



Our Students. Their Moment.

# The DTSDE Review Recommendations Process

**DTSDE Institute**  
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# Session Objectives

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- To outline the vision for leaving recommendations on-site
- To connect the vision for leaving recommendations to the vision of the DTSDE
- To outline the process by which teams will conclude a review by leaving school-specific recommendations

# Essential Questions

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- How does leaving recommendations align with NYSED's vision for the DTSDE?
- What opportunities can emerge from leaving recommendations on-site?
- What are some potential pitfalls of leaving recommendations on-site? How can these be addressed?
- What will be different about this new approach?
- What are the characteristics of good recommendations look like?

# Recommendations On-Site

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Where our thinking began:

- Recommendations for IIT reviews had been arrived at by the OEE alone, days after the review
- Recommendations would appear generic (“Ensure...” “Provide PD on ....” and would be open to multiple interpretations (“Strengthen student feedback”) without a clear path as to how the recommendations could be accomplished
- Recommendations were hit-or-miss and may have been informed with limited input from the school leader and with limited context regarding what has worked in the past.
- Recommendations were based on getting an Effective rating in that SOP
- The number of recommendations within a report can impede the school’s ability to address the most significant recommendations

# Recommendations On-Site

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At the same time, we noticed that:

- Day 3 debriefing meetings spent a good deal of time discussing semantics
- The Debriefing sessions were distant, and did not encourage dialogue
- Schools were left to interpret debriefing statements and try to identify actionable next steps as they awaited their reports
- Debriefing statements were sometimes edited during calibration, causing additional confusion.

# Recommendations On-Site

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We also recognized that:

The best reviews have principals who are actively engaged throughout the process

Principals are a great resource for explaining what is working and not working at the school, and helping reviewers understand why some things are working better than others

For IIT reviews to have an impact, reviewers need to be able to provide the guidance for the school's improvement efforts sooner, rather than later.

# Recommendations On-Site

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Prompt:

Think of a school you are familiar with that is in need of improvement.

What is the top issue or problem in that school that, when addressed, answered or resolved, would lead to greater student outcomes?

Turn and talk with your “elbow partner” for 1 minute.

Follow-up: What is keeping that school from achieving that at this moment?

# Recommendations On-Site

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In Fall 2014:

- Schools in two districts piloted the idea of the IIT reviewers leaving recommendations on-site in lieu of debriefing statements.
- Feedback from these recommendation sessions was positive, and now NYSED will be expanding this approach so that all schools receiving IIT reviews will be left with a recommendations in lieu of debriefing statements when the IIT concludes the review.

# Recommendations On-Site

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## How it will work:

- The time the IIT had devoted to debriefing statements will now be devoted to identifying the best actionable, school-specific recommendation for School Leaders, Curriculum, Instruction, Social-Emotional Learning, and Parent Engagement.
- Principals will meet with the team, at which time the IIT will share their preliminary recommendations and ask for feedback and input. The principal will be allowed to provide his insight and knowledge of the school at this time.
- The team will go back and meet together to refine the recommendations based on the discussion with the principal.
- The team will then invite the principal and his or her cabinet to hear the on-site IIT recommendations.

# Making it work: The Purpose of Recommendations

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- Identify the next step for the school to take for each Tenet.
- Provide a clear and unambiguous path for the school to move the school forward.
- Won't just point out what needs to be worked on, but will provide strategies to attend to that issue.
- One Recommendation for each Tenet

# Working with school leaders to frame recommendations

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- There is a need to have transparency throughout the review between reviewers, particularly OEE and school leader
- There should be an ongoing dialogue between OEE and school leader throughout the review
- Joint classroom visitations
- Discuss recommendations together at the end of review

# Making it work: Recommendations

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- Recommendations should emerge as the review takes place. By the time the team works on putting them together, they should not be a surprise to the other team members or the school leader.
- Just as IIT reviewers discuss Tenet 2 after all of the other Tenets, the recommendation for Tenet 2 should come after the recommendations for all of the other Tenets. This recommendation can reinforce the recommendations made elsewhere.

# Recommendations: Key Characteristics

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- Few in number. One per tenet, but may be use bullets to connect issues across SOPs
- School specific
- Challenging but achievable
- Written clearly without room for misinterpretation
- Balance between details but not overly prescriptive and not too long
- Recommendations fully reflective of weaknesses identified in the narrative.
- Visually easy to follow

# Task

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What are some potential pitfalls that may arrive from this approach?

Discuss at your table for two minutes.

After sharing, think about what you would need to do to avoid these from happening.

# Things to Be Aware Of

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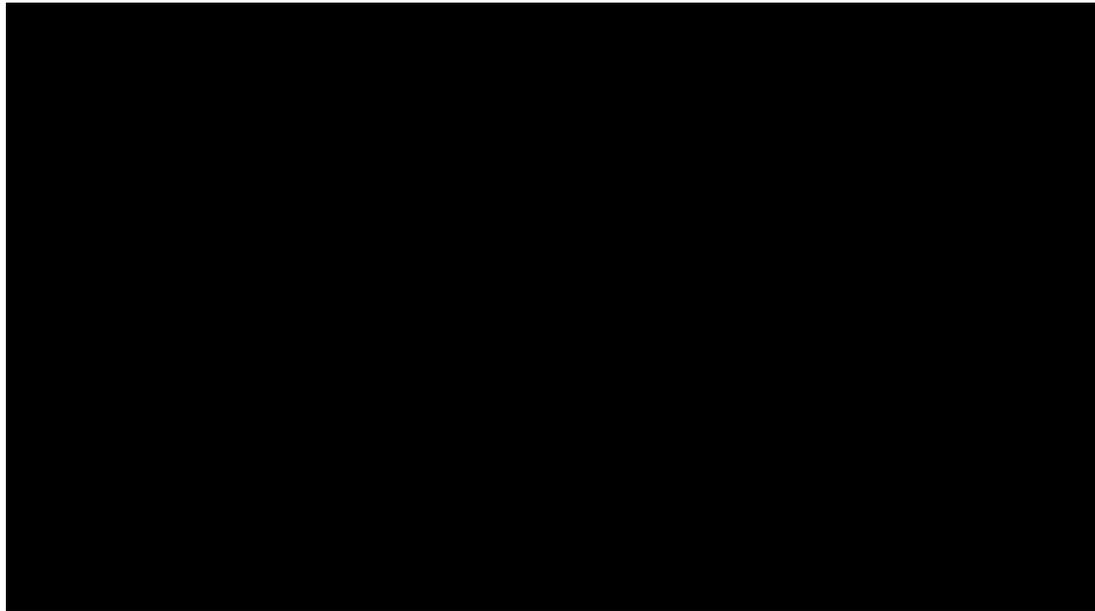
Things to be aware of:

- Recommendations won't be for **everything** in need of improvement
- Recommendations will provide the next steps in actionable language. They will not provide the guidance for what the school needs to do after those steps are accomplished.
- The team must get the recommendations **right** on-site. Adjusting recommendations during calibration will just create more confusion, and will run counter to the idea that the recommendations are to start immediately. What is left at the school is what will remain.

# Activity

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- Imagine if a bulk of the classrooms the review team visited looked like the one in the following video.
- Click on the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxPVyieptwA>



# Activity

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- Read through the document “Crafting Quality Recommendations.”
- With a partner:
  - Think of a good recommendation to raise the quality of instruction at the school. Make sure the recommendation meets all 15 of the points outlined on the Crafting Quality Recommendations document.
  - Select five points and create five different examples of BAD recommendations (one for each point) that do not meet the criteria outlined. Identify the rule that each one breaks.
- After completing with a partner, share with the table the “good recommendation”, along with your five bad ones
- Make sure the rest of the table agree that the good recommendation meets all 15 of the points
- Identify one “good recommendation” for the table to share , along with five “bad” ones