DTSDE process?

Yes, surveys of students in Grades 3-5 and 6-12, as well as surveys of teachers are mandated components of the in the DTSDE process for IIT and District-led reviews. NYSED also encourages districts to conduct parent surveys.

F.2. Who pays for the surveys?

The District will pay for the surveys. Title I 1003(a) grant funds may be used to pay for the cost of the surveys in Title I Focus and Priority Schools.

F.3. Is the State supplying the survey to the schools?

The list of approved survey vendors can be found here: <http://usny.nysed.gov/rtt/teachers-leaders/approved-surveys/>. In addition to the surveys on this list, PLC Associates' Data Triangle surveys (The Community Engagement Survey, The Student Voice, and The School Performance Scan) are approved for use as part of the DTSDE review. To contact PLC Associates regarding use of their surveys, please visit www.plcassociates.com or email pciaburri@plcassociates.com.

Only a state-approved survey vendor can be used for the DTSDE review process. If a survey vendor has submitted their survey to NYSED and is awaiting approval, a district should contact the Office of School and District Review so that further guidance can be provided.

F.4. To whom must the survey be administered?

Surveys must be administered to students in grades 3-5 and 6-12 and to teachers in Priority Schools and Focus Schools that are participating in a State led IIT school review or a District-led DTSDE review.

F.5. If a district wishes to survey students in grade K-2 and/or parents, is this permissible? May the district use 1003(a) grant funds to pay for such surveys?

Yes, 1003(a) grant funds may be used to pay for surveys of students in grades K-2 and/or of parents in a Title I school receiving a State led IIT school review or a District-led DTSDE review during the school year.

F.6. If a district wishes to conduct surveys district-wide or in schools that are Priority or Focus Schools, may the district use 1003(a) grant funds to pay for such surveys?

1003(a) grant funds may only be used to conduct surveys in Title I Priority and Focus Schools. 1003(a) grant funds may be used to pay for a district-wide survey only if all of the schools in a district are Title I schools that have been identified as Focus or Priority.

F.7. When are surveys to be administered?

Surveys are to be administered (whenever possible) before the review team visits the school. The surveys are a part of the pre-documentation review that will be reviewed by the IIT to gather a better understanding of the perceptions and support that are provided by the school to teachers, students, and parents. The surveys should uncover trends and practices at the school that will lead to the development of an inquiry trail for specific events by the review team.

F.8. We conducted a survey at the end of last year. Can we use it for this year's review?

NYSED will permit the use of survey from the previous school year provided the survey has been administered within 12 months of the scheduled review, and provided there have been no substantial changes to the school, such as a turnover in leadership or a grade reconfiguration.

However, NYSED will remind schools and districts that in order for the survey to be a helpful tool, it should accurately capture the current state of the school. Outdated surveys will not reflect improvements that have been made since the survey was conducted. Schools have also found that annual surveys provide a key source of EVIDENCE OF IMPACT to show reviewers that the practices they have begun have added value to the school.

[Back to the Top](#)

G. District-led Reviews and School Reviews with District Oversight Roles and Responsibilities

G.1. What are the roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders/positions for District-led reviews? Who coordinates school reviews when the SED lead is not doing it? What is the OEE role?

Each district should make their own decision on who participates and coordinates the District-led Reviews using the DTSDE Protocols and the School Review with District Oversight based on district needs and staffing capacity.

G.2. How do District-led reviews differ from IIT reviews?

If districts choose to do District-led Reviews Using DTSDE Protocols, we expect districts to follow the same steps and protocol as the SED-led reviews, with the exception that the district-led reviews of schools will have the option of selecting three tenets as a focus for the review. Districts are also expected to administer surveys as part of the District-led reviews.

More information on the writing District-led reports can be found here:

[District-led Review](#)

[School Review with District Oversight](#)

G.3. Is there a deadline for the District-led Reviews using DTSDE Protocols and School Reviews With District Oversight?

Visits should be conducted so that the district can submit its final report to NYSED no later than June 30th.

G.4. Can you please confirm which district employees can/should participate on the review team? Who actually makes up the district review team?

Members of the district-led review teams should be individuals who have participated in DTSDE training. In particular, districts that have been identified for the performance of ELL or students with disabilities subgroups should have the support of the RBE-RN and RSE-TASC staff for their district-led reviews.

[Back to the Top](#)

H. Report Writing

H.1. Who writes the IIT report?

The NYSED-supplied OEE will write the final report for the school based on the evidence collected by the team.

H.2. Is there specific guidance for writing Reports for District-led reviews or School Reviews with District Oversight?

Yes. Guidance on writing reports and the report template for District-led reviews and School Reviews with District Oversight can be found at the pages that correspond with type of review:

[District-led Review](#)

[School Review with District Oversight](#)

H.3. Are there specific words or phrases used in writing reports and report writing findings?

Yes. The reports are written using a Findings, Evidence and Impact structure:

Findings:

- A **conclusion** reached after the examination of information from your interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom visits during the school or district review process.

Evidence:

- **The compelling** information used that informed the findings.

Impact:

- The **effect** that the reviewer's findings is presently having on the school or district. Note that the impact does not refer to the impact that **will occur** if the issue is not addressed, but rather the **current effect** on the school or district community.

[Back to the Top](#)

I. District Comprehensive Improvement Plans (DCIP) and School Comprehensive Plans (SCEP)

I.1. We haven't received our report yet, won't this delay our DCIP/SCEP?

Districts and schools who have not yet received their reports should proceed with crafting their DCIPs and SCEPs based on their insight into the district, along with feedback left by the IIT.

I.2. Is there any guidance on how to complete the SCEP other than the few pages in the document itself?

Yes. The webinars on DCIPs and SCEPS can be found at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/Webinars.html>.

[Back to the Top](#)

Additional questions related to training and future DTSDE activities will be added as soon as more information is available. Please check back for updates.

- **Diagnostic Tool Information**

[About](#)

[DTSDE Handbook](#)

[DTSDE Institute](#)

- [DTSDE Learning Lab](#)
- [DTSDE Resources](#)

[DTSDE FAQs](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Last Updated: January 12, 2015

[Contact Office of Accountability](#)

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

[Back to Office of Accountability Home Page](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact NYSED](#) | [Index A - Z](#) | [Terms of Use](#)