



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	061700010000
District	Jamestown City School District
District Address	197 Martin Road Jamestown, NY 14701
Superintendent	Tim O. Mains
Date(s) of Review	April 25, 2014
Schools Discussed in this Report	Thomas Jefferson Middle School

District Information Sheet											
District Grade Configuration	K-12	Total Student Enrollment	4866	Title 1 Population	70%	Attendance Rate	94%				
Free Lunch	61%	Reduced Lunch	8%	Student Sustainability	N/A%	Limited English Proficient	4%	Students with Disabilities	12%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin of District Student Population											
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	Black or African American	5%	Hispanic or Latino	18%	Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0%	White	68%	Multi-racial	9%
Personnel											
Number Years Superintendent Assigned/Appointed to District	1	Number of Deputy Superintendents	1	Average Years Dep. Superintendents in Role in the District	21	# of Directors of Programs	3				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate in District	0	% Teaching Out of Certification in District	2%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. in District	2%	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	9	Number of SIG Recipient Schools	0	Number of Schools in Status	9		
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	21% (2013)	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	21% (2013)	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	79% (2013)	4 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	68% (2009)	6 yr. Graduation Rate (for HS only)	72% (2007)		

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

Debriefing Statement: The district leader has a strategic plan for systematically building school leaders’ capacity to be effective instructional leaders. The strategy includes using monthly school leader meetings as a vehicle for administrators’ professional development (PD) through modeling best practices, engaging in coaching conversations, monitoring, and providing targeted interventions related to areas of concern. As a result, school leaders are better equipped to provide feedback and guidance to improve teachers’ instructional practices.

Strengths:

Overall Finding:

The district systematically recruits, evaluates, and sustains high quality staff to help schools address the needs of their community and ensure student success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has effective systems in place for advertising vacancies, both internally and externally, in order to recruit well-qualified and experienced staff.
- The district has effective systems for supporting new staff, offering PD and peer coaching support to long-term substitute teachers, in addition to permanent staff. The district coordinator of teacher development oversees new teacher induction and the peer-coaching program for mentoring new teachers.
- The district has established an Educator Academy program as part of the Demonstration District Project, wherein teacher leaders from each school provide PD for colleagues in the teacher observation rubric and process.
- The district leader offers extensive training for school leaders, which promotes effective practices in teacher observation and evaluation, with increased focus on multiple observations and strategies for giving effective feedback to teachers.
- The district has sound partnerships with local universities with teacher education programs, which results in a regular supply of student teachers who work alongside teachers in the schools. The district has a recruitment strategy of viewing high-performing student teachers as potential recruits.

- The district leader has bi-monthly meetings with school leaders where one meeting is based on his agenda and the other based on the school leaders’ agenda. The district leader uses these meetings as a vehicle for school leader PD through modeling best practices, engaging in coaching conversations, monitoring, and providing targeted interventions related to areas of concern.
- The district sustains high-quality personnel through its PD program, which supports teacher and administrative leaders through the implementation of a career ladder. In his first budget, the superintendent has proposed a significant increase in spending for PD.

Impact Statement:

- School leaders are better equipped to provide feedback and guidance to improve teachers’ instructional practices and this leads to higher student achievement.

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	E
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Debriefing Statement: The district leader has involved a wide range of community and school stakeholders in creating a strong, cogent theory of action. He has shared this clear vision with the school community and established a set of high expectations for providing a quality education for all students. The district has established an effective strategy for communicating its vision, which includes using translations into Spanish to reach a wider audience. This approach is creating a collaborative environment in which people are included in carrying forward the district vision.

Strengths:

Overall Finding:

The district leader has taken a strategic and inclusive approach to establishing a culture of high expectations across the district and has been successful in changing the way people think in a short time.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district leader has involved a wide range of community and school stakeholders in creating a new mission, vision, values, and goals to guide its strategic planning. The district has effectively shared this new vision with the school community and established a set of high expectations for providing a quality education for all students.
- In his short time in this position, the district leader has made inroads into changing the district culture. The district leader achieved this by identifying and systematically promoting three clear priorities: the delivery of a rigorous and engaging curriculum for all students; the monitoring of progress through data gathering and analysis; and the commitment to working collaboratively as a team to achieve the district’s goals. The district closely monitors initiatives by conducting surveys to gather data on implementation perceptions on, for example, the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) modules,

and then publishes the results system-wide to ensure transparency.

- The district leader introduced the above priorities to all school leaders at a summer leadership retreat and to all school staff at an opening of school meeting. Regular reports to the Board of Education, district cabinet meetings, and monthly meetings with school leaders and curriculum coordinators, communicate district goals and priorities. The new district leader has also extended representation on the cabinet to include district leaders responsible for transportation, health, and physical education. This district leader believes that they are all educators, which enables him to develop a strong bond and a cohesive approach. The district leader also reinforces these messages during frequent informal visits to classrooms and schools.
- The district leader has also initiated a district strategic plan that focuses on raising student outcomes. The school leader stated that the new district leader has created eight strategic planning committees and that she is serving, along with a range of community stakeholders, on the parent engagement committee. Through the work of these eight committees, which include district, school, parent, and community representatives, the district is developing a strategic plan that focuses on raising student results.

Impact Statement:

This approach is creating collaborative environments in which people are included, believe in, and carry forward the district vision.

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: At a time of diminished resources, the district carefully considers school building needs when making allocation decisions. It distributes resources using a formula based on school enrollments and population demographics. The district provides generic advice and support on how to maximize the deployment of physical and human resources. It makes every attempt to allocate resources equitably to meet the needs of students, staff, and families. The distribution of resources promotes the district mission.

Strengths:

Overall Finding:

The district carefully considers school building needs when making allocation decisions and makes every attempt to allocate resources equitably to meet the needs of students, staff, and families.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has urged schools to establish school decision-making committees, comprised of school leaders and a cross section of teacher leaders, together with parent representatives, in order to be the school leadership teams, which have the identification of the school needs as one of their tasks. The district budget process then invites special requests from schools and departments based on areas of

need.

- Within the context of ongoing revenue shortfalls, it has been difficult for the district to allocate sufficient resources to sustain staff and programs at an optimal level, but the checks and balances have ensured that the allocation of resources has been equitable. The district prioritizes the use of available resources from grant funds, allocating staff and resources to schools based on the level of need.
- This year the district has restructured certain program services by basing provision in specific schools. For example, all district provision for English as a Second Language (ESL) is in one school to maximize the level of support available to meet student needs. The district also reallocated staff that supported ESL to follow the students in their new location. The district collaborates with outside agencies offering services related to family and mental health needs to provide additional supports to high need schools.

Impact Statement:

The distribution of resources promotes the district mission and seeks to ensure progress for all students.

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

D

Debriefing Statement: The district has a plan that outlines PD focused predominantly on the implementation of the CCLS and instructional shifts in mathematics and English language arts (ELA). This district training relies on the coordinators in kindergarten through grade eight, as well as other staff, to lead turnkey training or discussions in professional learning communities. It has not yet resulted in system-wide changes in practices in schools. The district communicates a calendar of PD that is driven by the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) and School Comprehensive Education Plans (SCEPs). The district is at an early stage of providing post-PD follow-up support to teachers. As a result, PD does not lead consistently to teacher effectiveness.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district PD is focused predominantly on the implementation of the CCLS and the instructional shifts in mathematics and ELA, and relies on those staff receiving PD to provide turnkey training, which has not resulted in system-wide changes in practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The previous year’s DCIP and SCEPs determine the district PD calendar, which has not been updated to reflect current priorities. However, the district is working to develop a new PD plan that will reflect the recommendations identified through the strategic planning process.
- The district has worked to empower schools to make school-level decisions about PD, based on identified needs to ensure that it reaches a wider audience.

- The district employs curriculum coordinators who plan and facilitate PD at the district level, and who are available to support school leaders to do the same at the school level. The district has employed a turnkey training model to provide PD in key priority areas to teacher and school leaders, who in turn lead the learning at the school level, but this has not resulted in system-wide changes in practices.
- The district has recently implemented Teachscape Learn, an online resource for individually selected PD, collaboration, and sharing of best practice. In this context, the district leader has also monitored school leaders' understanding of what best teaching practices look like and has offered advice on improving school leaders' observation reports where required.
- The district communicates PD opportunities on an ongoing basis, with most PD decisions based on Race to the Top and the New York State Regents Reform Agenda.
- The district plans to continue to support PD for teacher and school leaders through the implementation of a career ladder in order to expand the impact of the peer-coaching program.

Impact Statement:

The current PD provision does not lead consistently to teacher effectiveness and improved achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Implement in full the planned approach to PD, which is based firmly on school needs and expectations; rigorously monitor the impact of PD on improving instructional practices and student achievement and make improvements where needed.

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 communicates expectations for establishing, supporting, and monitoring the use of data and is setting up electronic and organizational systems to implement these expectations. The district is at the early stages of identifying and implementing best practice concerning teachers' use of data to inform instructional decisions and to set student and school goals. Stakeholders across the district do not have a detailed understanding of how students are performing and, therefore, cannot strategically adjust their practices.

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district clearly communicates expectations for collecting and using data. However, data is not used in all schools to inform instructional decisions and set student and school goals.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has established the expectation that schools use professional learning communities as a vehicle for using data to inform instructional decisions and academic interventions. Additionally, the district has recently introduced eDoctrina in order to enable teachers to create and share common unit and lesson plans, common formative assessments, and data analysis for improved learning outcomes. Teachers have received some initial PD to help them use the eDoctrina software, but the training and support has been insufficient for them to deploy the software with confidence.
- The district has recently implemented Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress, a computer adaptive assessment test, and Star Mathematics as diagnostic assessments and screening for student instructional needs in mathematics. For ELA and reading, the district uses the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills and Scholastic Reading Inventory assessments. PD has been provided, with plans to continue, in order to support teachers to make effective use of data to differentiate instruction and support productive student learning. However, evidence from classroom observations and evaluation of planning documents indicate that not enough teachers are using data effectively to bring about sustained improvements in instruction and student outcomes.
- The district has provided PD to support teacher and school leaders in implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and the Response to Intervention (RTI) processes in schools. The district plans to continue to provide PD in these areas

Impact Statement:

Stakeholders across the district do not have a sufficiently detailed understanding of how students are performing and, therefore, cannot strategically adjust their practices and systems to increase 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 support teacher leaders and teachers in the use of eDoctrina through PD, and provide further coaching and mentoring to the professional learning communities on how to collect and analyze data to inform their practices
- Rigorously monitor classroom practices to ensure that all teachers use data to drive instruction.

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

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.	Tenet Rating	E

Strengths:

Overall Finding:

The school’s relationship with the district is very positive, and support has improved with the arrival of the new district leader. The regular communication with the district provides the school with opportunities to consult and engage on a range of matters, including school vision and mission, PD, staffing issues, and the budget.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader of Thomas Jefferson Middle School reported that the school’s relationship with the district was very positive and that support was good and had improved with the arrival of the new district leader, who was described as “personable, an instructional leader, and a good manager.” The school leader felt that the recently improved and regular communication with the district provided her with opportunities to consult and engage with the district on a range of matters, including the school vision and mission, PD, staffing issues, and the budget.
- The school leader stated that the district provides her with high-quality support that meets the instructional needs of the school and that the district leader leads by example. She said, “The district vision involves district leaders having discussions with school leaders and other staff about professional goals.”

Impact Statement:

The quality support from the district provides the school community with a clear vision that encourages student achievement.

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

D

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district is working collaboratively with schools on establishing a plan for PD that is more responsive to school needs than the current one, which relies heavily on a turnkey approach that is not consistently effective. The district has increased the PD budget for next year and has a new curriculum coordinator in mathematics. However, the district still has to complete work to ensure that the impact of these efforts is reflected in improvements in classroom practices and student outcomes.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that the district leader’s aim is to develop a district set of CCLS modules, rather than using the “off-the-shelf ones”, which some teachers are finding difficult to work with. There have been improvements in the level of district support and expectations regarding the implementation of the CCLS and in ensuring that students are college and career ready. However,

these improvements are recent and have not yet had sufficient impact on improving teaching, learning, and student achievement across the district.

- The district has increased the PD budget for next year to provide all core content teachers with three days of PD and all non-core teachers with two PD days, which addresses a concern of the non-core teachers’ for this year. The school leader reported that the district had recently appointed a new curriculum coordinator for kindergarten through grade eight in mathematics, in addition to the curriculum coordinators for ELA. The school leader reported that the district is “all about providing support on the CCLS,” and “they are doing the best they can.” She added, however, that her teachers would like to have the curriculum coordinators in the building more often and confirmed that district and school efforts had not yet resulted in quantifiable and sustainable improvements in student outcomes.
- The district leader personally monitors and evaluates the CCLS curricula and programs in schools and plans to visit all classrooms in the district by the end of the academic year. He discusses all his visitations with the school leaders to comment on the alignment and fidelity of CCLS implementation.

Impact Statement:

The district recognizes that the current curriculum and PD support do not provide teachers with consistent opportunities to provide CCLS-aligned curriculum that challenges 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:

- Implement the PD plan in full to ensure that all teachers benefit from appropriate CCLS-aligned support so that improved instructional practices can benefit all learners; ensure that the implementation of the PD plan leads directly to improvements in student learning and achievement, and put in place additional strategies to address any identified weaknesses.

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.

Tenet Rating

D

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district is at the early stages of planning to provide learning opportunities linked to teacher needs and best practices. While there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), the process is beginning to have a positive impact on what happens in the classroom.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district’s communication with schools about PD has been modified this year since the arrival of the

new district leader and the introduction of new systems, such as the Shared Decision Making committees, in addition to professional learning communities that ensure that school development takes into account school and student data when planning the curriculum and instruction. However, the fact that these strategies are new means that they have not yet had time to affect the classrooms. Currently, few teachers use data to guide, inform, and drive instruction. Consequently, instruction is not consistently meeting the needs of all students. School and district leaders are cognizant of this and are working together to address the concerns, but equally recognize that there is more work to be done to ensure that student outcomes and the quality of instruction are at higher levels.

- Teachers reported that the APPR process has inconsistencies in the ratings, but that it is bringing some improvement in their instructional practices through constructive feedback after lesson observations. One teacher said that student engagement had improved because of feedback, and another commented that he had improved his questioning technique.

Impact Statement:

Not all teachers consistently provide 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:

- Implement in full, and closely monitor, the new district strategy for ensuring that schools take into account school and student data when planning the curriculum and instruction in order to raise student achievement, while also ensuring that systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of instruction consistently lead to improvement.

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

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district has a policy to engage schools in the planning and implementation of PBIS to foster the development of student social and emotional developmental health. The district has provided PD to support the introduction of PBIS and some members of staff at the middle school have received training, but the impact of these initiatives has not resulted in the needs of all students being consistently met.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The district has a policy to engage schools in the planning and implementation of PBIS to support the development of student social and emotional developmental health. The student support staff at the school stated that at this early stage, not all staff was committed to PBIS, but that support was increasing and that the commitment of all staff was needed to ensure that the needs of students were

consistently met. The district has provided PD to support the introduction of PBIS and some staff has received Tier One training, including the guidance counselors, the assistant principal, paraprofessionals, physical educators, and health educators. The school and district recognize that all staff needs to avail themselves of training so that PBIS is implemented consistently and with fidelity. PBIS is being used to accommodate the behavioral aspect of RTI. The district is also phasing in the implementation of School-Wide Information Services to ensure comprehensive behavioral data collection.

- The district funds the Thomas Jefferson Middle School after-school program, which supports student social and emotional developmental health needs. The district also appointed a behavior specialist to provide guidance and support for schools in working with students with difficult behaviors. The district also works in partnership with community agencies to obtain additional support for students and families with social and emotional needs. For example, the school receives funding from the United States Department of Agriculture to provide free breakfast and lunch programs.
- The district strategic planning process is developing additional strategies, including the full implementation of PBIS, to support schools in the fostering of social and emotional developmental health.

Impact Statement:

Although the district is taking a strategic approach to supporting students’ social and emotional developmental health, not all students are receiving 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:

- Fully implement PBIS and additionally develop a strategy for offering targeted PD for student support staff.

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

D

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Finding:

The district communicates the expectation that families should be engaged in schools, though no formal family engagement plan is currently in place. The district has urged schools to increase family engagement opportunities, particularly related to understanding and supporting students’ achievement of the CCLS. The district is developing a partnership with the school Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) with the aim of increasing membership and the range of activities. The district utilizes a variety of tools to communicate information to

families.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader stated that the new district leader has created eight strategic planning committees and that she is serving, along with a range of community stakeholders, on the parent engagement committee. The school leader said that the district communication systems include Global Connect, a parent portal, and a district website, but that many parents were not able to access these. The district leader has urged schools to increase family engagement opportunities, particularly related to understanding and supporting students' achievement of the CCLS. The school leader confirmed that the district frequently held parent education workshops on the CCLS and the district leader commented that when one school declined to hold "yet another parent curriculum night," district personnel stepped in and provided the session. However, these workshops are only reaching a small number of parents.
- The district leader is starting to develop partnerships with school PTAs with the aim of increasing membership and activity. In this context, the school leader confirmed that the district leader has personally held five family interactive sessions to emphasize the district's commitment to family engagement. There was high attendance of the parents of English language learners (ELLs) at some of these sessions. However, there is a lack of a formalized strategic plan aimed at garnering the support and engagement of all parents, which hinders a cohesive approach to ensuring that efforts result in sustainable home-school partnerships.
- The district leader uses a variety of tools to communicate information to families, including district-wide mailings, an automated calling system, and a regularly updated website and Facebook page. The district website includes translations into multiple languages, and district forms are available in both English and Spanish. The district leader is currently developing a centralized registration process to include the involvement of community agencies and resources.

Impact Statement:

Not all families in the district work in close partnership with schools to provide 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:

- Develop a comprehensive family and community engagement strategic plan in order to engage as many families as possible in supporting their children's education and promoting higher achievement.