



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	580403030000
District	Huntington Union Free School District
District Address	50 Tower Street, Huntington Station, NY 11746
Superintendent	James Polansky
Date(s) of Review	April 23 – 24, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	Huntington High School and J. Finely Taylor Middle School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	K-12	Total Student Enrollment	4,567	% Title 1 Population	2.7%	% Attendance Rate	98%				
% Free Lunch	35.9%	% Reduced Lunch	8.6%	% Student Sustainability	0%	% Limited English Proficient	12.2%	% Students with Disabilities	16.4%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	8.6%	% Hispanic or Latino	36%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.9%	% White	46.4%	% Multi-racial	2.3%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	2	Number of Deputy Superintendents	3	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	6	# of Directors of Programs	5				
% 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	2%	Average Teacher Absences in District	8-10% per day				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District	2	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools	0	Number of Schools in Status	2		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	0				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	63%	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	70%	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	89%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	85%	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	87%		

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White	X	Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	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	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
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		
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.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each statement of practice (SOP), and indicate in the **OVERALL RATING** row the final designation for the overall tenet rating.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
1.1	The district has a comprehensive approach for recruiting, evaluating and sustaining high-quality personnel that affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.		X		
1.2	The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that leads to appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community, which promotes school improvement and success.		X		
1.3	The district leadership has a comprehensive explicit theory of action about school culture that robustly communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.		X		
1.4	The district has a comprehensive plan to create, deliver and monitor professional development in all pertinent areas that is adaptive and tailored to the needs of individual schools.			X	
1.5	The district promotes a data-driven culture by providing strategies connected to best practices that all staff members and school communities are expected to be held accountable for implementing.			X	
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 1:		E		

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.		E		

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student learning outcomes.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.1	The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports that are connected to the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and are inclusive of the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects in a data-driven culture.			D	

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.1	The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices that lead to effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.			D	

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
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5.1	The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students' social and emotional developmental health.			D	
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.			D	

District Review Narrative:

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

Debriefing Statement: The district has multiple structures in place to hire personnel and provide them with opportunities to improve their practice to encourage better student outcomes.

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.

Debriefing Statement: The district's approach toward evaluating and developing personnel does allow the district to ensure that staff are able to meet the needs of the students and the community.

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

- The district has recruitment strategies that lead to adequate personnel in all schools. The hiring process entails a series of rigorous interviews and includes input from the superintendent and other district leaders. The district is using staff interest and school leader recommendations to identify qualified teacher-leaders within the district to staff the new STEM school. The district self-assessment reports that only two percent of teachers have taught in the district for fewer than three years; this statistic supports the superintendent's comment that "Retention is not a problem in the district." The district's approach for recruiting, evaluating and sustaining high quality personnel affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.

Statement of Practice 1.2: The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that leads to appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community, which promotes school improvement and success.

Debriefing Statement: District resources are equitably distributed across schools and used to provide support for students, parents and the school community.

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

- The district has structures for assessing school needs and deploys resources that respond to the needs of school communities. The district consults with school leaders on their progress in implementing actions plans and provides programs to support the instructional needs of the school community. Evidence gathered in the document review and district cabinet meeting details how the district allocates and tracks funds for each school. School leaders have input into budget decisions for their schools, but district leaders make final decisions. The superintendent reported that district leaders prioritize equitable distribution of resources across schools. For example, some schools had a significantly higher number of classroom Smart Boards than other schools. This inequity was remedied by placing Smart Boards in all district classrooms. According to the documents reviewed, the district

identified the need to reinforce school leaders' action plans through continued discourse about progress. These conversations about progress were then used to determine what extra supports to provide. In the superintendent interview and the district cabinet meeting, it was noted that the superintendent conducts classroom observations for tenure-year teachers to identify the professional development (PD) needs. For example, the superintendent identified a need for teachers to learn strategies for differentiating instruction rather than relying on teacher-centered instruction. Based on document review, the district provides resources to offer parent workshops on important topics, such as the Dignity for All Students Act. In addition, during interviews, the team noted that a parent workshop on CCLS implementation was scheduled for that day. Examples from the visit to Huntington High School (HHS) indicated that resources are used to provide programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved. During the district cabinet meeting and the student support staff interview, participants discussed outside resources, which have been identified to offer students socio-emotional, and developmental health counseling and family support through a partnership with Patterson-Kraig. The district is organized and allocates resources in a way that leads to appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community, which promotes school improvement and success.

Statement of Practice 1.3: The district leadership has a comprehensive explicit theory of action about school culture that robustly communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.

Debriefing Statement: High expectations regarding the connection of professional practices and student outcomes are communicated with staff. In addition, certain actions taken by the district support the needs of a linguistically and culturally diverse community.

Strength:

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

- The district has communicated high expectations for connecting professional practices to student outcomes. During the human resources and superintendent interviews, staff stated that the district has high expectations for connecting professional practices and student outcomes. For example, teachers and departments were asked to develop annual goals that are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). According to the documents reviewed and staff interviews, parent workshops are held on topics such as CCLS and the Dignity for All Students Act. According to the superintendent and interviews at the school level, all district correspondence to families and phone calls through ConnectEd, the automated phone service, are made in English and Spanish. When needed, additional translations for a small Haitian-Creole-speaking population are made available. A visit to one school revealed numerous forms of communication with most parents. The district's ability to communicate high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents increases the likelihood of improved outcomes and shared ownership of student success.

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.

Debriefing Statement: The comprehensive nature of the district's plan for professional development was evident; however, a mechanism for providing follow-up support needs to be further developed.

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

- The district has a calendar of PD opportunities based on an assessment of school staff practices. No evidence was presented that the district has mechanisms for follow-up support to ensure that staff applies strategies learned in PD. According to documents reviewed, the district created a PD plan based on the specific needs of the school community. Evidence was found in the PD plan that the district used results in its New York State Report Cards to select PD activities and to address and support CCLS. Staff reported that the superintendent conducts classroom observations for tenure-year teachers to identify the PD needs. District staff reported that the district offers a menu of workshops from which teachers select PD, and the union contract requires that a calendar of PD opportunities be published by September 1 of each year. The union contract specifies the minimum required hours of PD for non-tenured and tenured teachers, 21 and 13 hours, respectively. However, based on the interviews and document review, the district does not have a systematic process for determining whether strategies learned during PD are implemented. The absence of a plan to monitor PD and ensure that teachers implement the practices they learned compromises the effectiveness of the district's PD program.

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.

Debriefing Statement: The district promotes a data-driven culture; however, a collection of best practices concerning teachers use of data addressing student achievement and school goals was not apparent.

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

- The district requires that school leaders and chairpersons use data to develop action plans, and the district has selected software to measure student progress. The district has not identified and communicated best practices for using data to inform instruction. According to documents reviewed, chairpersons and school leaders are expected to prepare data-based action plans that require evidence to show student growth. According to the superintendent and the documents reviewed, the district uses Aimsweb to monitor student progress. During the reviewer's meeting with curriculum and instruction representatives from the district it was evident that program decisions were data-driven. For example, after analyzing student data the district added five sections of earth science to the curriculum. These sections were added to reduce class size. The team did not find evidence that the district identified best practices concerning teachers' use of

data to inform instruction or evidence of how data should be used to address student achievement and school goals. The absence of district-identified strategies connected to best practices for the use of data limits its ability to hold staff members and school communities accountable for using data to inform instruction and increase student achievement.

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

<p>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions Statement of Practice (SOP) 2.1: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for the school leader to create, develop and nurture a school environment that is responsive to the needs of the entire school community.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>Strength: The district has received a rating of <i>Effective</i> for this Statement of Practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district provides school leaders with high-quality support options to promote academic growth. Participants in the curriculum and instruction interview listed five district programs designed to meet the instructional needs of school communities. The programs include: providing Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol PD using turn-key training for teachers to appropriately educate ELLs, beginning a Dual Language Program for grades 1 through 5, allowing grade 6 students to take the Regents Comprehensive Examination in Spanish, providing an alternative high school equivalency 2-year program for students who are over-age,. The district will also provide this program in Spanish. During the district cabinet meeting and the student-support staff interview, participants discussed outside resources that have been identified to offer students social and emotional developmental health counseling and family support through a partnership with Pederson-Craig. The student-support staff reported on two district-sponsored extended-time programs. The district allocated resources to provide an extended school year program for approximately 126 students with disabilities to address regression in academic progress. The district holds a 10-week Saturday academy for level 2 students in grades 3 through 8 across the district. During the academy, students receive 90 minutes of English language arts (ELA) and math instruction. The academy serves approximately 350 students in classes of 12 to 15 students. According to members of the district cabinet meeting, the district has implemented workshops that provide parents information regarding academic, social, and emotional developmental health of students. The student-support staff interview also noted that the district holds transition evenings to prepare parents and students for transitions from one school to another. This includes a transition evening for students moving from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten, elementary school to middle school, and middle school to high school. The district provides high quality support options for the school leader develop a school environment that is responsive to the needs of the entire school community. 		
<p>Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>D</p>

Statement of Practice (SOP) 3.1: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports that are connected to the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and are inclusive of the arts, technology and other enrichment subjects in a data-driven culture.

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

- The district has provided support to schools for implementing the CCLS by purchasing curriculum maps and providing PD. The district provided resources to help schools incorporate technology in the curriculum, but provided no evidence about the inclusion of music and art. The district has software to monitor progress, but did not provide evidence of a district assessment and accountability system. According to the curriculum and instruction interview participants, the district purchased Atlas Rubicon Curriculum Maps to aid in aligning curricula to CCLS. According to the documents reviewed, the district identified the training that educators needed to ensure the proper implementation of curriculum maps. The documents reviewed indicated that the district provided PD opportunities to teachers and district curriculum writers to better prepare them to create and align curriculum to the CCLS. Members of the curriculum and instruction team reported that the math curriculum is not yet aligned with the CCLS. Based on reviews of curricula, reviewers concluded that the district’s middle school curricula more closely align with the CCLS than do those of the high school. According to curriculum and instruction interview participants, the district helps schools incorporate technology in the curricula, the district has replaced old equipment and introduced new technological resources, including computers, iPads, and Smart Boards. The district provides inconsistent opportunities and supports to schools, which hinders the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum appropriately aligned to the CCLS

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions

Statement of Practice (SOP) 4.1: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices that lead to effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.

SOP Rating

D

Area for Improvement:

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

- The district provides teachers with learning opportunities that help teachers identify best practices and strategies; however, no evidence was found that the district provides follow-up support to teachers to ensure that the instructional practices learned in PD are implemented. Reviewed documents showed that the district is implementing My Learning Plan to organize its professional development. According to the documents reviewed, conversations between the district and school leaders about progress on school action plans were used to determine what extra supports were

needed. According to the curriculum and instruction interview participants, the district has provided schools with training on using technology and offered opportunities for teachers to become Smart Board trainers. Staff reported that the superintendent conducts classroom observations to identify the PD needs. However, the effectiveness of the PD provided was not evident during the review team’s visits to schools, where reviewers saw instructional practices that were not challenging or engaging students. In addition, reviewers noted that there is not a clear professional development plan connected to social and emotional developmental health and the learning barriers that can arise when those needs are not met. While the district has made efforts to connect professional development to the needs of its schools, without a clear plan to follow up on the professional development provided, the ability of the PD to improve instructional practices will vary, limiting the potential for improved student success.

<p>Tenet 5- Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health Statement of Practice (SOP) 5.1: The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students’ social and emotional developmental health.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
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Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice.

- During the Curriculum and Instruction interview, it was noted that the district has implemented a program that provides workshops for parents regarding the academic, social, and emotional developmental health of students; however, the district did not provide evidence that staff members are offered PD on supporting students’ social and emotional health. During visits to schools, reviewers also noted a lack of a clear school-based vision toward supporting students’ social and emotional developmental health. The absence of PD and the lack of a vision supporting students’ social and emotional health limit staff’s ability to support students.

<p>Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement</p> <p>Statement of Practice (SOP) 6.1: The district has a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan that states the expectations around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families.</p>	<p>SOP Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Area for Improvement: The district has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for this Statement of Practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district does not have a strategic plan for family and community engagement. Very little evidence regarding PD on developing partnerships with families could be found. The district identified one partnership with a community organization to support students and families. According to the superintendent and school interviews, all district correspondence to families and phone calls through the district’s automated phone system are made in English and Spanish. When needed, additional translation for a small Haitian Creole-speaking population are made available; however, during visits to district school’s reviewers noted that some documents were not translated for parents who do not speak English. The absence of a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan limits the ability of districts and schools to create and sustain a welcoming environment for families with reciprocal communication and to establish partnerships with community organizations and families. 		

DISTRICT LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tenet 1: District Leadership and Capacity

In order for the District's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 1, the District should:

- 1.4: Develop procedures for monitoring the implementation of PD initiatives to ensure that PD results in changes in practice that increase student achievement.
- 1.5: Develop procedures to identify best strategies for how staff members will use data to inform instruction and set achievement goals. Develop a written plan that communicates the expectation that staff will be held accountable for using these strategies.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

- 3.1: Provide further support to assist school's in aligning their curriculum to the CCLS. Work with school leaders to identify opportunities for interdisciplinary instruction, and promote the development of curriculum that connects across disciplines.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

- 4.1: Develop a clear plan to monitor the effectiveness of the PD provided and monitor the implementation of the PD. Ensure that PD is offered connected to social and emotional developmental health and its relationship to learning.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

- 5.1: Create structures to ensure that the district and schools collaborate with community organizations to provide PD so that student social and emotional developmental health needs are met. Provide follow-up support to ensure that staff is able to implement strategies learned in PD.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

- 6.1: Ensure that the district and schools develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for family and community engagement. Ensure that the district and schools communicate in formats and languages that are accessible to all families.