



DTSDE 2.0 Rubric Resource Guide

New York State Education Department

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

The Development and Use of this Resource Guide

This resource guide was developed as a companion to the DTSDE 2.0 rubric. It begins where the DTSDE assessment process ends.

The assessment process for schools and districts yields a final report that identifies and describes strengths, progress markers and identified needs for improvement. District and school leaders will rely on the final school/district report's findings when they develop the next versions of their respective district and school improvement plans. Specifically, their plans will target the assessed needs and priorities presented in their respective DTSDE reports.

Two important questions remain:

- How can leaders act upon the findings of the DTSDE report- crafting comprehensive, coherent, and research-supported improvement plans, and then implementing them with fidelity?
- Where might colleagues go to obtain relevant learning and improvement resources?

This resource guide is one response to these questions. Its primary purpose is to provide leaders with useful resources so that they can benefit from the DTSDE process and report. Its secondary purpose is to facilitate colleagues' professional development; recognizing that improvement fundamentally depends on adult learning and development.

The Development Process

A team of UAlbany-SUNY (UA-SUNY) research and development experts was contracted to develop this guide. Work commenced in November 2013, and the initial version was completed on April 1, 2014.

The idea of an "initial version" is an important feature of this guide. Guides like this one are like unfinished symphonies because they require constant updating to incorporate new policies, pioneering improvement models and strategies, and innovative interventions. In brief, this guide is a living document, ripe with contributions but always ready to be enhanced with new resources.

What contributed to the Resource Guide?

Four important types of sources are included in the Resource Guide:

- (1) Recent research and promising improvement theories;
- (2) Best practice and policy briefs;
- (3) Relevant websites with solid improvement recommendations and learning resources; and
- (4) Videos, especially ones easily accessed via a simple internet search.

These four resources are not mutually exclusive. In fact, these resources were selected with an eye toward how their relationships open up several professional development pathways. For example, a colleague can

start with a YouTube video and use it to gain new awareness, language, ideas, and strategies. Once readied in this way, this same colleague can proceed to relevant research and best practice policy briefs. Alternatively, another colleague can start with the research and policy briefs before proceeding to user-friendly videos and websites. The guide emphasizes systems thinking and planning, adult learning, action research, and school-district leadership teams and networks.

The Improvement Rationale for the Resource Guide

The resources included in this guide have substantial support. Thus, there is no question about their use-values. To the extent that the strategies and priorities included in this guide are implemented with fidelity and all relevant professional development and adoption of innovation requirements have been met, schools and entire districts are likely to improve in three demonstrable ways.

1. Their status on the HEDI rating scale will improve;
2. Their organizational capacities and people-centered competencies for innovation and improvement will increase; and
3. With time, results for students, schools, and entire districts will improve.

Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet One

Statement of Practice 1.1

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: Schools have personnel that are able to effectively address the student's needs.

Strategies for District Leaders

- a. The district has a comprehensive approach to recruiting, hiring, assigning, and retaining high quality personnel for all positions.
- b. District officials use the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan to support school leaders through professional development and professional feedback.
- c. District officials collaborate with school leaders to develop, implement, and monitor staff hiring, assignment, and retention strategies.

District leaders use the following strategies in the when recruiting, hiring, supporting, and retaining all staff:

- In partnership with higher education institutions and other providers (e.g., BOCES, non-profit professional development organizations), develop a formal plan with explicit criteria for hiring, assigning, and retaining high-quality personnel.
- Frame every new hire as an opportunity to innovate, learn and improve and develop induction systems that capitalize on newcomers' fresh knowledge and skill.
- Assess staff members' working conditions, including their job descriptions, available equipment, and the quality of their facilities and improve them where needed.
- Review the status of teacher, school leader, student support staff members' contracts ensure that they are aligned with performance expectations and accountabilities and also to pave the way for contractual improvements, including ones recommended by staff members.
- At the same time, meet with representatives of all professional staff constituencies to gain their perspectives on district-wide and school-specific improvement needs and priorities. Follow-up in a timely manner, indicating how their feedback and recommendations have been evaluated and used.
- Assess the quality and implementation level of performance evaluation systems for all professional staff members. In particular, examine the extent to which sub-optimal and unacceptable

performances are identified and corrective measures are implemented at the district level and at each school.

- Develop and implement a strategy whereby the performance assessment and accountability system implemented at the district office level is modeled for and then adopted and implemented completely at the school level.
- Review district office staff members' roles, responsibilities, and assignment/deployment policies, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities.
- Review principal roles, responsibilities, and assignment/deployment policies, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities.
- Review teacher roles, responsibilities and assignment/deployment policies, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities.
- Review student support professionals' roles, responsibilities and assignment/deployment policies, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities.
- Review retention policies and strategies for all professional staff with particular interest in how to maximize performance and prevent undesirable turnover.
- Review tenure policies as well as policies for all permanent assignments, ensuring that the district's resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to meet enduring priority needs.
- Review the district's history of special grant applications and use; with particular interest in grant alignment to improvement plans. Additionally, examine the extent to which grant activities have continued when no demonstrable improvements have been provided.
- Develop role-specific and generic professional development policies and plans, emphasizing differentiated, customized, and job-embedded opportunities for principals, teachers, student support professionals, and district office staff members.
- Anticipate and plan for embedded professional development focused on adult learning models and strategies. Emphasizing customized and differentiated ones for district level officials, school building leaders, teachers, and student support professionals.
- Consult with leaders in community and partner business organizations to maximize human resources, determining the roles and responsibilities community personnel can perform.
- Periodically, district officials and representative school leaders meet to evaluate and improve personnel policies and decision-making mechanisms.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet One

Statement of Practice 1.2

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: Students achieve at high levels of success

Strategies for district leaders

- a. District leaders have developed and regularly communicate high expectations and goals for student and school outcomes, emphasizing all staff members' roles and accountabilities
- b. District leaders have an approach for communicating the “theory of action” to all stakeholders.

The district leader uses the following strategies when creating a theory of action and communicating the high expectations of the district:

- Convene, optimize, and rely on a leadership team consisting of all school leaders and relevant district office personnel, building individual and team commitments and competencies for data-guided and evaluation-driven, organizational learning and improvement.
- Emphasize the development and formal testing of consensus-based, district-wide “theories of action”—explicit frameworks or models that specify how the district will proceed from “here” (the current state of affairs and performance level) to “there” (better outcomes).
- Regularly and continuously, revisit these theories of action, revising and replacing them as needed, while holding everyone accountable for results.
- Focus on systems thinking, adult learning, action research, and data-driven, evidence-guided decision-making to achieve priority goals, to learn, and to improve district-school leadership team meetings.
- In addition to district team meetings, hold regular meetings with each individual. Build their commitments and capacities to respond to their respective building's needs.
- Lead and manage by “walking around,” routinely visiting classrooms as permitted by union contracts. Expand each school leader's commitments to, and competencies for, staff evaluation, professional development, and performance improvement.
- Prioritize regular, high quality communications focused on the district's vision, mission, and SMART goals with all relevant stakeholder groups (school boards, governmental officials, business leaders, community agency heads, parents and students), while seeking their feedback on both the communications strategy and the main message.
- Frame the technical work in two related ways: Developing cradle-to-career education systems and preparing 21st Century learners. Emphasize that no school is entirely successful unless everyone is successful

- Examine the district’s prior history and how it can be brought to bear on current challenges and needs. For example, review minutes of district meetings, interview school principals and officers of parent organizations, and visit with leaders of community groups.
- Employ systems thinking in your improvement planning. Look for and emphasize relationships among now-separate and disjointed parts and offer more inclusive and complete “mental models” to the school board, other district officers, school building leaders, and other school community stakeholders.
- Ensure that building leaders and their school improvement teams have developed SMART goals and use action research as they strive to achieve these goals.
- Review with school leaders their respective budgets, aligning them with district priorities and ensuring that funding allocations are aligned with priority needs and goals.
- Remember the emotional side of all educational change, starting with Fullan’s recommendation that you strive to like and love your employees so that they feel and act in the same way toward their staff members.
- Emphasize from outset to all relevant stakeholders that their work is directed toward building a new system that improves results for everyone. Highlight the gap between the disappointing results from the current system and the desirable results needed from the new system, while emphasizing the need to implement a new measurement system and use the data it generates to set and revise SMART goals.
- Begin improvement planning with explicit inquiries into participants’ frames of reference, their preferred language, and the old, unwritten rules that everyone knows and lives by. (Recognize that all sub-optimal orientations and actions can be traced back to people’s preconceived ideas, selective perceptions, and “mental models” for their jobs, including the influence of the old rules on how people set goals, orient themselves, and behave.)
- Make explicit the new rules and the new game in the district, inviting participation in design, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.
- Emphasize in all relevant communications the important distinction between “reform” and “improvement.” Include the important idea that isolation is the enemy of improvement. Also, that historically, schools have reformed over and over again without any demonstrable improvement.
- Proceed with a compelling statement of moral purpose and explicit core values regarding the process of education. Guide your leadership team through a strategic planning and improvement process that results in the development of a clear vision, a compelling mission, and district-level SMART goals.
- Teach the plan to other district office officials and school building leaders, helping them to develop new mental models for improvement and preparing them to do the same with their respective constituencies.
- Emphasize district-wide coherence and alignment on these purposes, core values, vision, mission and smart goals, while granting school leaders’ acceptable “accountable autonomy.”

- Acknowledge that coherence and alignment work is a never-ending priority, one that enables knowledge generation, learning, and continuous improvement.
- Collaborate with school leaders on budgeting, aligning school and district budgets and helping each leader allocate funds and human resources strategically so that goals are achieved.
- Collaborate with school and district leaders to develop shared commitments to explicit norms for the quality of treatment and interaction; as well as to language that is strengths-based, solution-focused, and culturally-competent.
- Make cultural sensitivity and competence a district-wide priority in everything; starting with instructional practices for students. Include professional staff policies, professional development, and induction-initiation-promotion systems.
- Start with the district-wide leadership and management team(s); then structure and support professional learning communities district-wide. Pay explicit attention to and provide resources in support of, networking and bridging communications among these communities.
- Emphasize with all relevant stakeholders, but especially district office and principals, the distinction between leaders of learning and building managers.
- Model the orientations, attitudes, and behaviors you expect and require from all personnel. Particularly focus on engagement in continuous learning, knowledge generation, and improvement.
- Emphasize with all relevant stakeholders, but especially district office and principals, the distinction between leaders as persons (individuals as leader-heroes) and leadership as a function or activity that must be distributed widely with shared responsibility and accountability.
- Especially with middle school and high school leaders, jointly craft instructional leadership plans and strategies that emphasize subject matter expertise in mathematics and science and align the work of principals, instructional coaches, and professional learning communities.
- Evaluate the relationships and connections between the district and both families and community agencies. Find out what needs to be done to improve them. If they do not exist, develop them.
- Serve on community advisory boards and various partnership councils, recognizing that a seat at these tables is one of the best ways to promote district and school visions, missions, and goals and also to obtain family and community resources.
- Prioritize and allocate resources for all relevant information technology innovations, including relevant websites, listservs, and interactive designs that enable on-demand information sharing and community engagement.
- Designate district officers and particular school building leaders to bridge, buffer, and broker district-wide and school-community functions.
- Collaborate with school board members, community organization leaders, business and corporate leaders, governmental officials, and higher education representatives to develop Cradle-to-Career partnership councils.

- Use intermediary people and organizations as needed to facilitate this overall agenda, especially when endemic conflicts must be addressed and contested boundaries need to be crossed and bridged.
- Develop your district leadership structure and operational processes with particular reference to the local context, especially so in rural districts in which an elaborate, specialized district office infrastructure is impossible to develop completely and sustain.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 1.3

DTSDE Tenet 1.3: *The district is organized and allocates resources (financial, staff support, materials, etc.) in ways that align appropriate levels of support for schools based on the needs of the school community.*

Impact: The resources in the district are effectively administered to promote school improvement and success.

Strategies for district leaders

- a. District leaders develop a plan and protocol for assessing and allocating resources (e.g., financial, staff support, materials, etc.)
- b. District leaders continuously assess how resources are being used to support school leaders and adjust as necessary.
- c. District leaders ensure that resources are allocated both equitably and adequately throughout the schools in the district.

District leaders use the following strategies when planning for, allocating, and assessing the use of resources:

- Examine the budget carefully, finding out where and how dollars are being spent, and reallocating to match district priorities and goals.
- Evaluate personnel assignment/deployment policies, determining whether the right people are in the right places and making adjustments as needed.
- Emphasize joint improvement planning with specific projects. Demonstrate that district leaders are responsive to each school leader and grant all school leaders some measure of accountable autonomy.
- Develop district-level resource priorities and allocation plans for partnerships with student- and family-serving community agencies, including both school-specific and district-wide partnerships.
- Plan for the differential resource and professional development needs of individual schools in support of the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the APPR framework.
- Target two related, but separate priorities:
 - School capacities -improving each school as a high-performing, learning organization
 - Personnel competencies - using professional development to expand the expertise of key people and teams
- Plan for a strategic deployment of personnel based on school needs and goals (e.g., additional student support professionals for schools with high-needs students; literacy and language specialists for schools serving ESL populations).

- Formulate plans for and allocate resource in support of dropout prevention/intervention and back-on-track programs as needed in individual schools and that are advanced district-wide.
- Build school leaders' commitments and capacities for strategic, goal-oriented budgeting. Ensure that these leaders understand the district's budgeting and also are able to explain budgeting priorities and strategies to their respective staff members.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 1.4

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: The targeted professional development leads to increased teacher effectiveness.

Strategies for District Leaders

- a. District leaders develop a plan for the strategic professional development that is tailored to the needs of district office officials, school leaders, teachers, and student support professionals
- b. District leaders create a calendar of professional development opportunities based on the needs of district and school educators and communicate the calendar to all stakeholders.
- c. District leaders establish mechanisms for technical assistance, mentoring and coaching as follow-up supports and implementation facilitators.

District leaders use the following strategies when developing, communicating, and following up with personnel throughout the district:

- Develop a strategic professional development plan that is framed by the district’s vision, mission, and SMART goals and is in tandem with supervisors’ reports.
- Tailor the strategic professional development plan to the needs of district office officials, school leaders, teachers, and student support professionals.
- Prioritize the professional development needs of school building leaders, ensuring that these leaders are able to take charge of staff members’ learning and professional development needs in their respective buildings.
- Develop a formal calendar and budget for all staff members’ professional development, allocating resources for learning during the summer as well as implementation during the regular school year.
- Review principal performance data, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities for customized professional development.
- Review teacher performance data, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities for customized professional development.
- Review student support professionals’ performance data, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities for customized professional development.
- Review district office staff members’ performance data, looking for strengths, opportunities, needs, and improvement priorities for customized professional development.

- Ensure that all of the above professional development planning and resource allocation are firmly tied to school and district-wide improvement priorities, especially school and district alignment and overall coherence.
- Inquire from principals, teacher leaders, and student support staff about potential topics, ideas, conferences, professional development opportunities that they feel would help them improve.
- Develop and implement aligned school and district office professional development monitoring systems, including mechanisms for in-flight adjustments as unanticipated needs, challenges, and opportunities arise.
- Collaborate with school leaders to develop for embedding new practices in targeted schools.
- Collaborate with school leaders to craft scale-up plans involving the replication and transfer of effective innovations from one school to others.
- Collaborate with school personnel and community partners to deliver professional development opportunities on the social and emotional developmental health of all students.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 1.5

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: Stakeholders across the district have a deep understanding of how students are performing, and can adjust their practices accordingly to promote further student achievement.

Strategies for District Leaders

- a. District leaders communicate the expectations for the use of data to support meeting the vision, Mission/SMART goals of the district.
- b. District leaders identify best practice regarding data-driven instruction and meeting student learning goals.

District leaders use the following strategies when developing, communicating, and implementing data use district-wide:

- Establish a formal vision, mission and SMART goals regarding data-guided decision-making and evidence-based practices and policies. Align each school’s vision, mission and SMART goals with this improvement priority.
- Prioritize and allocate resources for data-guided, SMART goal-driven action research, ensuring that school leaders follow suit firmly and sustainably.
- Require student learning and school performance data in all relevant communications and joint planning with school building leaders.
- Collaborate with school leaders, community representatives, school boards, and families to develop relevant data communications strategies and structures such as community dashboards, relevant websites, and regular reports.
- Delve into the data to find out where the gaps and problems are most evident and also to determine areas of strength.
- Focus on district-level and school-level data system development and improvement to address these gaps.
- Develop data systems and implementation plans to achieve twin priorities:
 - Improvements for particular schools
 - Improvements in the district-wide, cradle-to-career education system developed so that all students are college- and career-ready without needing academic remediation.
- Collaborate with higher education admissions officers to ensure a data-driven alignment of high school course and assessment requirements to college and workforce entry requirements.

- Improve data systems as needed so that they emphasize and provide timely, actionable information about different sub-populations of students, emphasizing their learning and developmental needs and paving the way for targeted, tailored interventions.
- Evaluate and improve the district's system for obtaining, collecting, storing, retrieving, sharing, and disseminating data, consulting the most important data users and contributors.
- Evaluate and improve the quality of the district's information technology hardware and software with special attention to the timely communication and use of student, school, and district performance data.
- Evaluate and improve the competencies of district level officials to evaluate data, determine whether it merits the status of evidence, and then use the evidence to identify, implement and evaluate customized improvement interventions. Provide embedded professional development interventions as needed.
- Evaluate and improve the competencies of school building leaders to evaluate data, determine whether it merits the status of evidence, and use the evidence to identify, implement and evaluate customized improvement interventions. Provide embedded professional development interventions as needed.
- Evaluate the quality of data-related tools and protocols, anticipating that better tools and protocols, district-wide, will go a long way toward solving data problems.
- Review all student achievement data and pertinent demographic data and evaluate the quality of the available data, looking for data system improvements.
- Develop with school and district leaders, school board members, and representative parents and community members, strategies regarding how best to communicate widely and accurately relevant student achievement and school performance data. Consider alternatives such as community dashboards and special websites.
- Cultivate the norms, values, rules, and interaction patterns conducive to high performing learning organizations, emphasizing the importance of data-driven mechanisms for identifying and correcting flaws, errors, and unintended harms.
- Interview district officials, school leaders, and representative teachers and student support professionals to identify and address the obstacles and formidable barriers to data-guided decision-making and evidence-based policy and practice.
- Complete joint planning with school leaders so that school-level improvement strategies based on data also are research supported (evidence based).
- Develop cross-boundary organizational structures and operational procedures for data-sharing between community agencies, district office, and individual schools.
- Model the data- and evidence-related orientations, attitudes, and behaviors you expect from others.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 2.1

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: The school community has a clear vision supported by district staff members that positively affects student achievement.

Strategies for District Leaders

- a. District leaders create a relationship with school leaders based on mutual respect, joint planning, and collaborative decision-making.
- b. District leaders provide mentoring, coaching, technical assistance and social supports to school leaders for curriculum development and implementation.
- c. District leaders collaborate with school leaders to create a school community which is responsive to the needs of its stakeholders.

District leaders use the following strategies when working with school leaders:

- Create a relationship with school leaders based on mutual respect, joint planning, and collaborative decision-making. Explore how district officials can increase each building leaders' commitments, competencies and performance.
- Meet regularly with leadership teams and each school leader to provide mentoring, coaching, technical assistance and social supports. Use these meetings to obtain school leaders' feedback and tap their fresh ideas for innovation.
- Recognize that the development of optimal school-community relationships and engagement strategies is a persistent weakness in pre-service education programs. Plan and provide resources for district-wide professional development focused on these priority goals.
- Collaborate with school leaders to provide and sustain academically supportive, nurturing, and culturally competent school environments.
- Collaborate with school leaders on creating positive relationships and interactions among all of the adults and students in each school.
- Model the orientations, attitudes, and behaviors you expect and require from all personnel. Particularly focus on engagement in continuous learning, knowledge generation, and improvement.
- Avoid standardized planning and resource allocations for every school and provide school leaders with a variety of options for support so that leaders can meet the special needs of their respective schools

- Collaborate with school leaders to create a school-wide vision, mission, core values, and SMART goals that are in alignment with the district vision, mission and goals.
- Collaborate with school leaders to provide and develop school environments that are responsive to the needs of all school stakeholders, including students, parents, families, and community.
- Assist school leaders in aligning the various components in their school's improvement plan, and also in aligning the school's improvement plan with the district's overall plan.
- Routinely provide technical assistance to, as well as mentoring and coaching for, school leaders so that they are able to interpret and implement State Education Department policy mandates and recommendations with fidelity.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 3.1

DTSDE Tenet 3.1: *The district works collaboratively with the school (s) to ensure CCLS curriculum that provides 21st Century and College and Career Readiness skills in all content areas and provides fiscal and human resources for implementation.*

Impact: The curriculum created and used provides teachers opportunities to deliver instruction that is CCLS aligned and challenges every student.

Strategies for District Leaders:

- a. District officials work collaboratively with school leaders to establish both long and short term plans for CCLS development and implementation.
- b. District leaders allocate human and fiscal resources for curriculum development and implementation.
- c. District leaders monitor and evaluate curriculum and instruction and make adjustments based on student data.

District leaders use the following strategies when planning for curriculum and instruction:

- Collaborate with school leaders to establish both long and short term plans for CCLS development and implementation with particular emphasis on how the CCLS shifts relate to curriculum development, teaching and learning.
- Recognize that all relevant CCLS planning, implementation, and teaching-learning shifts require customized professional development. Anticipate how much time it will take to achieve complete implementation. Allocate human and fiscal resources accordingly.
- Guide school leaders' understanding of CCLS-aligned curricula and shifts and how they impact instruction and learning. School leaders can then implement Annual Professional Performance Reviews which are aligned with the CCLS-structured teaching and learning.
- Create an evaluation-driven, organizational learning and improvement system that is focused on CCLS alignment, implementation, and collective instructional coherence in all schools.
- Recognize the enormity of this change and work collaboratively and regularly with school leaders and teachers to establish a plan for curriculum development and implementation.
- Ensure that the district office and each school have an aligned curriculum plan with both short-term and long-term SMART goals.
- Monitor CCLS implementation and continuous improvement district-wide, taking stock of resource and professional development needs for CCLS shifts in specific schools and across the district.
- Adjust and improve curriculum implementation based on assessment data.

- Collaborate with school leaders on joint projects to monitor the effectiveness of data systems and make improvements as needed.
- District leaders respond to the needs of individual schools for additional resources and professional development in support of the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the APPR framework.
- Be responsive to each school leader and grant school leaders some measure of accountable autonomy.
- Plan for formal resource development and allocation for key instructional technology, equipment, and professional development priorities.
- Plan for formal resource development and allocation for out-of-school time learning and instructional supports.
- Make partnerships with student and family-serving community agencies a priority by planning and allocating resources for them.
- Plan for resource priorities and allocation for parent and family engagement initiatives, both school-specific and district-wide.
- Respond to the needs of individual schools for additional resources and professional development in support of the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the APPR framework.
- Invest strategically in both school capacities (improving each school as a high-performing, learning organization) and personnel competencies (using professional development to expand the expertise of key people and teams).
- Make resource allocation decisions in service of the college and career readiness of students whose families have limited or no history of postsecondary education.
- Deploy personnel strategically, based on school needs and goals (e.g., additional student support professionals for schools with high-needs students; literacy and language specialists for schools serving ESL populations).
- Invest in college and career readiness-oriented counseling systems.
- Determine formal plans for and investments in dropout prevention/intervention and back-on-track programs as needed.
- Allocate sufficient time and provide dedicated resources to support the adoption and implementation of complex innovations—especially the CCLS, the APPR, and RTI/PBIS.

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 4.1

DTSDE Tenet 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 accounts for student data, needs, goals and levels of engagement.*

Impact: Teachers and instructional staff provide students with consistent rigorous learning opportunities.

Strategies for District Leaders

- a. District leaders work collaboratively with school leaders to create plans for teachers professional development needs, dovetailing these plans with school leaders' companion professional development needs.
- b. District leaders provide a variety of professional development learning opportunities, ensuring that they are responsive to individual and group needs identified in the APPR and also are aligned with CCLS-related shifts.
- c. District leaders implement evaluation strategies that provide data regarding needs for follow-up professional development for teachers and school leaders.

District leaders use the following strategies when planning, implementing, and monitoring professional development opportunities district-wide:

- District leaders and school leaders use data to make decisions about the professional development needs of school and district personnel.
- Professional development opportunities make specific reference to students' academic needs, goals and levels of engagement.
- Provide a variety of methods for delivery (e.g., online, traditional classes, collaborative learning, etc.) of professional development opportunities for district and school staff.
- The district plan includes a need-responsive, evaluation-driven, and data-informed professional development plan for *teachers*, a plan that includes implementation follow-through mechanisms (e.g., responsive coaching, booster training, peer teaching and mentoring).
- The district professional development plan for teachers explicitly connects the APPR process, the CCLS implementation, and the district's strategies for the induction of new teachers.
- The district plan includes a need-responsive, evaluation-driven, and data-informed professional development plans for *student support professionals*, a plan that includes implementation follow-through mechanisms.

- The district plan includes a need-responsive, evaluation-driven, and data-informed professional development plans for *principals and other leaders*, a plan that includes implementation follow-through mechanisms.
- District leaders ensure that all such professional development planning and resource allocation is tied firmly to aligned school and district improvement planning (i.e., professional development enables the implementation of both the school’s theory of action and the district’s theory of action).
- District officials have formal plans for embedding new teaching and learning practices in targeted schools, as well as a scale-up plan involving other schools needing to adopt, implement, and embed the same innovations.
- Emphasize school-wide an action research cycle with a six step sequence:
 1. Set a SMART goal
 2. Obtain or collect data
 3. Make sense of the data, deciding if this information counts as evidence
 4. Find and implement an solid intervention that fits the evidence
 5. Implement the intervention with fidelity
 6. Monitoring student progress in order to set new SMART goals and start a new action research cycle

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 5.1

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: Students receive supports that appropriately address their needs.

Strategies for District Leaders:

- a. District leaders collaborate with leaders of student-serving community agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive system of learning supports and professional development, which emphasizes student learning barrier prevention and early intervention and positive student social and emotional developmental health.
- b. District officials collaborate with school leaders to provide coaching, modeling, and other forms of follow-up support to school level staff so that they will be able to effectively implement strategies that promote positive student social and emotional developmental health.

District leaders use the following strategies to meet the social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of students:

- Collaborate with school leaders to designate student support professionals to serve as school-family-community service coordinators.
- Designating a district office leader who provides system-wide coordination.
- Collaborate with school leaders to identify professional development needs of student support professionals and teachers. Determine needs for assistance in protocol development and overall student services designs.
- Collaborate with school leaders to ensure that all related improvement initiatives such as positive behavior intervention systems, response-to-intervention, special education services, and school climate planning are aligned and where possible integrated with services aimed at student social and emotional developmental health.
- Examine, in collaboration with school leaders, student, family, and community demographic data so that resources are allocated strategically and efficiently.
- Identify best practice as demonstrated by other districts and documented in relevant research
- Understand state standards for SEL
- Examine various SEL programs and curriculums, as well as afterschool programs, to determine which evidence-based program will be most effective for the district's schools and students
- Develop a district-wide policy for supporting the social and emotional developmental health of all students.

- Create a district-wide policy directed toward the specific aspects of positive school climates in every school.
- Establish and foster formal partnerships with community organizations that are tailored to the needs of the students in the schools.
- Institute a data-driven, comprehensive system of learning supports with an explicit focus on addressing appropriate behavior, engagement, academic achievement, and students' barriers to learning.
- Prioritize and address the learning supports needed by specific sub-populations of students (e.g., students in the juvenile justice, child welfare, and special education systems).
- Focus efforts on improving the education of the whole child, including academic, social and emotional components.
- Make it a district-wide practice to collaborate with pre-school and early childcare providers to promote SEL among young students, while assessing their SEL needs for kindergarten.
- Encourage school leaders to involve parents as well as community agencies in SEL.
- Encourage an SEL data sharing culture by having schools share their respective SEL successes, best practices, and lessons learned.
- Pursue funding and other resources (e.g., loaned staff from community agencies, parent paraprofessionals) in order to fully implement SEL program(s) or curriculum.
- Ensure that SEL is threaded throughout the district, starting in pre-k and continuing through high school.
- Provide technical assistance materials and other relevant professional development resources so that students, staff and parents recognize the connection between SEL and improved academic outcomes for students
- Encourage and promote model behaviors among adults in the school who are teaching students in SEL programs.
- Promote a district-wide approach to SEL in tandem with individualized supports for students who need personalized interventions.
- Regularly assess the schools' climates to identify strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- Oversee evaluation of the SEL program to ensure program implementation fidelity.
- Guarantee sufficient time for SEL programs to become fully implemented.
- Provide enough time for staff to be adequately trained.
- Ensure sufficient operation infrastructure for SEL programming
- Ensure that each school's mission and vision emphasize social and emotional development and its connections with academic learning and achievement.
- Examine all school related activities, such as athletics and clubs, and emphasize with school leaders how each activity influences student attendance, engagement, and SEL.

- Establish a district-wide and school-based school climate team
- Gather student data over an extended period of time to be able to identify and address problematic trends in behaviors particularly in sub-populations of students, especially those at risk of in-grade retention and school dropout.

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet One

Statement of Practice 6.1

DTSDE Tenet 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.*

Impact: Families in the district work in close partnership with schools to provide supports needed to improve student achievement.

Strategies for district leaders

- a. District leaders create a plan with recommended school policies for a welcoming environment for all parents/caregivers, entire family systems and community members.
- b. District leaders implement a communication strategy for the policy or plan which includes all parents/caregivers, school community, and community partners.
- c. District leaders evaluate resources and community partnerships and link families with resources that improve student and family outcomes.

District leaders use the following strategies when working with families and community partners:

- Create a plan with recommended school policies for a welcoming environment for all parents/caregivers, entire family systems and community members. Pay particular attention to newcomers and culturally diverse people.
- Hold regular meetings with families and community members to communicate the district's vision, mission, and SMART goals and to obtain feedback and ideas so that families and community members become engaged.
- Recognize that pre-service education programs are lacking in providing information or strategies for family engagement and community partnerships. Prioritize district-wide and school-specific professional development and technical assistance in this area for principals, teachers, and student support professionals.
- Collaborate with school leaders to develop joint funding resources (e.g., Title 1 dollars, special education funds) to hire and deploy representative parents/caregivers as parent engagement/ family support coordinators.
- Collaborate regularly with school leaders, representative teachers and student support professionals to develop more expansive and effective student engagement strategies, including strategies that address chronic attendance problems and tardiness.
- Collaborate regularly with school leaders, representative teachers, and parent leaders to develop improved homework policies and practices so that parents/caregivers can support both students and teachers.

- Establish a district-wide strategic policy that explicitly calls for parent leadership and family engagement, including a welcoming climate of belonging for all staff, students, families and community stakeholders.
- Develop a district level plan for engaging specific sub-populations of parents and families, a plan that can be tailored to the specific needs of each school and also extends beyond conventional parent involvement.
- Initiate proactive outreach and engagement plans, especially ones where district and school leaders meet with parents and community leaders in extra-school settings and at times that are convenient for them.
- Give representative parent leaders joint responsibilities for communicating with and engaging parents with challenging schedules and unpleasant personal experiences with schools. Reward these parent leaders for their work as parent organizers, family support workers, and school improvement aides.
- Develop regular communication mechanisms that reach targeted parents and family systems, ensuring that all communications are in multiple, pertinent languages.
- Establish rapid response, family support systems in partnership with community health and social service agencies, based on recognition that high student turnover, chronic absenteeism, and recurrent tardiness indicate parental stress and family support needs.
- Collaborate with community health and social service providers to explore the development of “two-generation strategies” whereby one of the best ways to help and educate a child is by helping and supporting the parent(s).

The written district plan for communication with families should include the following:

- Multiple methods for communication
- Communication in multiple languages as needed
 - Assess the needs of the school and classroom to determine what languages are spoken in the homes of students
 - Provide written communication in multiple languages, address the need for translations on school/district website, and provide translators for phone or face-to-face meetings
 - Reassess the language needs of parents periodically
- Acknowledgement that a traditional parent may not be the caregiver for every student and a plan to communicate with all caregivers – including foster parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, etc.
- Assessment of the differences of race, ethnicity, SES, education level of families of children and make efforts to adjust engagement initiative accordingly (Cultures may have differing views on the role of parents and education and require different types of interventions)
- Communication at regular intervals about: district wide events, school wide events, relevant community events
- Regular evaluation of district wide practices are effective in engaging parents
 - Include identification of barriers to increased engagement

- Make changes based on evaluation findings
- Regular evaluation of district wide practices are effective in engaging community partners
 - Include identification of barriers to increased engagement
 - Make changes based on evaluation findings
- Varying plans based on the level of education- engagement strategies in high school may differ compared to engagement with elementary school kids
- Different strategies to engage parents across the schools.
- Adherence to Title I parental involvement policy guidelines
- Use of data to develop, implement, and monitor the District communication plan
- Periodic and regular evaluation and revision of District communication plan

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet Two

Statement of Practice 2.2

DTSDE Tenet 2.2: *The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).*

Impact: The uniformly seen, heard, and known long-term vision is accomplished by the achievement of the school's SMART goals.

Strategies

- d. School stakeholders (Principal, staff, students, parents) created and support the SMART goals/mission and vision of the school.
- e. The school leader use a data-driven plan to achieve the SMART goals/mission and vision of the school
- f. The school leader, in collaboration with school stakeholders, monitors and evaluates progress toward achievement of SMART goals and vision of the school.

School leaders use the following strategies in the creation, use, and monitoring of the school's SMART goals/mission and vision:

- Rely on systems thinking in your school improvement planning and SMART goal development.
- Look for data-based patterns and interactions among your school's identified DTSDE improvement priorities so that you are able to address two or more priorities at the same time, creating a powerful synergy.
- Beware standardized leadership checklists and follow-the-number formulas for improvement.
- Never lose sight of the fact that *leadership is contingent on context, meaning that there can be no one best method or style to school leadership*. Take stock of the influences of your school's location, student and family characteristics, and your school level and size as you make leadership choices.
- Use the DTSDE process and diagnostic improvement report as an opportunity to clarify, modify, and strengthen the school's vision, mission and SMART goals, ensuring that these statements clearly and accurately announce to all stakeholders what your school will value, do and become.

- Framed by your school’s vision and mission, use DTSDE data as the baseline for the development of SMART goals that move the school toward highly effective status and announce to all stakeholders what your school is prioritizing and doing.
- Collaborate with district level leaders to ensure that your school’s vision, mission and goals are aligned with and nested in the district’s vision, mission and goals.
- Collaborate with teachers, student support professionals and other school community members to develop core values and formal norms for how people will talk to and treat each other, especially when problems arise; and gain their commitments to promote and co-enforce these values and norms.
- Instead of “school reform,” substitute “school improvement” -with a focus on the forces, factors and actors that you can do something about.
- Champion the idea that isolation is the enemy of improvement and learning, developing professional learning communities among staff members and small learning communities for students.
- Commit to and announce the all-important distinction between *a leader of learning* and *a building leader-manager*; making sure that the right things are prioritized and done and also ensure that they are done completely and correctly.
- Develop formal strategies for facilitating and evaluating student, staff and organizational learning. Avoid all tendencies toward “one and done improvement planning.”
- Develop the will and skill of building leadership team members and other school teacher leaders to help colleagues, parents, and community leaders learn the school’s improvement plan and help implement its key strategies.
- Become a strong, relentless leader-advocate with a laser-like focus on these four questions so that school community stakeholders never lose sight of the school’s primary mission for the learning and achievement of all students and are able to set the best SMART goals.
 - What and how do we want our students to learn?
 - How will we know if each student is learning each of the skills, concepts, and dispositions we have deemed most essential?
 - How will we respond when some of our students do not learn?
 - How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who already are proficient?
- Develop leadership for formal structures such as the building leadership team and professional learning communities.
- In addition, pursue opportunities for leadership via informal social networks of teachers, other adults in the school, students, parents, and community members.
- For every new improvement priority, SMART goal, and strategy, use data to emphasize the comparative advantage of the proposed improvement in relation to past-present practices and policies.

- Emphasize and build relational trust: your staff and other school community stakeholders believe that you have the right value system and are dependable, consistent, competent, and truthful.
- Anticipate and develop strategies to address the fear-based root causes of resistance to change by clearly stating the goals of the work, following through on your promises, and demonstrating constant collegiality in the face of tension so that teachers and other staff members have the courage to take calculated risks.

Research and resources for guidance

Three Special Resources

The two publications and the link listed below are very useful and important because they align in many ways with the DTSDE. In fact, these practical publications showcase a special principal performance rubric and rating scale, which mirror the DTSDE scale—highly effective, effective, developing and in need of improvement.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Two

Statement of Practice 2.3

DTSDE Tenet 2.3: *Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.*

Impact: Available resources address the immediate needs of the school community.

Strategies for school leaders

- a. The school leader works collaboratively with school staff to create a system for expanded learning time for students.
- b. The school leader works with partner organizations to meet the academic and social needs of students.
- c. The school leader analyzes and distributes financial resources to target efforts to meet school goals.

When making decisions about programmatic, human and financial resources, the school leader uses the following strategies:

- Before beginning a school improvement plan, look at the history of your school's improvement planning. Determine if there is a sub-optimal pattern of adding resource-hungry priority after priority with little attention as to whether they fit together and whether they are effective and needed today.
- Analyze your time allocation to determine how much time you actually spend on the promotion and achievement of priority goals, making adjustments as needed.
- Anticipate and allocate the time it takes to make every important school improvement decision. Include the strategies required to gain staff members' commitments to every proposed change.
- Recognize and develop learning and resource allocation strategies for the emotional aspects of every change. In particular, expect resistance that stems from two sources—a lack of trust and staff members' sense of grief and loss over the practices you are asking them to give up.
- Anticipate and allocate the time and resources for two related, but separate co-requisites for every new improvement priority: (1) People's competencies and (2) Your school's organizational readiness and capacities.
- Monitor, assess, and continue to improve the orientation-initiation-induction systems for all new staff members.
- Emphasize the full inclusion and social integration of culturally-diverse staff members in new member systems as well as in school level decision making processes.
- Implementation is not an automatic process: Allocate the required time, social supports and professional development resources needed to facilitate implementation fidelity, including on-going monitoring as well as on-demand coaching and technical assistance.

- Professional development experiences should be provided year-round, including both during the summer and during the academic year. Anticipate and allocate resources for follow-up training and coaching and implementation assistance during the school year.
- Distribute leadership for every proposed improvement (innovation). Organize and mobilize the school leaders, as well as your school’s opinion shapers, so that they help develop others’ commitments and competencies.
- Develop clear, coherent, and actionable communications strategies and problem-solving protocols.
- Provide teachers with learning and instructional resources from the school’s student support professionals as well as from community health and social service providers.
- If student turnover is a problem, collaborate with community leaders and district officials to develop stable school placements for students, also recognizing that family support strategies implemented by community health and social services professionals will be needed.
- If teacher turnover is a problem, collaborate with district leaders to develop and implement teacher assignment and support plans that encourage and support retention and high quality performance.
- If student turnover and teacher turnover pose problems, emphasize and implement the following improvement strategies:
 - school safety
 - student conduct (including student-to-student and student-adult relationships)
 - adults’ attitudes and behavior
 - parent involvement
- When planning resources, make the distinction between structural change and cultural change.
 - Structural change proceeds with new rules and regulations that you and others can mandate.
 - Cultural change cannot be mandated because it entails altering enduring assumptions, beliefs, expectations and habits that people in the organization view as normal and “the way we do things around here.” Compared to structural change, cultural change takes more time, technical assistance and resources because it involves changing the course of your school’s history, and it is certain to create conflict.
- Take stock of what it will take for you to stay on the job, maintain your health and well-being and remain committed to creating an excellent school. Draw on assistance, supports, and resources provided by other school leaders and especially your superintendent and other district office leaders.

Research and resources for guidance

Three Special Resources

The two publications and the link listed below are very useful and important because they align in many ways with the DTSDE. In fact, these practical publications showcase a special principal performance

rubric and rating scale, which mirror the DTSDE scale—highly effective, effective, developing and in need of improvement.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Two

Statement of Practice 2.4

DTSDE Tenet 2.4: *The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review to conduct targeted and frequent observations and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.*

Impact: Administrators and staff are held accountable for continuous improvement.

Strategies for school leaders

- d. The school leader and other school administrators develop a system wide APPR plan
- e. School leaders implement the APPR plan
- f. School leaders monitor and suggest adjustments to the APPR plan

School leaders use the following strategies when developing, implementing and monitoring the district APPR plan:

- Frame and name the annual professional performance review (APPR) as a strengths-based, solution-focused assessment process; one that facilitates professional development and strengthens school climate at the same time that it improves student learning and academic achievement.
- Use the APPR process as a springboard for respectful, blame-free, data-guided and relationship-building “challenging conversations” about improvement priorities and professional development needs. Follow through with individuals, like-groups of teachers, and formal professional learning communities.
- Ensure that challenging conversations triggered by the APPR and the DTSDE provide teachers and other school staff with accurate, candid feedback about their performance, especially performance that is sub-par and unacceptable.
- Focus APPR-generated, challenging conversations with teachers on their assumptions, especially their assumptions about students’ readiness and abilities to learn and achieve as well as their own ability to help their students learn and succeed.
- Ensure that challenging conversations triggered by the APPR and the DTSDE focus on the distinctive needs and strengths of diverse student sub-populations, especially English Language Learners, special needs students, students in foster families, and students in several systems (special education, mental health, juvenile justice, and child welfare).
- Clearly, firmly, and constantly communicate high expectations to teachers. This ensures that teachers feel supported and, like you, are less likely to tolerate ineffective teaching. In short, create strong instructional cultures—where teachers work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, where school leaders take action with teachers who perform poorly, and where great teaching is a top priority.

- Make the distinction between instructional leader (one person) and instructional leadership (as a school-wide function); and then develop a system of roles, relationships, responsibilities and accountabilities for high quality teaching and learning.
- Develop coherent, comprehensive, and consistent instructional leadership plans that unite your role as instructional leader, the role of instructional coaches, and the roles of professional learning communities and teams.
- Keep in mind the following guideline for instructional leadership: The greater the distribution of instructional expertise and instructional leadership, the more there is available to all school staff members and students. In short, your role is to cultivate widespread sharing and instructional leadership.
- When developing instructional leadership plans and strategies, take stock of the special subject matter expertise (pedagogical content knowledge) needed in all subjects, but especially in middle school and high school mathematics and science. In middle schools and high schools, expect to distribute instructional leadership responsibilities to subject matter specialist-coaches.
- Collaborate with teacher leaders on how to connect and integrate technology, pedagogy and knowledge about change in order to construct and sustain learning environments that are wider and deeper.
- Acknowledge and anticipate that this work involves changing the attitudes and behaviors of individuals. Ultimately, the goal is to develop *collective clarity, collective coherence, and a shared mindset*, so that school improvement initiatives are connected and integrated in the school's improvement goals.
- Champion the common core learning standards (CCLS) and 21st Century skills, helping staff members, parents and community leaders catch the vision and share the mission for all students' postsecondary education completion, with advanced competence.
- Champion the idea of whole child development with robust teaching and learning strategies, helping staff members resist the temptation to "teach to the test."
- Because teachers' abilities to help students hinges on their own professional learning and development, understand evidence-based, broadly-inclusive adult learning strategies and use this knowledge when you development professional development plans and allocate resources. For example:
 - Develop clear, coherent, and aligned professional development goals for your professional staff (teachers, student support professionals), making sure that you connect these goals to student learning and achievement and also to your school's organizational learning and performance.
 - Plan and implement this professional development process with the same quality and care as the best teachers do for their students.
 - Keep in mind that professional development should be personalized and laser focused, with only a few priorities addressed at a time
- Reach out to find out what conditions need to be in place for your teachers and student support professionals to do their jobs effectively and use their talents to the fullest. Start with their ability to

learn and improve from their own practice. Use this feedback to jointly craft better staff support systems, work configurations and school climate improvement strategies.

- Develop a school-wide instructional improvement system geared toward the varying needs of new and veteran teachers and provide developmentally appropriate professional development opportunities customized to the needs of teacher sub-populations.
- Understand the right drivers for the attitudes, emotions, and behaviors you seek, especially among teachers; and remember that the wrong drivers generate gaming (e.g., encouraging students to drop out so they won't take the test; teaching to the test, neglecting the whole child).

Research and resources for guidance

Three Special Resources

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Two

Statement of Practice 2.5

DTSDE Tenet 2.5: *Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).*

Impact: Measurable progress toward critical school-wide goals is achieved.

Strategies for school leaders

- a. School leaders model the use of and require staff to use evidence based systems to improve individual and school-wide practices.
- b. School leader monitors and revises the evidence based systems

School leaders use the following strategies when developing, utilizing, and monitoring the evidence-based system in their school:

- Develop basic consensus on the measurement indicators for improvement and performance. Use the data to determine what to keep doing, start doing, and stop doing.
- Prioritize the quality, accessibility, and usability of the school's data system, dovetailing its development with recommended practices for teachers and student support professionals.
- Develop decision-making protocols and technical assistance resources that help teachers and student support professionals to evaluate data, determine whether this information counts as evidence, and then select, implement and monitor an evidence-based intervention.
- Critically examine your school's data on special education referrals, being alert for a disproportionate number of referrals involving culturally diverse and ethnic minority students.
- No matter how small the wins may be, share data-based successes to create "seeing-is-believing" moments for teachers, student support professionals and other school community members.
- Learn how to take your school's "organizational temperature" via data collection and staff feedback so that you make solid decisions about what improvement priorities to emphasize at any particular time.
- Monitor, assess and continue to improve the four core components of school climate:
 - Relationship among school staff members
 - Relationships between staff members and parents
 - Relationships between staff members and students
 - Student-to-student relationships

- Assume that flaws and systematic errors are the norm, not the exception; and develop with building leadership teams user-friendly, data-driven error detection and correction procedures.
- Finally, remember that data are relatively meaningless without standards. Provide regular, structured opportunities for your staff members to compare and contrast your school's data with best practice data from other schools, seeking opportunities to adopt their superior practices and policies as appropriate and feasible.

Research and resources for guidance

Three Special Resources

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet Three

Statement of Practice 3.2

DTSDE Tenet 3.2: *The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.*

Impact: Curricula used meet the needs of students, leading to college and career readiness.

Strategies for school leaders:

- a. School leader develops a comprehensive school improvement plan with SMART goals for student achievement, professional development for teachers, and implementation of CCLS curricula.
- b. School leader provides teachers with professional development focused on the alignment of the CCLS and their own instruction.
- c. School leader monitors implementation to ensure that curricula encompass all relevant CCLS and NYS standards.

School leaders should use the following strategies to meet the needs of students with a CCLS aligned curricula:

- There is a systematic plan for curriculum and instruction that includes targeted SMART goals to address the needs of all students.
- The curriculum plan is developed in conjunction with the school's teachers.
- A formal schedule for professional development support for teachers and school staff is developed and that teachers have input into the schedule and topics for professional development.
- There is time in the school schedule for both vertical and horizontal collaborative curriculum work by teachers.
- Teachers within and across grades and subjects collaborate on curriculum development and instructional pedagogies.
- CCLS-aligned pedagogical support is provided for teachers and staff—with special emphasis on CCLS-related shifts, including: time for visitation between classrooms, cross-grade planning, use of exemplars, access to curriculum experts, and access to conferences for CCLS.
- CCLS standards and shifts are included in all curricula and across all areas of instruction, including, but not limited to, AIS/RTI, dual credit courses, and electives.
- Strategies are implemented to ensure that all educators are able to describe the purpose and explain the rationale of the CCLS.

- Targeted goals are developed for all students as well as for subgroups of students, including English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, Gifted and Talented students, and students from disadvantaged families.
- Curriculum is monitored, evaluated and adjusted regularly, using student data.

The Comprehensive School Improvement Plan should include the following items pertaining to curricula:

- School plans for alignment to CCLS and CCLS shifts
- School-wide plans for implementation of CCLS and shifts
- CCLS-aligned learning goals for students at all grade levels
- Year-long scope and sequence documents that scaffold student learning
- Clear, detailed, feasible, and adaptable unit plans
- Framed by these unit plans, lesson plans aligned to CCLS
- Supporting materials (class work, homework, etc.) for lesson plans
- Resources and technical assistance strategies for module development and implementation
- Pre-tests to assess students' prior knowledge and skills in order to shape unit pacing and instruction
- Student performance tasks to be administered in the middle and at the end of each module
- Formative assessments at the unit level to monitor and adjust curriculum
- Assessments that pinpoint the progress and special needs of particular subgroups or students who need extra help
- Reference to curriculum modules at engageny.org for school year

Research and resources for guidance

Common Core Learning Standards

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CCSS Instructional Practice Guide English Language Arts K-2 [CCLS ELA K2](#)

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CCSS Instructional Practice Guide Literacy in Science and Technical Studies 6-12
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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts Tenet Three

Statement of Practice 3.3

DTSDE Tenet 3.3: *Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.*

Impact: All students show growth in meeting the demands of CCLS across grade/subject areas, leading to improvements in achievement.

Strategies for teachers:

- a. Teachers work collaboratively to develop lesson plans that meet CCLS and DDI protocols and address achievement for all students.
- b. Teachers use these lesson plans across all grade levels and content areas.
- c. Teachers monitor and adjust lesson plans to support CCLS shifts and NYS standards.

Teachers should use the following strategies when creating, implementing and monitoring lesson , unit, and annual plans:

- Develop lesson (or unit and annual) plans guided by the CCLS and NYS standards
- Use curriculum tools such as pacing calendars and curriculum maps in development of lesson plans
- Include data-driven instruction protocols in lesson plans
- Design lesson, unit and annual plans to build every student's higher-order thinking and deep content knowledge
- Work collaboratively with other teachers, both within and across grade levels, to develop coherent, structured unit and lesson plans that are sequenced and scaffolded for all students
- Plan and use a variety of strategies, complex materials, and texts to challenge and engage students
- Collect a variety of data on students to assess the curricular needs of all students and use these data to adjust curricula
- Collaborate within and across grade levels to discuss instructional techniques and share successes
- Provide necessary academic supports (e.g., AIS, after school coaching) for all students, across all subgroups

Research and resources for guidance

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Data Driven Instruction Case Studies <http://www.engageny.org/resource/ddi-calendars>

Data Driven Instruction Action Planning Templates [Action Planning Templates](#)

Data Driven Instruction Implementation Rubric [DDI Rubric](#)

Data Driven Instruction Sample Assessments and Resources [DDI Sample Assessments](#)

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet Three

Statement of Practice 3.4

DTSDE Tenet 3.4: *The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across grades and subjects creating interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.*

Impact: Students have multiple opportunities to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities that increase their ability to be academically successful.

Strategies for school leaders and teachers:

- a. The school leader and teachers collaborate to develop an interdisciplinary curricula which includes the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities
- b. Teachers collaborate within and across grade levels to use the interdisciplinary curricula
- c. Teachers reflect on their use of the interdisciplinary curricula and make adjustments as needed.

School leaders and teachers should include the following when creating interdisciplinary curricular plans:

- Year-long scope and sequence documents that scaffold student learning
- Curriculum mapping that incorporates arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities
- Clear lesson (and unit/annual) plans that are explicitly aligned to CCLS
- Module framing/overview documents
- CCLS-aligned learning goals for students at all grade levels
- Performance tasks to be administered in the middle and at the end of each module
- Supporting materials (class work, homework, etc.) for lesson plans
- Formative assessments at the unit level to monitor and adjust curriculum
- Assessments that address attention towards particular subgroups or students who need extra help
- Project-based learning that requires subject matter integration, critical thinking skills, and teamwork
- Integrated skills and assessments with essential questions
- Activities linked to essential questions
- Collaboration among teachers and school leaders to create and revise interdisciplinary curricula
- Inquiries that help students discover the natural connections between specific field disciplines
- Professional development for teachers on incorporating interdisciplinary curricula into instruction

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts Tenet Three

Statement of Practice 3.5

DTSDE Tenet 3.5: *Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking and ownership of learning.*

Impact: The alignment between the curriculum and the assessment leads to improved student achievement.

Strategies for teachers

- a. Teachers develop a comprehensive system for collecting and using student assessment data.
- b. Teachers use a variety of student assessment data.
- c. Teachers provide ongoing feedback to students based on assessment data.

Teachers should use the following strategies when working with data:

- Collect and use student data for curriculum planning for all students, with special attention to ELL students, disabled students, and students from disadvantaged families
- Hold team data-analysis meetings after each interim assessment
- Use different types of data (demographic, pedagogical, process, achievement) to support decisions about curricula
- Employ rubrics, student responses to questions, demographics, check lists, and test scores to determine student learning styles, strengths and weaknesses
- Attend professional development to improve competencies for data-driven instruction
- Assess CCLS and NYS standards to improve instruction and curricula
- Provide immediate feedback on assessments to school stakeholders
- Provide user-friendly, succinct data reports routinely to the school leader, parents/guardians, and students
- Provide a variety of student assessments to parents about their students' academic performance
- Work directly with students to help them understand their own data
- Work with students to help them self-assess, understand rubrics, and set goals
- Work with students to help them reflect on feedback and adjust learning goals

Research and resources for guidance

Data Driven Instruction from Engage NY(2013).

Data Driven Instruction <http://www.engageny.org/data-driven-instruction>

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Curriculum Planning For SPED, ELL, & Disadvantaged Students

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet Four

Statement of Practice 4.2

DTSDE Tenet 4.2: *School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.*

Impact: The school’s instructional practices promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry, leading to increased student achievement and the meeting of student goals.

Strategies for school leaders:

- a. The school leader and teacher leaders ensure that teachers use lesson, unit, annual plans that are informed by data and goals for student learning
- b. Teacher leaders and coaches collaborate with teachers to develop plans aligned to the needs of all students.
- c. Teacher leaders and coaches collaborate with teachers to establish goals for all students based on grade-level benchmarks and other evaluations of performance appropriate to the subject area, grade level, and students’ language and learning needs.

School leaders and teacher leaders use the following strategies with teachers to promote planning for good instruction:

- Develop, monitor, and revise as needed the implementation of school-wide models for unit and lesson plans which are detailed, CCLS-aligned, and structured by learning targets/objectives and goals
- Drive planning for instructional coherence school-wide by emphasizing a “raise all boats” message.
- Communicate that plans be rooted in common purposes and instructional strategies, while permitting and encouraging justifiable experimentation that enables all teachers and students to succeed.
- Ensure that all plans incorporate strategies for differentiating instruction—preparing students for the lesson by drawing on prior knowledge, scaffolding complex tasks, helping students apply new knowledge and skills through multiple modalities, providing opportunities for personal and team-based inquiry-based learning, and adapting the instruction in other ways as needed based on students’ language proficiency and unique learning needs

- Include in all lesson plans, both on the drawing board and as implemented, that the following core components are included:
 - A lesson objective -- posted for students, stated by the teacher, or generated by students themselves
 - A structure to the lesson that includes, for example, purpose, connection to prior knowledge, explicit teaching, guided student work, independent student work, assessment, reflection/metacognitive activity, closure of lesson tied back to the objective.
 - Provisions for thoughtful interactions between teacher and students, and students and other students, in which students suggest next steps in their learning.
- Include in all annual and unit plans, a variety of methods of assessing students including self and peer assessment. Implement an APPR process that reinforces the above strategies and serves to identify improvement priorities and professional development needs with regard to planning for instruction.
- Integrate student support professionals, leaders of extra-curricular programs, and parents/guardians in activities when appropriate.
- Align all relevant instructional leadership strategies, especially principal supervision and evaluation, the work of instructional coaches, and peer assessments in professional learning communities.
- Consistently collect data and use this information to reflect on leadership practices as well as overall school performance, seeking guidance and assistance as needed from district level leaders.
- Principal and other school leaders periodically observe teachers' classes and give them timely, action-oriented feedback on lesson, unit, and annual planning, that highlights building from strengths

School leaders and teacher leaders take note of the following school-wide improvement priorities in supporting planning for instruction:

- Emphasize twin, non-negotiable priorities school-wide: All students can and will learn and achieve, and all teachers believe that they are able to make this happen systematically.
- Develop and disseminate regularly a district curriculum (in electronic or hard copy form) that is available and accessible for every course and grade level subject.
- Develop and disseminate pacing guides or timelines that are available for every course or grade-level subject.
- Develop CCLS and APPR implementation monitoring mechanisms so that gaps and professional development needs can be identified and addressed.
- Establish social marketing and promotion strategies aimed at gaining widespread support among all members of the school community for the school's ambitious learning and instructional goals for all students.
- Generate a school-wide "culture of data" in which all decision-making is grounded in evidence regarding two core priorities: The quality of teaching/instruction and the quality/amount of student learning
- Implement teacher-responsive time allocation and use plans; with particular emphasis on providing blocks of dedicated time for both individual and professional learning community planning.

- Structure times, spaces, and procedures for teachers to share knowledge and successful teaching and engagement strategies
- With a special priority for the CCLS, ensure that teachers understand why they are teaching what they are teaching. This, in turn, helps students understand why they are learning what they are learning.
- Collaborate with teachers to create feasible strategies for ensuring that parents/guardians know the learning goals for their child.
- Develop and implement a school-wide plan for homework, a plan that coordinates big assignments, facilitates students' timely completion and engagement, and encourages parent/guardian involvement and supports.
- Coordinate and connect after-school learning and community-based out-of-school time programs with learning and instruction during the school day, emphasizing additional resources and supports to both teachers and students in particular classrooms.
- Take stock of proposals for 21st Century skills, including their provisions for team-based learning, creative problem-solving and project-based learning, progressively helping teachers adopt and incorporate these new learning strategies in their plans.
- Provide on-demand coaching and technical assistance for teachers who request help with planning for CCLS-aligned shifts in curriculum, instruction, and student learning.
- Provide on-demand coaching and technical assistance for teachers who need help in planning for differentiating ways to teach and assess learners Provide on-demand coaching and technical assistance for teachers who need help in planning for CCLS-related learning tasks requiring reading, writing, speaking, and listening within each unit, including ways to tailor these tasks for students of different language backgrounds, levels of achievement, and learning styles.

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Four

Statement of Practice 4.3

DTSDE Statement of Practice 4.3: *Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.*

Impact: Instructional practices lead to high levels of student engagement and achievement.

Strategies for Teachers

- a. Teachers use CCLS aligned instructional practices to educate all students
- b. Teachers encourage higher order thinking and questioning strategies from students through the use of CCLS aligned instructional materials.
- c. Teachers use techniques to differentiate instruction to students of different language backgrounds, levels of achievement, and learning styles drawing on specialists, coaches, and other staff expertise.

Teachers use the following strategies when implementing instructional practices:

- Use the time, social supports, and resources provided to understand the rationale and organization of the CCLS, especially the aim of preparing all students to be college and career ready without need for academic remediation.
- Use the time, social supports, and resources provided to make the shift from “whole class, assembly line training” to CCLS-aligned, customized learning and instruction via integration of a variety of teaching and learning strategies including those that are technology-assisted.
- Take stock of the requisite subject matter expertise required for CCLS implementation
- Share in instructional leadership with specialists (e.g. ESL, special education), coaches and other staff in professional learning communities.
- Collaborate with other teachers so that no teacher feels isolated and works alone.
- Use CCLS-alignment strategies learned in professional development to go beyond technical changes and include provisions for taking care of teachers’ and other staff emotional needs.
- Recognize the temptation to “teach to the test;” yet emphasize the education of the whole child, including the use of positive youth development strategies (e.g., voice and choice, a sense of attachment to the teacher) to facilitate learning
- Take advantage of informal and formal learning opportunities on how to integrate CCLS and the school-wide curriculum in instruction.
- Collaborate with colleagues to share learnings and findings from professional development opportunities focused on CCLS-alignment.
- Thoughtfully and strategically, group students by interest, learning style, progress or other relevant criteria. Use a range of texts, multimedia, and other materials during instruction.

- When working with students, provide clear, comprehensive, and accurate explanations and use higher-order questioning techniques (i.e. with multiple correct answers or multiple approaches to answering and with students sharing in the direction of the discussion).
- Use meta-cognitive strategies team-based problem-solving, problem-based learning, etc. as appropriate to learning objectives.
- Carefully select and use feedback strategies that provide useful kinds of information to further students' thinking and learning

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Four

Statement of Practice 4.4

DTSDE Tenet 4.4: *Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.*

Impact: **The learning environment is intellectually and physical safe for all students.**

Strategies for teachers

- a. Teachers use a behavioral and school culture plan/program school-wide
- b. Teachers work with students to acknowledge diversity of all students' needs, backgrounds, learning abilities.
- c. Teachers encourage norms of behavior that are responsive to the values, needs, and perspectives of all students.

Teachers use the following strategies when creating a safe learning environment:

- Collaborate with other educators, students, parents/guardians, and community leaders to develop aligned school-wide and classroom climates that are conducive to students' psychological and physical safety, healthy emotional development, social inclusion and integration, classroom engagement, and learning.
- Facilitate the development of shared expectations for how people treat each other and interact, together with rules for how they will communicate with each other (e.g., strengths-based, solution-focused, and culturally-sensitive language). Model these behaviors for students.
- Utilize relevant evidence-based school and classroom climate strategies such as Positive Behavior Intervention Systems and Response-to-intervention.
- Use relevant school and classroom climate data (e.g. surveys) to inform what is prioritized with regard to fostering a positive school and classroom learning environment
- Collaborate with other educators to develop teacher-responsive "911-like", rapid response systems. In this system, students' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral needs are addressed in a timely fashion as to not escalate. Understand what kind of school environment school leaders are striving to build.
- Reinforce the school's vision, mission, and any school-wide program for positive behavior/character education in the school and classrooms
- Provide visual representations of positive behavior/character education throughout the classroom (Character Traits, Pillars of Character, key ideas or themes about character).
- Encourage students to ask questions of one another and develop small learning communities among groups of students.

- Develop, in collaboration with other teachers, justifiable, feasible effective classroom management plans, and monitor and adjust these respective plans according to student needs and other events.
- Commit to, and demonstrate, culturally-respectful and –competent attitudes, language, and behavior.
- Adopt and implement culturally-responsive instructional strategies, learning resources, and textbooks that are inclusive of all students.
- Provide differentiated, inclusive instruction for students with special learning needs.
- Recognize that mistakes and errors are facilitators for learning. Encourage students to take risks, generate and share original thoughts and value others’ different ideas.
- Create a friendly, inviting, and mutually respectful environment, where all students, especially students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and those with special needs, feel comfortable and confident to express their opinions.
- Communicate clearly with students about academic and behavioral expectations while focusing on strengths and growth
- Communicate clearly with parents/guardians about academic and behavioral expectations of students while focusing on strengths and growth

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
Tenet Four

Statement of Practice 4.5

DTSDE Tenet 4.5: *Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).*

Impact: Data-based instruction is timely and purposeful and leads to high levels of student achievement.

Strategies for teachers

- a. Teachers use data to create and modify instructional plans.
- b. Teachers use a variety of data to inform instructional plans
- c. Teachers provide regular and appropriate feedback to students on their progress toward achieving learning goals.

Teachers use the following strategies when working with data:

7. Acknowledge and support the idea that data-based assessment for individual, group, and organizational learning is not an occasional event; it is a defining feature of “how we do things in this school.”
8. Use the following procedure when working with data:
 1. Consider if the information counts as evidence of a learning or other goal
 2. Determine if an adjustment or intervention is needed based on the evidence
 3. Find and implement an appropriate adjustment or intervention that fits the evidence
 4. Implement the intervention
 5. Monitor implementation and student progress in order to obtain more data and start a new decision-making cycle
9. Take advantage of professional development opportunities for using data-based decision-making processes.-
10. Seek out specialist and student support professionals’ data. Use this information to reflect on own practices and work with support professionals to identify and use effective service interventions.
11. Strive, in conjunction with your colleagues, for the progressive development of a school culture defined by shared, voluntary accountability for improved results for all students.
12. Use a variety of different assessments and data collection methods.
13. Rely on many different kinds of data when conferencing with individual students to discuss next steps and set shared goals.

- Pay attention to school-wide and specialist data reports and consider how they might inform instruction. Prepare students to evaluate their own performance, examine their own data and use this information to set personal learning goals, monitor progress, and adjust goals as they learn.

Research and resources for guidance

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Tenet Five

Statement of Practice 5.2

DTSDE Tenet 5.2: *The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.*

Impact: The implemented systems effectively address barriers to social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

Strategies for school leaders:

- d. The school leader collaborates with the building leadership team to establish a comprehensive system of learning supports to address healthy development and success in school and barriers to students' learning.
- e. The school leader ensures that a comprehensive student and family referral system is implemented; and that the school community knows how to access student services.
- f. The school leader ensures that data are used to identify priority needs of students, including the special needs of particular sub-populations of students.

School Leaders use the following strategies when creating a social and emotional health plan to support students' academic learning.

- Collaborate with the building leadership team to develop a system of learning supports for all students
- Ensure all staff members know their respective roles, relationships, and responsibilities in this comprehensive learning supports system
- Ensure that a comprehensive student and family referral system is in place; and that staff members know how to access student services.
- Provide information to parents and students on how social, emotional, and developmental health are related to academic performance
- Provide information to parents and students on how to access student services
- Make information accessible to parents and students in a variety of ways (e.g., multiple sources, relevant languages)
- Cultivate school-family-community partnerships to promote student social and emotional health and academic achievement, allocating resources to strengthen and sustain them.
- Use data to identify students' needs and priorities.

- Develop leadership structures and operational processes (e.g., protocols for teacher referrals, protocols for student re-entry into classrooms) for school-based child study teams/student support teams
- Provide all teachers and staff with Response-to-intervention (RTI) and school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) protocols
- Partner with school-family-community coordinators to plan, monitor, and evaluate student placements for health-social services, positive youth development, and out-of-school-time learning
- Use data to identify students in need, facilitate response-to-intervention planning, and monitor their progress
- Develop and maintain an early warning and rapid response system for student health and mental health, especially one that quickly and accurately identifies student risk factors and emergent needs.
- Ensure that health prevention, early intervention, and promotion programs are sponsored by the school, interwoven into the school's fabric, and connected to community health and wellness programs.
- Place visual reminders throughout the school of appropriate and expected behaviors.
- Develop systems and protocols for special education teachers and student support professionals, in consultation with parents, to regularly revisit and revise as needed students' individualized educational plans
- Implement research-based programs for student social, emotional and behavioral health school-wide
- Develop and sustain transition programs to facilitate students' social integration into the norms and life of the school, including horizontal transitions for new students during the school year and vertical transitions for all students

School leaders ensure that the improvement plan includes:

- An explicit priority in the school improvement plan for students' healthy development, addressing barriers to learning, and a positive school climate
- Plans to provide programs and services at the school (school-based) as well as other programs provided by community agencies, but connected to the school (school-linked); and with early identification strategies and referral protocols for students needing to be in one or more programs and services
- Explicit priorities and special strategies to make sure that every student is known to at least one caring adult at school, ideally a teacher
- Explicit norms for how adults (teachers, student support professionals, school staff, and parents) are expected to interact and treat each other
- Explicit norms that promote respect for student and adult diversity (ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation, gender)
- For middle schools and high schools, positive youth development principles and strategies provide structural and operational guidance for how students are viewed, treated, and engaged.

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts
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Statement of Practice 5.3

DTSDE Tenet 5.3: *The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.*

Impact: Students learn in a safe and healthy school community.

Strategies for School Leaders

- a. School leaders implement a comprehensive, research-supported curriculum or program which facilitates teaching and learning and is focused on students' social and emotional developmental health.
- b. School leaders ensure that professional development on promotion of students' social and emotional developmental health and positive school climate is provided to all staff members
- c. The school's improvement plan prioritizes evaluating and revising the professional development provided to school staff.

School leaders use the following strategies when planning, implementing, and evaluating the professional development of teachers on social and emotional learning (SEL):

- Prioritize a positive school climate with particular emphasis on four kinds of relationships: Student-to-student, educator-to-student, educator-to-educator, and educator-to-parent/career.
- Implement RTI, PBIS, and anti-bullying programs designed to promote social and emotional health of all students
- Develop explicit norms, formal rules, and recommended language for all adults in the school regarding student safety, security, and social/emotional developmental health.
- Create and sustain a steering committee for social/emotional health. Or alternatively, ensure special attention by the building leadership team.
- Develop an action plan for social/emotional health initiative implementation and evaluation-driven continuous quality improvement.
- Implement plans for teachers and student support professionals to obtain and use each student's data when they select and implement personalized interventions.
- Establish school-wide social and emotional learning (SEL) goals and objectives.
- Ensure that parents and community agency leaders are involved in SEL teaching, learning and interventions, especially so with students in special education, foster care and in the juvenile justice system.
- Focus efforts to improve overall school climate. Provide formal strategies for engaging students as co-leaders in the development of a safe school climate and supportive classroom environments.

- Designate time and resources to carry out the SEL curriculum or program.
- Provide transition supports and resources for students who change schools during the academic year.
- Provide transition supports and resources for students who move to a new level of schooling (e.g., elementary to middle school; middle school to high school).
- Promote and foster the SEL skills of adults within the building to model behaviors for students
- Develop and implement effective supports and training of teachers to prevent burnout, alleviate stress, and facilitate their retention and renewed commitments

School leaders should provide SEL-related professional development opportunities that:

- Provide ongoing SEL-focused professional development for every adult, especially teachers, providing chances for teachers and staff to ask questions, share concerns and identify areas where they feel more training is needed.
- Include plans for monitoring and revising professional development of adult stakeholders.
- Assist teachers in balancing and coordinating SEL program components with other school initiatives and daily coursework
- Include training for all teachers as well as staff so that each individual is aware of their unique role in the SEL program and that a team effort by all individuals is required
- Address commonly occurring behaviors or concerns that teachers and staff are likely to face
- Updated as new evidence becomes available on best practices for SEL
- Include training on how to collect appropriate data and to monitor program implementation fidelity
- Consider a coaching model where teachers can gain insight and direction from mentors, coaches and school experts on SEL
- Help teachers to better address the social and emotional needs of students.
- Demonstrate to teachers that such skills will facilitate academic learning.
- Are dovetailed with the development of professional learning communities so that teachers and student support professionals are able to learn, innovate and improve together.

Research and resources for guidance

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Website. <http://www.casel.org/>

Developmental Studies Center Implementation Resources website. <http://www.devstu.org/caring-school-community-implementation-resources>

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Statement of Practice 5.4

DTSDE Tenet 5.4: *All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.*

Impact: All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is a safe learning environment that meets student social and emotional developmental health needs.

Strategies for school leaders

- a. The school community's members have collaborated to develop, implement and use a plan to ensure social and emotional supports for all students.
- b. School leaders include community leaders, students and parents in establishing the school's vision pertaining to social and emotional developmental health.
- c. School community members monitor, evaluate, and adjust social and emotional learning (SEL) plans for particular students and identifiable sub-populations of like students.

School leaders use the following strategies for collaboration with the community and families:

- Collaborations are structured by formal roles, relationships, and responsibilities.
- Ensure regular involvement in the school by community health, mental health, and social service providers so that they are able to provide specific services.
- Parents and community agencies are included in the development, adoption, implementation and evaluation of the school wide plan of addressing social and emotional health.
- Parents and the community are included from the time of initiation.
- Community partners, parents, and school leaders have developed shared goals, as well as consensus-based strategies for achieving them.
- Parents are provided with pathways to gain knowledge about the SEL program and are actively recruited and rewarded for their efforts to develop a positive, safe school climate.
 - Parents are provided with contacts and connections to receive services that they themselves may need.
 - Parents are provided with educational resources in their preferred language to enhance their own basic knowledge about social and emotional development.
- Parents are active in creating and monitoring individualized educational plans for special education students.
- Community partners and the school work to share data and information in ethical and beneficial ways.

- Events are held where parents and children attend and learn together, building their relationship and succeeding in a safe, supportive school environment.
- Service projects and service learning in conjunction with community organizations provides hands on experience for students to practice serving others.
- Schools share specific information with parents on what is being learned and discussed in school and encourages parents to continue such discussions at home.
- The school emphasizes the need to be inclusive of various cultures, languages, abilities and social classes.
- Schools make efforts in other areas beyond SEL to build strong relationships between the school and parents.
- Parents and the community are taught to and encouraged to hold students to high standards of behavior in various aspects of student-life.
- Data on parents and family systems are obtained to be used by the school.
- Parents and teachers interact in regular and civil ways that model productive relationships
- Parenting workshops and information on effective parenting practices are available.
- Efforts to reach out to parents are varied. Opportunities for parents to participate in school activities and events match the times and places most convenient for parents.
- Explicit, formal mechanisms are in place to prevent parent blaming and maltreatment dynamics; and reciprocally, to prevent parents' blaming and maltreatment of teachers and other school leaders.
- Parents are viewed as resources with their respective strengths and potential contributions to the student, teacher, and school overall.

The school plan or system to address social and emotional health includes:

- A formal learning support system with rules, roles, relationships, and responsibilities for students' healthy development and readiness for learning, including monitoring and continuous quality improvement mechanisms.
- A school health/mental health council or team, ideally with community agency and parent representation.
- A plan for solid implementation strategies for developing social and behavioral developmental health curricula, programs and interventions.
- Evidence of implementation of positive behavioral intervention and supports (PBIS) systems and response to intervention (RTI)—with special attention to the important connections between RTI and PBIS.
- Professional development for staff focused on RTI, PBIS, and collaborative work with students and, as needed, with their parent(s) and family systems.
- Mechanisms for staff and teachers to analyze and improve their own social and emotional health and interactions with others.

- Provisions for students access to support professionals and community health and social service providers.
- A student engagement plan that encompasses and connects classroom/academic engagement, school engagement (e.g., participation in school-sponsored activities), community-based engagement (e.g., participation in community agencies, youth sports, performing arts), and parent/family engagement.
- Development of individualized interventions that also takes into account community and familial factors into account.
- Faithful implementation and ongoing monitoring of individualized educational plans for special needs students.
- A system for identifying and responding to student social and emotional needs at two levels: the individual student level and the sub-population level (groups of students with the same characteristics and needs).
- Ongoing coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance provided by special education teachers to classroom teachers in support of special need students' full inclusion and personalized assistance.

Research and resources for guidance

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Statement of Practice 5.5

DTSDE Tenet 5.5: *The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.*

Impact: Students have increased opportunities to become academically and socially successful

Strategies for school leaders

- a. School leaders develop and use a strategic system to collect, analyze and use a wide variety of data to address student social and emotional developmental health.
- b. The school community uses the data-informed strategic plan to deliver and monitor timely services and supports to students.

School leaders use the following strategies when using data to address social and emotional developmental health of students:

- Ensure that school staff work in conjunction with community agency stakeholders to collect, analyze, and use data to address students' social/emotional development and health.
- Align the plan and the system with overall efforts to improve school climate and particular classroom learning environments.
- Provide structures (time, space, teams) and resources for using data to address students' academic, social/emotional and developmental health needs.
- Provide responsive professional development to teachers and student support professionals regarding the meaning, significance, connections, and recommended action strategies for three kinds of data: student academic data, student behavioral data, and student family data..
- Develop data and evaluation toolkits and make sure that they are available for all staff.
- Systematically evaluate programs and services and use the data collected for continuous quality improvement planning.
- Develop a shared data system with community agencies and neighborhood organizations.
- Use data to help make decisions about staff assignments; basing them, in part, on the special skills and expertise needed with particular kinds of students.
- Provide organized and regular reports to families and the community about the learning progress of students.
- Ensure that teachers are providing regular parent communication regarding the progress of their individual student.

- Establish a culture where goal-setting is based on data about student problems, needs, and aspirations and SEL standards.
- Hold staff meetings that focus on strategies and issues raised by the school's data with the end result being an adjustment to improvement plans.
- Create and support a data leadership team with particular interest in students' social and emotional well-being.
- Develop and monitor data measures or checks to ensure SEL program fidelity.
- Provide teachers and staff are given sufficient time to complete SEL reports.

Data collected to improve SEL of students should include:

- Monitoring and tracking mechanisms for students' attendance, tardiness, engagement, grades, behavior, and academic achievement and evidence that these data are used in intervention planning/implementation.
- Data are easily accessed at the school and from district office
- Access to information about students' parents/caregivers and families.
- Several years of data to allow for identification of patterns and trends.
- Reports and measures from a variety of sources—such as teachers, principals, coaches or even students themselves.
- Reports from various points within the school year to allow for comparison—typically a recommended timing would be at the beginning, middle and end of the year.
- Measures that have already been validated for reliability and validity in other studies.

Research and resources for guidance

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Resource Guide for Schools and Districts

Tenet Six

Statement of Practice 6.2

DTSDE Tenet 6.2: *The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.*

Impact: The relationship between families and the school contributes to student needs being met and students achieving the academic success required to become college and career ready.

Strategies for school leaders

- a. School leaders develop a plan which ensures that parents, community leaders and school personnel know the school's priority of high expectations and plans for students to graduate from high school and complete postsecondary education
- b. School personnel use the plan to have two way dialogue with parents and the community focused on student learning and development and using multiple points of entry to reach more parents
- c. School personnel monitor the plan to determine how parents are responding to efforts to build the family-school partnership and make necessary adjustments

School leaders use the following strategies to promote high expectations when working with parents, caregivers and the community:

- Provide parents and entire families with multiple points of access and opportunities for promoting conversations about high expectations for students and strategies to improve their healthy development, engagement, learning and academic achievement.
- Regularly review, evaluate, and revise, as needed, plans for communicating school priorities with families and community stakeholders.
- Provide communications to families in their first language.
- Advocate for two-way parent/family engagement strategies that serve the school but also serve parents/families.
- Emphasize collaboration of school leaders with one or more coordinators who share responsibility for parent/family engagement and community partnerships.
- Provide resources in support of parent paraprofessionals and volunteers who improve school-family-community relations.
- Have plans for family-supportive, positive youth development during out-of-school time (e.g., advocacy for after school program, placements in community agencies).

- Place emphasis on protocols for developing connections among teachers, parents, and community health/social service professionals.
- Ensure that students are clear of assignments' expectations and know what a high quality assignment looks like; providing parents with guidelines and rubrics so that they can help their child complete an assignment that meets these high expectations.
- Communicate to parents/caregivers what teachers' expectations of their roles are in the learning of their child.
- Give regular reports of a child's progress towards expected outcomes.
- Verify that sufficient supports at home and in the school are available. Make it known that if resources are lacking in the home, community resources will be sought.
- Help students see a consistent pattern of high expectations from administrators, school leaders, teachers, and parents leading to the same high expectations within themselves.
- Recognize that current expectations may vary across teachers, parents and students and that a consistent message of high expectations will have a greater influence on students.

School leaders convey high expectations by ensuring that:

- Parents, families, the community and school personnel understand that the school has high expectations for student academic achievement.
- Staff members encourage and educate parents/ caregivers to have high expectations for their own student's achievement.
- Parents and caregivers are informed at the beginning of each year of clear and high expectations within each specific subject area.
- Parents and caregivers are provided with specific things that they can do to assist their children in reaching high expectations; including providing specific guidelines in individual content areas.
- Parents/caregivers, teachers, students, administrators each hold responsibility for achievement of high expectations.
- They help parents/caregivers understand that parental expectations of their child's learning play a role in the academic achievement of their child.
- School-wide beliefs are held that teachers and school staff have the ability to improve academic achievement.
- There is a specific school-wide improvement plan and parental assistance with its progressive and faithful implementation is sought.
- Joint school and family counseling systems are prioritized; together with the professional development of staff, for age-appropriate, college and career readiness of all students.

Research and resources for guidance

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Statement of Practice 6.3

DTSDE Tenet 6.3: *The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.*

Impact: Families can support their child’s academic achievement and social emotional growth.

Strategies for school personnel:

- d. School leaders develop an explicit written plan for communicating with families and students about school and student progress, issues/concerns, and needs.
- e. School personnel use the plan to communicate with parents
- f. School personnel monitor the plan to determine the effectiveness of communication with families

School leaders and staff use the following strategies when communicating effectively with parents, family members, and guardians:

- Encourage, facilitate, and promote communication regularly.
- Provide multiple ways for parents/ caregivers to contact you.
- Be creative and flexible to come up with solutions for communicating with and partnering with parents and caregivers with non-traditional situations (working parents, non-English speakers, those without transportation, health issues).
- Provide honest but tactful information about the student
- Do not use educational jargon when communicating with parents.
- Educators who adopt the following beliefs work effectively with families:
 - All families have strengths.
 - Parents can learn new techniques.
 - Parents have important perspectives about their children.
 - Most parents really care about their children.
 - Cultural differences are both valid and valuable.
 - Many family forms exist and are legitimate.
 - Schools and homes have shared goals
 - Respect caregivers and communicate that respect

The written school plan for communication with families should include the following:

- Multiple methods for communication (Face to face meetings, video meetings, email, letters via backpacks, text, school websites, report cards, school-to-home journals, phone calls, social media).
- Communication in multiple languages as needed:
 - Assess the needs of the school and classroom to determine what languages are spoken in the homes of students.
 - Provide written communication in multiple languages, address the need for translations on the school/district website, and provide translators for phone or face-to-face meetings.
 - Reassess the language needs of parents periodically.
- Acknowledgement that a traditional parent may not be the caregiver for every student and a plan to communicate with all caregivers.
- Determine the education level of parents and caregivers and provide appropriate communication.
- Communication at regular intervals about: classroom learning or events, school wide events, individual student progress or concerns, relevant community events, opportunities for parents to help at the school.
- Multiple ways to reach a parent/caregiver: Home address, multiple phone numbers, email, text
- Multiple ways for a parent/caregiver to reach the school- teacher website, teacher email, teacher phone numbers, school information (email, phone numbers, address).

Research and resources for guidance

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Statement of Practice 6.4

DTSDE Tenet 6.4: *The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.*

Impact: All students benefit from a robust and focused home-school connection.

Strategies

- g. The school community has a plan to ensure that all staff members know how to promote family engagement by teaching parents how to work with the school community to support student learning
- h. School leaders consult with teachers, student support professionals and parents and use information gleaned to provide professional development to all school staff on how to sustain partnerships with families and the community.

Educators should use the following strategies when working with parents:

- Help parents see the connection between supporting social, emotional, and physical health and positive learning outcomes.
- Have mechanisms in place for parents to connect with teachers and support professionals such as social workers, guidance counselors and school psychologists.
- Present information sessions on social, emotional and physical health which provide a connection to educational attainment.
- Determine parents' views on their most prevalent social and emotional concerns.
- Utilize parental expertise and experience to address the social, emotional and physical health needs of students.
- Make parents aware of social and emotional supports that the school offers prior to problems arising
- Provide access to information on potential providers, locales and entry-ways to support services through a parent resource center, resource guidebook, or website lists.
- Share information with parents about how to deal with and handle stress and to encourage their children to do the same.
- Provide parents with news and happenings at the school that may affect their child, such as problematic cases of bullying or fighting.
- Provide customized familiar supports - recognizing that across grade levels and in differing neighborhoods, different parental supports are needed.
- Encourage the development of a parental advisory committee.

- Recruit, train and reach out to parent leaders who can then assist other parents with social and emotional supports for their children.
- Inform parents of already established relationships between the school and community organizations (e.g., after-school care providers, extra academic opportunities) so that parents can take advantage of such opportunities.
- Encourage parents to participate in early childcare programs including home visiting programs for children who are not yet in the school.
- Include parents in the development and running of a social and emotional learning program.
- Have parents and children collaborate with the school in developing social and emotional goals.

Educators should use the following strategies when working with community partners and organizations:

- Seek the co-location of services when possible, easing access to community service providers.
- Ensure that services are provided and accessed in a way that students and families do not feel stigmatized when receiving support services.
- Ensure that community service providers have knowledge about, participate in, and commitment to the school's vision, mission and core values.
- Look for community organizations that may be able to partner with the school and provide needed services.
- Collaborate with other agencies for training or informing parents about how to help their children deal with stress or other socio-emotional concerns.
- Have an early emphasis on social and emotional development ensuring that children entering school are socially and emotional prepared.
 - Work with Head Start and other feeder day-cares and pre-kindergartens to improve the social and emotional preparation of incoming students.
 - Participate in and support programs for early child development, even though such children are not yet in the school district.
- Be in contact with local agencies and be willing to partner with them in grant applications that may bring additional support and resources to the school.
- Develop a community profile to ensure that the school is aware of both risks and protective factors that are in the homes and communities where children are growing up
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current partnerships and address areas that need improving.
- Explore collaborative partnerships of various types—it may not always be a provision of services, but some community organizations and businesses may be able to provide in-kind resources, physical supplies, money or groups of volunteers.

- Explore the potential of developing the school into a community school with its special blend of partnerships and collaborative relationships.
- Have a strategy for collaboration and communication between and among schools within the district—recognizing that perhaps some schools are already tapping into resources that could easily be shared with others within the district.
- Explore partnerships in a variety of areas including social services, juvenile justice, neighborhood/community improvement, work/career and enrichment/recreation.
- Recognize that parents may have unique relationships and contacts to better improve and initiate interactions and partnerships with agencies and the school.

School leaders provide professional development programs for:

- Teachers which focus on students’ academic success.
- Teachers which focus on students’ social and emotional developmental health.
- School personnel to promote family engagement in schools.
- School support staff to support student success.
- All educators on cultural difference and on how to improve relationships with diverse families.

Research and resources for guidance

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Statement of Practice 6.5

DTSDE Tenet 6.5: *The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.*

Impact: The school community empowers families to take action to support student learning, leading to higher student achievement.

Strategies for the school community:

- c. School leaders, data specialists, student support professionals, program coordinators and community agencies share data and integrate data systems in order to identify family needs and target support strategies
- d. The school community shares data in a way that families can understand a child's learning needs and successes, advocate for their children and provide student support.

Educators should use the following strategies in interactions with parents/caregivers:

- Convey the difference between formative and summative assessments
- Provide parents with additional resources on curriculum and data to help them contextualize the data they are receiving.
- Follow up with parents to see if the data reports are as helpful as the school intends or to solicit ideas from parents of ways to make data more useful.
- Provide parents with an orientation about school data.
- Provide parents with a variety of data types- school wide, district wide data, and individualized data on their child.
- Provide a variety of opportunities (e.g., email, phone, face-to-face meetings) for parents to ask questions about data presented to them.
- Be familiar with the family dynamics of youth so that data sharing and communication with parents is directed to the appropriate care-givers.
- Adjust communication efforts as parents respond differently and does not treat all parents in exactly the same manner.
- Provide parents and community with access to data and information as well as the ability to contact appropriate school personnel if discussion or clarification is needed.
- Communicate in ways that are culturally-competent (e.g. provided in multiple languages, use words that parents can understand, are inviting and not punishing or demeaning).

- Share ideas and specific ways parents can support their child rather than simply telling parents their child is struggling or failing at school.

Educators should use the following strategies and practices that promote the effective use of data:

- Teach students to evaluate their own data and set learning goals and plans for improvement.
- Foster trust in data sharing by taking all necessary measure to ensure confidentiality.
- Create a data sharing culture among teachers which will lead to a data sharing culture across the school and into interactions with parents and the community.
- Effectively use parent-teacher conferences as opportunities to share, contextualize and make plans for improvement based on student data.
- Establish data teams that meet and discuss ways to better present and utilize data with parents.
- Encourage teachers to use a variety of means of contact with parents to share data including emails, text messages and online data systems.
- Have a protocol for appropriate response times to parents’ emails, calls or texts.
- Educate parents on the changes to school/state testing and curriculum.
- Ask parents if data is presented in a useful and easy to understand format and for suggestions on improving the way that data is presented.
- Share data to inform parents about a child’s progress and development, not to pass judgment but instead focusing on potential for growth and improvement.
- Provide teachers with professional development about data use and sharing so that they feel successful and competent about sharing data with parents.
- Encourage teachers to share their best practices with fellow teachers.
- Avoid education jargon, including acronyms in interacting with parents.
- Provide parents with appropriate web links and log-ins for school data systems, explanation of state standards and other resources.
- Establish community data dashboards for the school and the district overall.
- Utilize data systems to facilitate student and family sub-population identification, targeting, and intervention development/implementation (i.e., interventions are data-driven and personalized instead of “cookie cutter” interventions that do not fit student needs).
- Work collaboratively with community agencies to target entire neighborhoods or special places where high needs families live and meet; and with special emphasis on supporting families so that students are healthy and ready to learn.
- Establish formal norms and protocols which give parents the rights to advocate for their child.
- Evaluate data-systems and improvement planning with regard to determining if data provision is both timely and user-friendly.

- Communicate the idea of a data cycle; so that parents and school staff know that data is used to evaluate in order to make changes and improvements, not merely to pass judgment.

Research and resources for guidance

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