



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	41-23-00-01-0000
District	Utica City School District
District Address	106 Memorial Parkway
Superintendent	Bruce Karam
Date(s) of Review	June 14, 2013
Schools Discussed in this Report	James H. Donovan Middle School Martin Luther King Elementary School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	K-12	Total Student Enrollment	9573	% Title 1 Population	63%	% Attendance Rate	93%				
% Free Lunch	77%	% Reduced Lunch	6%	% Student Sustainability		% Limited English Proficient	16%	% Students with Disabilities	17%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	% Black or African American	25%	% Hispanic or Latino	17%	% Asian, Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	15%	% White	38%	% Multi-racial	4%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/ Appointed to District	2	Number of Deputy Superintendents	0	Average Years Deputy Superintendents in Role in the District	0	# 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	5%	Average Teacher Absences in District	4 days				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus Schools Identified by District	9	Number of SIG (a) Recipient Schools	0	Number of Schools in Status	10		
						Number of SIG (g) Recipient Schools	0				
% ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	37%	% Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	46%	% Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	78%	% 4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	67%	% 6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	73%		

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

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.			X	

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.			X	

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.			X	

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

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

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.			X	

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.	Overall Tenet Rating	D
---	-----------------------------	---

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.	SOP Rating	E
---	-------------------	---

Debriefing Statement: The district has a plan to recruit and support school leaders that enables them to evaluate staff and provide frequent feedback. This has enabled the district to maintain a strong central leadership team to provide support to schools.

Strength:

- The district has effective systems and supports in place to achieve the personnel requirements needed to promote student success and increase school responsiveness to community needs. The district leader indicated to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that the central office staff had been reorganized to maximize efficiency and elevate leadership. Interviews and a review of documents showed that district level reorganization included creation of the consolidated position of Administrative Director of K-12 Curriculum and Instruction to ensure a comprehensive and consistent curriculum across all grade levels; creation of the position of Administrator for Testing, Data Analysis, and Planning, responsible primarily for analysis and review of assessment data and the development of School Based Inquiry Teams (SBITs); and the reorganization or new hiring for the positions of Administrator of Special Education Services, Director of Grants, Contracts, and Compliance, and Director of Human Resources. Each of these leaders has streamlined processes within their purview, increased organizational efficiency, outreach and support to schools, and meets as a group monthly to review, recommend and revise procedures, as needed. The district leader stated that, in addition to the central office reorganization, he has hired a new middle school principal and two new elementary school principals during his tenure, using a rigorous process to match school and district needs with potential hires. The IIT confirmed a new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process, which was negotiated, is in use and includes a procedure for feedback and appeals. The district leader reported that extensive training was provided to staff on the “rigorous” evaluation process. Race to

the Top (RttT) funds, a Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround (SSDST) grant, a Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grant, and a New York State (NYS) Title IIB Math and Science Partnership Program grant with Utica College have provided funding for professional development (PD) for school leaders, teachers, and staff to address and support the Regents Reform Agenda (RRA). Mentoring programs and staff development for both leaders and teachers are also provided through partnering with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Madison-Oneida Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Network Team. Consequently, the district has a comprehensive and effective approach to seeking, supporting, and sustaining high-quality staff through PD, mentoring, rigorous evaluation and essential feedback, which ensures the schools' ability to promote student achievement.

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.

SOP Rating

E

Debriefing Statement: The district has developed structures for assessing and allocating fiscal resources to schools based on available funding. Despite a significant reduction of funding, the district has been able to maintain most priority programs, which promotes school improvement efforts.

Strength::

- The district applies a budgetary decision-making process that addresses the needs of the school community. The district leader stated that all budget decisions are based on school enrollments, test data, the social emotional needs of students, and the needs of the individual communities. As an example, he cited the allocation of resources at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, a priority school. To this point, he noted the following: "We've provided coaching support for the principal; we're going to pilot the Kindergarten to grade two Listening Learning Common Core Modules; we've purchased the expeditionary learning book bundles for grades three to six; we've kept the number of classes at each grade level intact, while other schools experienced cuts; and we've kept a parent liaison at King while all other elementary liaisons were cut due to budget constraints." The IIT interview with the fiscal management staff confirmed this process, with one staff member stating that district resource decisions are determined through a "team approach-- we work together for the betterment of the district." Each central office administrator is assigned a school building in which to act as a liaison and provide organizational oversight. The district leader reported that the distribution of Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in reading and assignment of support staff throughout schools is based on the needs of students. In addition, the district leader indicated that Title I allocations, and School Improvement Grant (SIG) monies are apportioned per building, based on the school-wide needs. Reductions in funding have led to a loss of staff at all levels, which has led to the need for reorganization of departments and processes. Human resources (HR) staff reported that they had reorganized and streamlined services to promote efficiency. During interviews with the IIT, district leaders expressed the need for additional staff, such as a speech therapist and support staff for special education programs. The district has a system to allocate resources to support individual schools based on the school- wide needs, which enhances the opportunity for school improvement and student 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.	SOP Rating	D
---	-------------------	---

Debriefing Statement: The district has communicated a comprehensive and explicit theory of action about school culture and high expectations for all constituents. However, it is not clear that this vision is shared by and embraced by all stakeholders across the district.

Area for Improvement:

- The district has established and communicated a district-wide mission, which espouses a commitment to improving the quality of education, and in turn, improving student achievement; however, the mission has not yet been consistently adopted by all schools in the district. The mission is visible on the district’s website, and visitors to the site have the ability to translate materials shared on the site to many different languages. District leaders conceived a strategy for accomplishing their mission using a structured approach to improving district and building leadership, highly effective teaching strategies, and relationships between schools and the community, which is outlined in the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP). The district leader stated that the mission and three general goals, which are posted in the boardroom, are stressed and reviewed at the opening administrative council meeting each year. These are reiterated throughout the year at monthly administrative council meetings, cabinet meetings, management meetings, and principals’ meetings. The district engages in continuous monitoring, reviewing, and revision of the DCIP and School Comprehensive Education Plan(s) (SCEPs) through monthly district school improvement committee meetings and semi-annual district director meetings to “ensure that each school’s SCEP is a living document” and that progress is being made toward accomplishing the districts’ mission. According to the district leader, the scope of work for all grant applications, district scheduled PD, and school leader developed annual measurable goals for individual school buildings reflect the spirit and intent of the mission. Although implementation of strategies meant to promote a district wide theory of action has begun at the district level, it has not yet resulted in a consistent connection of instructional practices to increased student outcomes in all schools, which limits staff’s ability to address all students’ needs.

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.	SOP Rating	D
--	-------------------	---

Debriefing Statement: The district has a plan that provides PD opportunities for staff that addresses priority needs based on the district’s goals and objectives. However, follow up support from some building level administrators is inconsistently adapted to meet the needs of individual schools.

Area for Improvement:

- The district has a professional development plan (PDP) in place to provide staff with needs - based PD opportunities designed to improve instruction and learning. The district leader reported that the district RRA based PDP is developed by a committee comprised of teachers, school leaders, and a

teaching assistant. Interviews with the district cabinet indicated that the district focused PD around the RRA. The cabinet reported that course offerings are determined by individual, school, and district-level goals, and a needs assessment survey administered to staff annually. In addition, they noted that course listings, and registration and attendance are managed through My Learning Plan, a professional development management system and that program evaluation and recommendations for future activities are sought after PD completion. The STLE grant has allowed the district to obtain intensive training for sixty-six teachers and leaders in a variety of areas, including the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) overview, Common Core shifts in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, APPRs, Response to Intervention (RtI), Differentiated Instruction, Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and Close Reads, among others. According to interviews with district staff, these teachers and leaders, as well as fifteen NYS Common Core Ambassadors, act as turnkey trainers throughout the district to provide targeted PD to staff. RttT funds have allowed the district staff to work on CCLS curriculum and develop aligned assessments, while NYS Math and Science Partnership Program (MSP) monies have been used, in part, to provide PD in inquiry- based learning. Funding from a RttT Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround grant has supported the development of Instructional Walk (IW) protocol and training, the leadership-mentoring program, and the leadership workshops and coaching provided through the AIR program. However, the IIT found little evidence to confirm that follow-up support and monitoring of PD is occurring at individual schools throughout the district. As a result, PD is not consistently meeting the needs of staff throughout the district.

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.

SOP Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The district has a system in place to collect data and offers supports to schools to analyze data. Because the district does not have a system to monitor staff use of best practices regarding data to drive instruction and programming decisions, a data-driven culture does not yet exist throughout the school community.

Area for Improvement:

- The district has established a system to collect and use data to drive instruction that is in the preliminary stages of implementation. The district leader stated that there is an expectation that all school staff use data to inform instruction, and that resources are provided by the district to support SBITs in meeting and analyzing data. The DCIP outlines the establishment of a SBIT protocol that identifies areas affecting student achievement; assists in the development of a plan to address identified areas of weakness; and creates benchmarks and records progress toward established goals, with monthly meeting minutes submitted to the district administrator for testing, data analysis, and planning. The district leader stated that SBITs were trained in Data Driven Instruction (DDI) and are responsible for progress monitoring, with particular attention given to identified sub-groups to improve academic performance at the school level. He noted that *Driven by Data* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo was provided to all staff, that there are ongoing data workshops to address pertinent topics and skills development, such as COGNOS training, and that each school has a central office administrator assigned to work with staff on data usage. However, through interviews and document

review at James H. Donovan Middle School, the IIT learned that while staff has access to a significant amount of data, there is little evidence to suggest that it is being used to adapt instruction and establish goals for students consistently across classrooms, programs, and schools. As a result, the lack of an efficient and consistently applied system for managing and using data in the classroom and larger school community, limits the district’s ability to identify best practices that improve instruction and promote 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>D</p>
<p><u>Area for Improvement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district’s relationship with the two school leaders that participated in IIT reviews was collaborative in one case and less collaborative in the other case. The district leader stated to the IIT that all school leaders received training in Leadership Competencies for Turnaround through a Systemic Supports Grant, and that all school leaders are provided with coaching through AIR and mentors through BOCES. The middle school leader stated that central office administrators provide support for schools with data analysis, identification of building strengths and weaknesses, recommendation of research based practices, development of SCEPs, and program development centered on student need. In contrast, the IIT found that while there were supports for all school leaders, the school leaders were inconsistently able to translate that support into the creation of a school environment that was responsive to the needs of its’ constituents. Teachers at the elementary school reported that issues with scheduling, resource allocation, and space were problematic. They indicated that shared staff split between buildings and space issues are having a negative impact on student learning. Through interviews with district level administrators of subgroups, the IIT learned that there was a lack of communication between the elementary school leader and those district level administrators of subgroups. Through interviews with staff at the elementary school, the IIT found that the vision of the school leader and the vision of the district leaders were not in alignment, thus negating some of the support the district was providing. School leaders at both schools reported that AIR provided coaching and training for school staff, and the Madison-Oneida BOCES Network Team provided coaches for each school leader. They also stated that CCLS and APPR PD were provided by BOCES for ten days during the summer, and a <i>Driven by Data</i> book study took place to support the SBIT performance monitoring process. While the district provides a number of supports for school leaders, the lack of consistent reciprocal relationships with all school leaders limits the district-wide development of school environments responsive to the needs of the community. 		

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support

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.

SOP Rating**D****Area for Improvement:**

- The district provides opportunities and supports for teachers for implementation of a curriculum that supports the CCLS. The district leader reported that the district created district-wide curriculum committees by grade levels, to develop and implement Common Core aligned curricula in core subjects. The school leader at the elementary school stated that the first module of the district-developed CCLS-aligned ELA curriculum had been implemented and that district and school leaders continue to work on module rollout. Elementary teachers interviewed by the IIT indicated that the Saturday workshops offered by the district provided in-depth support for CCLS implementation. They indicated that they have kindergarten through grade six curriculum maps for ELA and mathematics. An IIT review of the curriculum maps at that school indicated that the curriculum maps were limited in scope and/or outdated. Additionally, the IIT observed that while some teachers at the elementary school were using units and lesson plans aligned with CCLS, reviewers did not find evidence of CCLS aligned curriculum unit plans in use across the grade levels. Teachers reported that the district encourages schools to integrate enrichment area subjects, such as art, music, and technology through teacher collaboration in professional learning communities (PLCs). The district leader reported they provide additional support for teachers, including the creation of subject/grade level committees to develop local achievement tests aligned to the CCLS, SLO training, and CCLS resources on the ELA shifts. However, the elementary school leader reported to the IIT that they were currently using unit tests for interim assessments, which were part of a professionally published series did not reflect the CCLS curriculum that was being implemented. While the district provides support to the school community around the use of CCLS curricula, the lack of accountability systems to assess the schools' effectiveness in the delivery and assessment of CCLS units and lessons inhibits consistent implementation of a comprehensive curriculum across the district.

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 provides opportunities and supports for school leaders and teachers to promote effective practices. The district leader provided the IIT with examples of district supports for schools, including the following: district-wide grade level meetings/workshops, at least twice yearly, to promote the sharing of best practices across all schools; Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training for all teachers who teach English language learners (ELLs); master teacher and leader training through a STLE grant, and PD opportunities “to increase teacher effectiveness based on data review.” District cabinet members provided the IIT with some of the topic areas covered in the PD, such as Common Core overview workshops, instructional shifts in ELA and mathematics, close reads, training in SBITs, and a book study in DDI. One district cabinet member indicated that while teachers are provided with grade level data using i-Ready diagnostic and instructional supports, teachers need more support in the use of this data. The school leader at the middle level indicated that students are assigned to mathematics AIS based on i-Ready program data. However, middle school teachers reported to the IIT that opportunities for data sharing regarding student instruction was minimal, and sheltered ESL teachers reported having only some informal contact with ESL instructors. The IIT noted during classroom visitations and through a review of lesson plans at the elementary school, that while teachers use instructional practices and strategies that are aligned to their plans, targeted interventions for specific subgroups were rarely seen and short and long term goals were not clearly identified for groups of students. Teachers interviewed by the IIT at the elementary school reported that the district provided training to teams of teachers from across all schools to help in the establishment of norms and structures for staff collaboration during structured meeting times in the school, which positively affected staff morale. Meeting norms, such as creating a focused agenda, starting on time, staying focused and ending on time to promote effective meetings were established, and teachers reported they are implementing them. However, during classroom visitations at the elementary school, the IIT noted that teachers’ plans and instruction were not adapted to data, especially for all subgroups. While the district is providing teachers with learning opportunities that help teachers develop effective strategies and practices, the support provided does not always take school or student data and learning into account, which results in inconsistent improvements in student outcomes.

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.	SOP Rating	D
--	-------------------	----------

Area for Improvement:

- The district provides PD to school staff to support students' social and emotional developmental health. The district cabinet members reported that all school principals were trained in the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and that it is embedded into the district's code of conduct. Additionally, the district supports Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programming in all elementary schools by providing training for school PBIS teams. District leaders and elementary student support team members reported in interviews that the district has also instituted the Primary Project in all elementary schools. Students in grades Kindergarten to grade three who score in percentiles fifteen to thirty on the Child Rating Scale and do not have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are referred to the Primary Project, where they can interact in a safe and non-demanding environment to foster a sense of safety and belonging. Document review at the elementary schools indicated that students participating in the Primary Project are making gains in their social and emotional development according to posttest results. While the district has been preparing for RtI for a number of years and teachers have had trainings, district leaders stated that more training is needed for teachers to support students' social and emotional health. They also reported it is important for all staff to have training on different cultures so that they could be more sensitive to and supportive of various cultural groups in the school community. While the district works with schools to provide some support and resources to foster student social and emotional development, there are additional supports that are needed to help schools optimally meet the social and emotional needs of all students.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement 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.	SOP Rating	D
--	-------------------	----------

Area for Improvement:

- The district provides supports to schools to facilitate family and community involvement and has established a variety of ways to communicate with families across the district. However, the district does not have a strategic plan to ensure families and community organizations are full partners in supporting student success. The district provides parent liaisons for all schools that reinforce the home school connection and academic coaches to support ELLs in the district. The district cabinet

reported to the IIT that the district uses the public access channel to keep parents informed of district-wide events by providing the opportunity for parents to view the events and the board of education meetings. Other communication tools that are available to parents include the student handbook, calendars sent out bi-weekly, information on the district website, and the parent portal. District leaders also indicated that they have a strong relationship with the Refugee Center so that they can be responsive to the needs of families who have recently joined the school community from various countries from around the world. However, parents interviewed by the IIT at the elementary school reported that most parents do not feel comfortable attending school events, perhaps due to language barriers, or cultural beliefs. Parents also indicated that while the school staff regularly communicates with families, communication is not consistently available in all pertinent languages. One parent of an ESL student stated in an interview with the IIT that she would participate more at the school if there were an interpreter always available. While the district uses a variety of means to communicate with families and provides support to schools that facilitate the home school connection, the lack of a strategic plan with clear expectations for schools that includes translation services, is impeding full participation of all members of the school community to promote student success.

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:

- 1.3: Continue to communicate the district's theory of action through regularly scheduled administrative council meetings, cabinet meetings, management meetings, and principals' meetings. Create mechanisms for follow-up monitoring and support of school leaders to ensure instructional practices are leading to improved student outcomes.
- 1.4: Provide and communicate PD opportunities based on the assessment of school staff practices, and establish mechanisms for providing timely follow-up support.
- 1.5: Provide a plan to support the development of best practices concerning the use of data to school leaders and staff, and establish systems for monitoring and providing follow-up support so that a data-driven culture can be established

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions

- 2.1: Survey school staff in all buildings to identify areas of greatest need for resources, such as staffing or space issues. Provide additional support to school leaders in resource allocation management for leaders to address the identified needs of their school communities.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support

- 3.1: Establish procedures for using assessment and accountability systems to assess school-wide effectiveness, monitor school progress, and determine patterns in student learning; share the findings with the schools.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions

- 4.1: Establish procedures for identifying PD needs of teachers regarding instructional practices and decisions aligned to school data. Provide teachers with PD opportunities and systematic follow-up support so that teachers can identify and use best practices.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Developmental Health

- 5.1: Provide ongoing PD for staff on cultural sensitivity. Leverage support from the district's established partnership with the Refugee Center to assist with translation and other needs that schools identify to engage families of ESL students in the education of their children.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement

- 6.1: Create a district-wide community and family engagement plan, in collaboration with school and community stakeholders that states expectations for all stakeholders focusing on creating a welcoming environment. Provide mechanisms for reciprocal communication in all pertinent languages, and develop partnerships to meet the various needs of the school community.