



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	01-01-00-01-0000
District	Albany City School District
District Address	1 Academy Park, Albany, NY 12207
Superintendent	Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard, Ph.D.
Date(s) of Review	June 17, 2014
Schools Discussed in this Report	Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School

District Information Sheet												
District Grade Configuration	PK-12	Total Student Enrollment	8858	Title 1 Population	51%	Attendance Rate			95.6%			
Free Lunch	64%	Reduced Lunch	7%	Student Sustainability	NP	Limited English Proficient		7%	Students with Disabilities	16%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population												
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	53%	Hispanic or Latino	15%	Asian or Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander		8%	White	21%	Multi-racial	3%
Personnel												
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/Appointed to District	2	Number of Deputy Superintendents	0	Average Years Dep. Superintendents in Role in the District		0		# of Directors of Programs		2		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	NP	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	NP	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District	NP		Average Teacher Absences in District		NP			
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)												
District in Good Standing		Focus District	X	Number of Focus School Identified by District	NP	Number of SIG Recipient Schools	NP	Number of Schools in Status	NP			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	18%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	14%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	61%	4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	49%	6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	61%			

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

#	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 leadership has a comprehensive and explicit theory of action about school culture that communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.			X	
1.3	The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that aligns appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community.		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(s) to ensure CCLS curriculum that provide 21st Century and College and Career Readiness skills in all content areas and provides fiscal and human resources for implementation.				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 and addresses 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 – Findings, Evidence, Impact and Recommendations:

<p>Tenet 1 - District Leadership and Capacity: The district examines school systems and makes intentional decisions to identify and provide critical expectations, supports and structures in all areas of need so that schools are able to respond to their community and ensure that all students are successful.</p>	<p>Overall Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Statement of Practice 1.1: The district has a comprehensive approach for recruiting, evaluating, and sustaining high-quality personnel that affords schools the ability to ensure success by addressing the needs of their community.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
<p><u>Debriefing Statement:</u> District leaders have put in place new district practices concerning recruiting, evaluating, and sustaining high-quality personnel. The district has established a structure and series of protocols, including partnerships with area colleges and universities, which define a comprehensive system for selecting highly qualified and thoroughly vetted personnel. Specific goals have been established for improving the monitoring of the evaluation system, with increased training provided to calibrate staff on the consistent application of evaluation standards. Data on the impact of this comprehensive approach and evidence of sustainability have not yet been generated.</p> <p><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></p> <p>Overall Finding: District leaders have conducted a self-assessment of policies, practices, and protocols for the hiring, evaluation, and retention of high-quality personnel. Because of the self-assessment, the district has redesigned its practices. The redesigned system conforms to the comprehensive school reform efforts currently underway in the district, which address an extensive range of district-wide practices. However, recent system improvements have been in place for too short a time for the district to gauge their effectiveness.</p> <p>Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district has created expectations and protocols for the recruitment of high-quality personnel that provide a standardized means of assembling a candidate pool. The central office’s human resources department reported playing a larger role in expanding the size of this pool by attending recruitment fairs where potential candidates are initially screened. District leaders stated that protocols are in place to define and expand the vetting process for candidates. School level leaders reportedly play an active role in identifying candidates who reflect the qualities needed to improve the academic culture of schools and further aspirations contained in the district’s strategic plan, <i>2020 Vision</i>. • The district has revised its process for staff evaluation. Using the learning walks model, district, school, and teacher leaders are trained and calibrated in evaluating teachers’ ability to increase student engagement through rigorous and relevant educational experiences that actively involve students in learning. District leaders reported that this activity is part of a planned dynamic to 		

create greater uniformity in the performance assessment of personnel using evaluation frameworks adopted by the district.

- The district has begun to study its ability to retain personnel. District leaders have established a goal within *2020 Vision* to retain 90 percent of staff in each school annually. However, the district has not yet constructed a comprehensive program of professional development (PD) that addresses the assessed needs that grow out of the district system for evaluating instructional quality.
- Reviewers found that the developing nature of these initiatives, which are at various stages of implementation, precludes the district’s ability to substantiate sustainability or impact.

Impact Statement:

The developing nature of these efforts hinders the ability of the district to ensure that district personnel effectively address the needs of all students.

Recommendation:

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

- Monitor the implementation of procedures for the recruitment and assignment of highly qualified personnel to assess impact; modify procedures, as needed.
- Fully implement and monitor the piloted process for consistent staff evaluation that grows out of the Studio Classroom model; assess the impact of staff evaluation and coaching.
- Develop a comprehensive program of PD that reflects the assessed needs of teaching staff.

Statement of Practice 1.2: The district leadership has a comprehensive and explicit theory of action about school culture that communicates high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The district leadership has developed a comprehensive theory of action and district-wide vision that sets high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents and provides clear direction to the school community. In addition, the district is beginning to employ its “Cycles of Inquiry” initiative, which provides steps for staff to address in the process of improvement. The recent introduction of these innovations limits the district’s ability to measure their impact on school improvement and success.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district leadership has developed a comprehensive theory of action and district-wide vision that sets high expectations for addressing the needs of all constituents and provides clear direction to the school community. In addition, district staff is beginning to use the “Cycles of Inquiry” process, by identifying a series of steps that

address the improvement process.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- In 2014, the district completed a Strategic Roadmap that identifies an array of unifying elements. The district roadmap contains a comprehensive theory of action, a detailed vision, a mission, core values, and strategic directions for the district. All stakeholders have been made aware of these initiatives. The district has established the expectation that each segment of the district will use this roadmap to align their strategic plans to the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP).
- The district has communicated its Strategic Roadmap using a variety of media and district-wide PD; however, district leaders have not established how to provide regularly translation services for the significant number of non-English speaking families district-wide to ensure that all families understand the dynamics of the roadmap.
- The roadmap has generated plans for the full implementation of programs currently being piloted and aimed at supporting high-quality instruction, such as the Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning instructional framework and the Studio Classroom program. The roadmap has also produced piloted programs aimed at supporting high-quality leadership, such as learning walks for instructional coaches and leaders, the Vision Cards Performance Management System, and Partnership Leadership training, in which the capacity to “partner when we should and manage when one must” is built.
- The roadmap has triggered the production of plans for the character education program, Second Steps, as well as a change in the way that disciplinary issues are handled in the district. Disciplinary changes are focused on keeping students in class, and avoiding suspensions.

Impact Statement:

The recent introduction of these initiatives limits the district’s ability to demonstrate impact on the ability of students to achieve at high levels of success.

Recommendation:

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

- Fully implement the planned and recently initiated programs aimed at guiding staff on how to align their professional practices to the district comprehensive theory of action promoting improved student performance.
- Monitor the progress of these programs; provide adaptations and PD, as needed.

Statement of Practice 1.3: The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in a way that aligns appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community.

Tenet Rating

E

Debriefing Statement: The district uses a well-defined process for allocating resources. This process provides for input opportunities from a wide-range of school personnel. Allocations are formally linked to the district's stated performance priorities. The district employs a system for assessing the relative needs of individual schools, and deploys resources that meet stakeholder needs.

Strengths:

Overall Finding:

The district's process for allocating resources provides for input opportunities from a wide-range of school personnel. Allocations are formally linked to the district's performance priorities and deployed to address the needs of the school community.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has implemented a budget and resource allocation process tied directly to the district's Strategic Roadmap. School level programs and personnel allocations are reviewed annually to ensure that resources are supporting the student performance goals contained in the roadmap. School leaders must justify requests for resources by demonstrating how those resources will improve one or more specific strategic directions being taken by the district. These areas include increasing learning for all students; providing a comprehensive P-12 educational program with personalization, academic and life skills development; increasing family and community engagement, connection, ownership, and participation; increasing life-long educational opportunities through community partnerships; and providing a recognized educational leadership system with excellence in governance, management, and consultation.
- Grant-funded programs are allocated based on a needs assessment of each school concerning the academic, and social and emotional developmental health of students. Grant-funded programs are reviewed at the end of the funding period to determine the level of impact they have had on student outcomes. Those that are assessed as having had significant impact receive continued funding through the district's annual budget.
- Reallocations and expansions of programmatic services are determined by reviewing levels of student need. For example, the district annually monitors demographic changes in the student population that warrant increases or decreases in the size of English as a second language (ESL) programs and special education programs.
- The district has been resourceful in responding to significant budget reductions in state aid by expanding the efforts of a dedicated grant writing and grants management officer. This has resulted in significant increases in available grant-funded resources.

Impact Statement:

Resources in the district are effectively administered to promote school improvement and 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.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: The district conducts PD, but has not yet developed a comprehensive plan for the creation, delivery, and monitoring of PD that is tailored to the assessed needs of individual schools and aligned to the district’s strategic vision and theory of action.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The planning, implementation, and monitoring of PD are not tailored to or consistently meeting the assessed needs of schools.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- From 2010 to 2013, the district employed a traditional set of protocols for the selection and implementation of PD that relied on disparate suggestions from teachers and leaders, and an ad hoc response to perceived needs. This school year, the district provided PD on a series of efforts concerning teaching, learning, and governance. The overarching focus of PD was the introduction of the district’s Strategic Roadmap and its associated practices and programs, which focused on a consistent district-wide approach for the improvement of student outcomes. The district is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan for PD aligned to the district’s newly adopted theory of action, its *2020 Vision* program, mission, values, and goals to build consistency in addressing the needs of all students. However, a comprehensive plan for PD is not yet established.
- The district has expanded the number of instructional coaches available to staff and provided a Coaching Institute with a focus on adult learning theory and coaching practices. Training is beginning to be offered in a standardized format to improve teacher practices. The district is conducting learning walks centered on the Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning to standardize and improve the district’s teacher evaluation process, as well as piloting a Studio Classroom PD program in several of its schools focused on instructional practice and content knowledge.
- Additionally, the district provided embedded PD in the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the Rigorous Curriculum Design model in support of CCLS implementation. To support implementation of the New York State (NYS) Kindergarten-Algebra Mathematics Modules, coaches and external consultants provided after-school and Saturday PD in mathematics content and deconstruction of the mathematics modules.

Impact Statement:

The absence of a comprehensive PD plan aligned to the district’s Strategic Roadmap limits the ability of the district to increase the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders.

Recommendation:

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

- Implement a comprehensive plan that addresses the creation of a wide array of PD opportunities concerning all areas of the school community.
- Establish a calendar of PD opportunities based on an assessment of school staff practices and offered in ways that allow and encourage high levels of participation and engagement.
- Establish mechanisms for providing PD follow-up support that are adaptive and tailored to the needs of staff members from individual schools.

Statement of Practice 1.5: The district promotes a data-driven culture by providing strategies connected to best practices that all staff members and school communities are expected to be held accountable for implementing.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The district is assembling the infrastructure needed to provide a robust and accessible array of data to inform and guide the implementation of best practices. While many data sources are available to staff, not all staff understand how to use the data to derive full benefit from a data-driven culture.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

While the district is beginning to provide many sources of data to drive school improvement, the use of this data is too variable to ensure consistent growth in academic outcomes for all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has embarked on the process of building its capacity for capturing, analyzing, and using data. The process has included the addition of a district data director who has guided the district in making key performance data accessible to all stakeholders. The data director has created mechanisms for disaggregating data and for maintaining longitudinal assessments. Data teams have been established in each of the district’s schools, with additional data specialists provided to these teams.
- The district has established a common measurement of progress in reading and mathematics by utilizing the Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to monitor student performance, while setting measurable goals for student progress. Teachers have

received training in the use of this testing data. In June of last year, each elementary teacher was provided with NWEA MAP Reading and Mathematics testing results for each student they were scheduled to instruct during the fall semester; this allowed them to plan based on information contained in that data. The district plans to use the NWEA MAP Reading data in developing the student learning objectives (SLOs) used in the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process.

- The district has designed an individual learning plan (ILP) template for use with NWEA MAP Reading and Mathematics data. District leaders plan to deploy this template with the goal of chronicling current student status and projecting the annual growth needed for students to reach a target of college and career readiness. The district has piloted the use of common forms of assessment in two schools with plans to expand this practice to other schools in the district.
- While many data sources are currently available to staff, reviewer observations and discussions with school leaders and teachers indicated that not all staff have the necessary skills and expertise to consistently use data in a way that contributes to the district's vision of creating a data-driven culture in every school.

Impact Statement:

The district's early efforts have not yet resulted in the creation of schools and classrooms uniformly committed and equipped to provide a data-driven culture, which limits student academic growth.

Recommendation:

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

- Fully implement the strategies and protocols developed to ensure that all staff members are aware of district expectations for data use in supporting, instructing, and establishing goals for students and schools.
- Expand staff PD on best practices for the use of data to improve student performance.
- Monitor, assess, and adjust the implementation of strategies and protocols.

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

<p>Statement of Practice 2.1 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for the school leader to create, develop and nurture a school environment that is responsive to the needs of the entire school community.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
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Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district has not fully developed or implemented its theory of action designed to “empower and support principals as the key leaders to facilitate” the district vision.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district is building structures and frameworks designed to create greater consistency within the district and to improve collaboration with the central office in ways that allow the central office to become a service center for schools. These structures and frameworks include the provision of instructional leadership directors to guide governance performance in data-driven practices through cycles of inquiry tied to immediate feedback on practices. In addition, the district has set priorities for all school leaders in the development and leading of differentiated PD. Finally, the district is attempting to strengthen levels of collaboration between school leaders, teachers, and the central office. School leaders reported, however, that efforts at collaboration are not always effective because it is not consistently viewed as “a two-way street.” Instead, the structure is perceived as top heavy with the district providing too dominant a force.
- The district is attempting to align building-level practices to the district’s *2020 Vision* and Strategic Roadmap. Some school leaders viewed this as an attempt to establish “a lot of top down in the district” with the creation of “a lot of layers we never had before.” Some school personnel stated that at times this hinders efforts of the district and schools to work together to drive forward school improvements.
- The district has set a goal to increase collaboration and consensual decision-making between the central office and school leadership through school leader network meetings in the next school year. However, some school leaders reported there is work to do to ensure a true working partnership that benefits and meets the needs of students, staff, and wider school communities.

Impact Statement:

The district’s partial collaboration with schools centered on the district’s theory of action for improving student performance hinders opportunities for improved student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the district's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the

district should:

- Forge reciprocal relationships with school leaders that foster a culture of collegiality and support, and encourage school leaders to consult, engage, and partner with the district.

Statement of Practice 3.1 - Curriculum Development and Support: The district works collaboratively with the school(s) to ensure CCLS curriculum that provide 21st Century and College and Career Readiness skills in all content areas and provides fiscal and human resources for implementation.

Tenet Rating

I

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district has been unable to ensure that CCLS curricula are being delivered consistently across all grade levels.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district plans to introduce a Kindergarten through grade five English language arts (ELA) curriculum for the 2014-15 school year. A document review showed that an ELA Unit One has been constructed, and additional summer curriculum development work has been planned. Unit One materials were not provided for the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) review. Reviewers found that the ELA curricular materials presented did not appear to be collaboratively developed, original work. In large part, reviewers noted an assemblage of downloaded articles on best practices, rather than direct guidance. No curriculum maps were presented for review.
- School leaders confirmed that the district has recently adopted the NYS Mathematics Modules as their elementary and middle school curriculum. Lesson observations indicated that teachers are beginning to implement this curriculum. At the secondary level, there have been efforts to train teachers to modify curricula to better support the CCLS. However, reviewer discussions with teachers and classroom observations revealed that the inclusion of the arts, technology, and other enrichment subjects has not yet been fully realized.
- Teachers reported that, “There is no school or district curriculum development plan. We are on our own.” School officials stated, “Too much of the PD from the district has been merely email; and it is hard to do curriculum through email.”
- Discussions with school leaders and teachers suggested there is little systematic work occurring toward incorporating the CCLS into a comprehensive curriculum. District officials reported that work has not begun on incorporating the instructional shifts into science and social studies curricula.

Impact Statement:

There is no assurance that curricula are being created and used to provide teachers with opportunities to deliver CCLS-aligned instruction and challenge every student.

Recommendation:

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

- Collaboratively establish ongoing short- and long-term plans for curriculum development and implementation that include clarity of purpose, procedures, and communication.
- Monitor and evaluate curricula and programs for CCLS alignment; make curricular adjustments, as necessary.

<p>Statement of Practice 4.1 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: The district works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices and addresses effective planning and account for student data, needs, goals, and levels of engagement.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>I</p>
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Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district and its schools have no consistent plan or process for providing opportunities and supports for teachers to develop strategies and practices that address effective planning for lessons supporting the CCLS and the promotion of high levels of student engagement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- There is no clear, curricular pathway from middle school to high school that directs students to advanced, rigorous coursework. Students are often confronted with low expectations for their performance.
- School leaders stated that there is no comprehensive PD plan that reflects collaborative discussion between the district and schools concerning school and student data, linked to the district’s Strategic Roadmap. While reviewers found some evidence of training to promote the introduction of more rigorous lessons and higher levels of knowledge questioning, there was no evidence that this training has resulted in rigorous learning opportunities for students, or that teachers have progressed beyond piloting these techniques.
- School leaders confirmed that the district is building support capacity through the Instructional Leadership Directors, the coaching program, and the learning walks program to support teachers in the consistent application of strategies that support higher order thinking and increased student engagement. However, these initiatives are at too early a stage to impact positively and sustainably on improvements to student achievement.

Impact Statement:

PD does not consistently lead to teachers and instructional staff providing students with rigorous learning opportunities.

Recommendation:

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

- Provide teachers with multiple points of entry to participate in learning opportunities to understand and use best practices, effective instructional planning, decision-making, and delivery of rigorous and engaging instruction.
- Implement the systems and structures under construction and ensure that they that lead to comprehensive follow-up support for teacher development in the areas of student data use, goal-setting, and instructional practices that yield high levels of student engagement and achievement.

Statement of Practice 5.1 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The district creates policy and works collaboratively with the school to provide opportunities and resources that positively support students’ social and emotional developmental health.	Tenet Rating	D
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Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district inconsistently delivers programs and PD to school staff that is aligned to student’s social and emotional developmental health needs and academic success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders stated that the district is piloting the character education program, Second Steps, in two schools in the district. However, this program has not been implemented in the majority of the district’s schools. A Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program is not fully implemented within the district, although there are plans to revitalize and expand the PBIS model in all schools. A program is in place in all elementary schools, although all are in different stages of implementation. School leaders stated that the district has not fully responded to the requirements of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA); and a Response to Intervention (RtI) model is not fully developed and implemented.
- The district has hired additional social workers and psychologists for assignments in each school to improve the range of student services. The district is making provisions for the creation of a clinical suite in every school building to provide a specific space to address student’s social and emotional developmental health issues. Reviewers found that significant changes have been made to district disciplinary policies and practices to reduce the amount of time that students are removed from classrooms. However, school leaders and teachers reported that these efforts have not yet fully met the needs of all students.

- School leaders reported there is no policy to provide specific PD for building and support staff to address social and emotional developmental health; the district plans to provide RtI and PBIS training in the future. The district conceded that its system of support for staff dealing with student social and emotional developmental health issues lacks uniformity, with no explicit understanding of whom to contact for services, and community-based organizations (CBOs) sometimes working at cross purposes.

Impact Statement:

All students do not consistently receive supports that appropriately address their needs.

Recommendation:

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

- Create a comprehensive support policy that focuses on proactively working with schools and CBOs; ensure the delivery of a wide range of PD topics and opportunities to school staff that address an array of student social and emotional developmental health issues.
- Provide support for the planned expansions of social and emotional developmental health intervention teams and proactive programming.

Statement of Practice 6.1 - Family and Community Engagement: The district has a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan that states the expectations around creating and sustaining a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families.

Tenet Rating

I

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district does not have a comprehensive family and community engagement plan that states clear expectations about creating a welcoming environment for families, reciprocal communication, and establishing partnerships with community organizations and families. Initiatives are in the planning stages, and have yet to impact on building robust partnerships between the district, schools, and homes.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has a team of home-school coordinators and school-based community outreach liaisons, as well as a district communications director. It uses a variety of media to share information with the community, including a Facebook page, district and individual school websites, a School News Notifier website that provides opportunities for those who register to opt to receive text and email messages about more than 25 different topics, a quarterly newsletter, and direct mail. School leaders confirmed that the district takes advantage of a variety of free and paid media, and that the district has plans to deploy a district-wide community engagement coordinator and a high school home-school coordinator next year.
- The district represents families speaking forty-one native languages. The district is planning a

service to schools that will provide translations of communications to families in the predominant languages of Spanish, Karin, and Arabic. However, school leaders noted that this service is not yet in place.

- District leaders have established an advisory council composed of community and district leaders. The district has set a goal to improve and expand relationships with families and communities, but evidence indicated that this goal has yet to be met.
- The district is building partnerships with community organizations, such as Albany Promise and the Karin Refugee Center to create a closer relationship between the district and the community, but this is a work in progress.

Impact Statement:

Families are not fully engaged in a partnership with the district to provide the supports needed to improve student achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Continue to build policies, systems, and structures that create a climate of belonging for families and communities.
- Ensure that all communications are disseminated in all pertinent languages.
- Identify and develop a toolkit of effective resources and supports to respond to the needs of students and families that can be widely shared to promote better student and family outcomes.