



**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Ken Slentz 

**SUBJECT:** Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) Panel

**DATE:** December 9, 2013

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
SUMMARY

**Issue for Discussion**

At the October 2013 Board of Regents meeting, the Regents received an update on the Department's progress in implementing the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness, which is a key component of New York's approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver and strategy for turning around low performing schools. In December, representatives from three Focus Districts, Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District, Newburgh Enlarged City School District, and Schenectady City School District, will share their experiences in implementing the DTSDE process in their identified Priority and Focus Schools.

**Panel Discussion: Implementation of the DTSDE process in Focus Districts**

**Panel Members:**

- **Lisa Buon**, Principal, Horizons on the Hudson Magnet School in the Newburgh Enlarged City School District

Ms. Buon has been an educator for 23 years and principal of the Horizons on the Hudson Magnet School for the past nine years. She served on the district review team that conducted DTSDE visits to eleven Newburgh schools in the 2012-13 school year.

- **Ed Forgit**, Deputy Superintendent, Newburgh Enlarged City School District.

Mr. Forgit became Deputy Superintendent in August 2013. Previously he served as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and in that role he coordinated all of the district led DTSDE reviews as well as served on the State Education Department led Integrated Intervention Team visits to the district. Prior to joining the Newburgh Enlarged City School District, Mr. Forgit was director of the Hudson Valley Regional School Support Center located at the Dutchess BOCES.

- **Debra Jackson**, Superintendent, Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District

Dr. Jackson has held positions as an art teacher, principal, curriculum coordinator, and assistant superintendent in two school districts and at two BOCES. She is currently serving in her fourth district and her 22<sup>nd</sup> year as a superintendent. The Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District has one of its three schools identified as a Focus School. Dr. Jackson has been a regular attendee at the DTSDE Institutes and has worked closely with the District's Outside Educational Expert to grow both the district's and the intermediate school's capacity in the six tenet areas of the DTSDE.

- **Lori McKenna**, District Director for Planning and Accountability, Schenectady City School District

Since 1992, Ms. McKenna has worked in the Schenectady City School District as a teacher, Academic Intervention Professional Development Specialist; Assessment, Research, and Design Supervisor; and Director of Federal and State Programs. Ms. McKenna coordinated the DTSDE review process for all 18 schools in the District, including three Priority Schools and 15 Focus Schools. She is the Calibration Assurance Team representative from the district to the Department and reviews the reports for all district-led reviews before the final reports are submitted to the State Education Department.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What was the experience of your district with DTSDE?
- What benefits did your district derive from participation in DTSDE?
- What are specific, concrete examples of what you learned about the strengths and areas for improvement of your schools and district as a result of participating in DTSDE?
- How is the district addressing in the 2013-14 school year the areas of need identified by the DTSDE process?
- How can we build upon DTSDE moving forward to increase academic achievement in your district?