

COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT EDUCATION PLAN

# Tully Schools

*Education Today for Tomorrow's Challenges*



## Executive Summary

**Tully Central School District**  
**20 State St.**  
**Tully, NY 13159**

*For submission to the Board of Education at the meeting of June 19, 2007.*  
*Approved plan to take effect beginning in the 2007-08 school year.*

## I. PREMISE

Comprehensive planning by school districts is critical in helping students meet or exceed the New York State learning standards. The Tully Central School District has established the goal of improving student achievement through the development of a Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP).

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a foundation for focusing the work of the schools on student learning. The CDEP Committee believes that the Key Areas of Performance, Statements of Commitments, and Current and Suggested Initiatives, when implemented consistently and in a systematic fashion, will improve the educational process in our schools and thus result in improved student learning.

One of the findings of the committee was that there are many current initiatives focused on improving achievement, and that an impediment to improvement in the past has been the difficulty of evaluating, monitoring, and supporting those initiatives that are having a positive impact. The CDEP is intended to address this issue in two ways.

First, it provides a unified focus in a limited number of Key Areas, for implementing, monitoring implementation, and reporting success or problems. Secondly, the plan includes as one of its core objectives the development of a system of monitoring and evaluation for all (current and new) initiatives. In order to facilitate this process, one section of the plan places current initiatives within the framework of the plan's Key Areas. The committee believes these elements are crucial for long-term improvement of education in Tully.

## II. PLANNING PROCESS/PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

*The CDEP Committee met as a group beginning in July 2006. The CDEP draft was completed and prepared for submission at the Board of Education meeting in June 2007. The process is described below.*

The Tully Comprehensive District Plan initiative began in spring 2006 when the Board of Education approved a year-long planning process to be engaged in by a committee of district representatives guided by a BOCES facilitator. After three initial days in July 2006, the committee met monthly for a half day to develop the long-range plan for the District.

The July days focused on formation of the committee, the planning process, understanding educational data, and consideration of changes in the District over the last ten years. Data was examined for trends in student performance on New York State Assessments. The committee also began to consider some factors that have powerful effects on learning when their implementation is emphasized, such as assessment systems and effective means of collaboration.

During the fall meetings, the committee developed a list of priorities which showed the most promise for improving the learning of students at Tully. This work was informed by consideration of the work of educational researchers such as Robert Marzano, Mike Schmoker, and others who have investigated effective school practices. The committee also continued to examine data on student learning, including special education data.

The initial list was altered and refined a number of times until the present Key Areas of Performance were agreed upon: Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Student Support Structures, and Organizational Support Structures. Within these Key Areas, the committee discussed and identified priorities that would best improve student outcomes. These constitute the heart of this plan.

It was recognized that the Tully schools are engaged in many initiatives which are important within the Key Areas. Part of school improvement will consist of continued support for these initiatives. Therefore, the committee revisited some of its earlier work and developed a set of current initiatives related to each of the five key areas. Finally, suggested initiatives were developed as samples of possible actions for improvement in the five areas.

The committee proposes the following next steps to this process: The Board of Education would review and approve a final version of the draft plan. The administration will develop an action plan for implementation, involving appropriate stakeholders. Regular reports will be provided to the Board on the implementation of initiatives within the Key Areas of Performance.



### III. Recommendations: CORE AREAS OF PERFORMANCE and OBJECTIVES

*The CDEP Committee has identified the following areas as having the greatest potential for improving learning in the Tully Schools. When implemented together, these will have substantial effects on the educational process. The identification of these areas included consideration of existing programs and initiatives, data about student performance, and research based best practices.*

The District will provide, in the following key areas:

1. Curriculum
  - a) Consistent and viable K-12 curriculum to communicate the essential content for all teachers and learners.
  - b) Curriculum aligned throughout the district to ensure continuous development of skills and content.
2. Instruction
  - a) Use of various research-based instructional strategies to provide quality instruction to all students.
  - b) Clearly specified learning outcomes to communicate curriculum related expectations to all students.
3. Assessment/Feedback
  - a) District-based assessment system that provides timely feedback to students about their understanding of specific skills or knowledge.
  - b) Assessment of what each student is learning that informs instructional responses to address identified gaps.
  - c) Assessment information about incoming students at all grade levels available to instructional staff for planning purposes.
  - d) A feedback system to provide information about a student's strengths and weaknesses that involves families in their student's learning.
4. Student Support Structures
  - a) Programs that effectively provide appropriate academic and social/emotional support for students who experience difficulty in school.
  - b) Instruction and experiential learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of all students.
5. Organizational Support Structures
  - a) Opportunities for collaborative effort to develop shared goals, implement strategies, and assess progress.
  - b) Environment organized to provide for optimal student success.
  - c) Opportunities for leadership development for students, staff, faculty, and community.
  - d) A system of monitoring and evaluation for all initiatives.

## COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT EDUCATION PLAN

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The mission of the Tully Central Schools is to create an open, caring and supportive atmosphere where every student is nurtured in the development of a respect and thirst for lifelong learning and personal dedication to the pursuit of excellence.

We will, through staff development and the use of community and its resources, provide a challenging and innovative curriculum which develops creative thinking and problem solving while incorporating high standards and accountability.

Tully Central Schools will graduate competent, compassionate individuals responsible for themselves and the world at large, who can excel at any chosen endeavor.

### Plan Components

- I. Goals**
- II. Planning Process/Implementation**
- III. CDEP Committee**
- IV. District Background**
- V. Key Areas of Performance**
- VI. Key Areas: Description and Rationale**
- VII. Current Initiatives**
- VIII. Suggested Initiatives**

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## I. GOALS

*Definition of Key Indicator of Success: A student-focused, measurable outcome which the district has the ability, desire, or need to influence for which it is willing, or required, to be held accountable.*

Key Indicator	As measured by:	Targets: From Board of Education Goals
<p>ELA &amp; Math Performance at Grades 3-8 and High School</p> <p>Graduation Rate</p> <p>Participation in Advanced Placement and/or College Credit courses</p> <p>Percentage of students attending four year colleges</p>	<p>NYS Assessments</p> <p>School Performance</p> <p>Subgroup Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education</li> <li>• Low Income</li> <li>• English Language Learners</li> <li>• Ethnic groups</li> </ul>	<p>We must improve our student achievement.</p> <p>No Child Left Behind mandates that by 2014 100% of our students will be in Level 3 or Level 4 on the state assessments. To that end this goal will be an ongoing process and will include the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the long range strategic planning process we will review and analyze data to make systemic changes toward student achievement</li> <li>• Increase the number of students participating in Advanced Placement and/or College Credit courses by 10% over the next two years as compared to the 2005-2006 school year.</li> <li>• Increase the number of students attending four-year colleges with a goal of 64% by the 2008-2009 school year.</li> <li>• Develop a curricular connection across the K-12 spectrum to demonstrate regular increases in the number of students in Level 1 and Level 2 reaching Level 3 and the number of students in Level 3 reaching Level 4 at the 4th and 8th grade assessment levels. The assessments in grade 3, 5, 6, and 7 will be used to provide guidance for making instructional adjustments for achieving targets at grades 4 and 8.</li> <li>• Involve our students in the learning process through participation in leadership roles (i.e. input to the Board of Education, long range planning and expanded roles for student government).</li> </ul>

This Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP) addresses the educational processes of the Tully Schools. Not addressed are fiscal and business responsibilities, physical plant, or other components which also support the educational processes.



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### III. COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT EDUCATION PLAN COMMITTEE, 2006-2007

Name	Title	Constituencies Represented
Kraig Pritts	Superintendent, Observer	District
Pat Mason	Principal	Elementary
Peter Cardamone	Principal	Secondary
Debora Cox	Asst. Principal/Director of Sp. Ed.	Elementary
Mary Ann Murphy	Asst. Principal	Middle
Ken Steiger	Board Member	Board of Education
Mark Drumm	Board Member	Board of Education
Michele McNerney	Teacher	Elementary
Sue Hardy	Teacher	Elementary
Michael Perkins	Teacher	Elementary
Mark Thomas	Teacher	Secondary
Virginia Killmore	Teacher	Secondary
Bill Ralbovsky	Teacher	Secondary
Joanne Kelly	Member	Community
Jill Northrup	Parent	Parents
Marianne Ralbovsky	Parent	Parents
Bethany Harris	Student	Students
Joe Ralbovsky	Student	Students
Peter McCarthy	Facilitator	OCM BOCES



#### IV. DISTRICT BACKGROUND

Tully Central School District is a rural/suburban district about 25 miles south of Syracuse. There are two schools: Tully Elementary (K-6) and Tully Junior/Senior High School (7-12). The total enrollment is about 1200 students.

Tully has been shifting from a predominately agricultural community to a more suburban bedroom community where residents commute to the Syracuse area for work. This shift has been accompanied by an overall decline in population. There has also been an increase in the number of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch. The number of students with disabilities has remained relatively constant, but within the context of an overall decrease in population, the percentage of Special Education students has risen. The population remains relatively homogeneous in terms of ethnicity and language, with a small increase in non-white or Limited English Proficient students. Mobility, in terms of students moving into and out of the district, is an issue of unknown consequences.

As is the case for many rural districts, funding is a major challenge for Tully. Expenses have increased in areas such as energy, health insurance, and retirement, in addition to the rising cost of salaries. At the same time state aid has decreased as a percentage of the total budget, resulting in local tax increases, exacerbated by a loss of some commercial tax revenue. Fortunately, the district has had strong community support as shown by yearly approvals of the budget.

Leadership has been an ongoing issue for the district. Over the past ten years, approximately 27 administrative changes have occurred, in a district with no more than six administrative positions. Teacher turnover has also been high in the last few years, as has membership on the Board of Education. These changes have interfered with both the preservation of “institutional memory” and the clear delineation and understanding of responsibilities.

State and Federal mandates have had major impacts. Testing requirements, Academic Intervention Services (AIS), Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), Mentoring, and Character Education, are some of the mandated programs that have challenged resources and energy. Reporting requirements such as data warehousing, violent incident reports, and financial auditing have also had an impact.

Special Education has been a particular challenge. Administrative and staff turnover and a shift to inclusion have combined with an increase in high-needs students such as those with autism, which increase the load on finances and program resources.

Tully has been responding to its challenges in a variety of ways. There has been an ongoing effort to emphasize the identity of the whole district rather than two separate schools. A major long term effort to align curriculum through the development of District standards and benchmarks is under way. Other programs include Reading Recovery, 6+1 Writing Traits, mentoring, peer coaching, Character Education, and the implementation of the AIS and APPR programs mentioned above. Technology has been upgraded with a significant annual investment. A commitment to agricultural programs is supported by a new greenhouse. Cafeteria automation has been implemented. Communication and involvement have been emphasized through the improved District website, monthly newsletters, and parent/community forums.

The development of the Comprehensive District Education Plan represents the commitment by the Tully community to the long-term health of its schools.

## V. KEY AREAS OF PERFORMANCE and Statements of Commitment

*The CDEP Committee has identified the following areas as having the greatest potential for improving learning in the Tully Schools. When implemented together, these will have substantial effects on the educational process. The identification of these areas included consideration of existing programs and initiatives, data about student performance, and research based best practices.*

The Tully Central School District will provide, in the following key areas:

1. Curriculum
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  - b) Clearly specified learning outcomes to communicate curriculum related expectations to all students.
3. Assessment/Feedback
  - a) District-based assessment system that provides timely feedback to students about their understanding of specific skills or knowledge.
  - b) Assessment of what each student is learning that informs instructional responses to address identified gaps.
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  - a) Programs that effectively provide appropriate academic and social/emotional support for students who experience difficulty in school.
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5. Organizational Support Structures
  - a) Opportunities for collaborative effort to develop shared goals, implement strategies, and assess progress.
  - b) Environment organized to provide for optimal student success.
  - c) Opportunities for leadership development for students, staff, faculty, and community.
  - d) A system of monitoring and evaluation for all initiatives.



VI. KEY AREAS: DESCRIPTIONS/RATIONALE	
Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Description/Rationale
<b>1) <u>Curriculum</u></b>	
a) Consistent and viable K-12 curriculum to communicate the essential content for all teachers and learners.	Clear, specific, rationale for instructional choices. The District must continue to develop curriculum that describes realistically what students must learn.
b) Curriculum aligned throughout the district to ensure continuous development of skills and content.	Describes a progression of knowledge and skills across grade levels. Students benefit from a continuous progression of curriculum, as each year develops upon previous content.
<b>2) <u>Instruction</u></b>	
a) Use of various research-based instructional strategies to provide quality instruction to all students.	Learning is improved when students have a variety of learning experiences.
b) Clearly specified learning outcomes to communicate curriculum related expectations to all students.	Students should know what they are expected to learn and the criteria for success. Responsibility for learning is improved when expectations are clear.
<b>3) <u>Assessment/Feedback</u></b>	
a) A district-based assessment system that provides timely feedback to students about their understanding of specific skills or knowledge.	Students should be informed about their progress. Specific feedback enables students to understand strengths and weaknesses to improve their learning.
b) Assessment of what each student is learning that informs instructional responses to address identified gaps.	Teachers need short-term results to monitor and adjust their instruction. Instruction is improved when teachers can target areas of need before moving to new content.
c) Assessment information about incoming students at all grade levels available to instructional staff for planning purposes.	Teachers can use data about the strengths and needs of incoming students to plan instruction. Knowledge of strengths and weaknesses can accelerate the planning process and improve instruction.
d) A feedback system to provide information about a student's strengths and weaknesses that involves families in their student's learning.	Parents and students can identify specific areas in need of improvement. Family support for learning can improve performance.



VI. KEY AREAS: DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE (continued)	
Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Description/Rationale
<b>4) <u>Student Support Structures</u></b>	
a) Programs that effectively provide appropriate academic and social/emotional support for students who experience difficulty in school.	Some students require additional support both during and beyond classroom instruction. Programs must be based on effective practices.
b) Instruction and experiential learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of all students.	Students' learning styles vary widely and instruction should meet the needs of the students. Course offerings and content should reflect a wide variety of vocational goals.
<b>5) <u>Organizational Support Structures</u></b>	
a) Opportunities for collaborative effort to develop shared goals, implement strategies, and assess progress.	Staff collaboration is essential to improve learning. Time, structures, and procedures are needed to develop, implement, and monitor the above improvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
b) Environment organized to provide for optimal student success.	Environment, both physical and cultural, affects student learning.
c) Opportunities for leadership development for students, staff, faculty, and community.	Leadership opportunities promote growth and support learning.
d) A system of monitoring and evaluation for all initiatives.	The district needs to assess what it is doing and how effective it is. Continuous reflection is essential to development of lifelong learners, and this needs to be modeled at all levels of the organization.

## VII. CURRENT INITIATIVES

*Current Initiatives: Those activities or programs which are relatively new and currently require significant effort and coordination by administrative and/or instructional staff for development and implementation; as opposed to long-term or established programs and practices such as Reading Recovery, Instructional Theory Into Practice, Advanced Placement, etc.*

Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Current Initiatives
<b>1) <u>Curriculum</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarks ELA and Math aligned with NYS Core Curriculum (K-8)</li> <li>• Benchmarks Sciences, Social Studies (K-8)</li> <li>• Draft Benchmarks for Special Areas: Health, P.E. Library, Music, Art (K-6)</li> <li>• Fountas and Pinnell Phonics (K-1)</li> <li>• Guided Reading (K-1)</li> <li>• Reading Series (2-6)</li> <li>• Literature aligned with curriculum (7-12)</li> <li>• Everyday Mathematics (K-6)</li> <li>• Math curriculum aligned with NYS Core Curriculum (7-12)</li> <li>• Departments meeting to align curriculum with NYS Standards (7-12)</li> <li>• Schedule reviews to increase level of students in academic classes (7-12)</li> <li>• College Credit courses</li> <li>• Course curriculum documents being developed in all areas</li> </ul>
a) A consistent and viable K-12 curriculum to communicate the essential content for all teachers and learners.	
b) Curriculum aligned throughout the district to ensure continuous development of skills and content.	
<b>2) <u>Instruction</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 + 1 Traits of Writing (2 -9)</li> <li>• Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop (K-1)</li> <li>• Everyday Mathematics (K – 6)</li> <li>• Reading Series (2-6)</li> <li>• Co-Teaching</li> </ul>
a) Use of various research-based instructional strategies to provide quality instruction to all students.	
b) Clearly specified learning outcomes to communicate curriculum related expectations to all students.	
<b>3) <u>Assessment/Feedback</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Series has weekly/unit assessment that match NYS tests</li> <li>• 6 + 1 Rubrics</li> <li>• Everyday Math unit assessments aligned to benchmarks</li> <li>• Analysis of Regents' exams (8-12)</li> <li>• PALS Program -Library and classroom teachers data analysis (ES)</li> <li>• Analysis of program and enrollment data (HS)</li> <li>• BOCES/SETRC(special ed)- analysis of ELA data (ES)</li> <li>• AIS progress reporting system (AISM)</li> </ul>
a) A district-based assessment system that provides timely feedback to students about their understanding of specific skills or knowledge.	

VII. CURRENT INITIATIVES (continued)	
Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Current Initiatives
b) Assessment of what each student is learning that informs instructional responses to address identified gaps.	(Included on page 9)
c) Assessment information about incoming students at all grade levels available to instructional staff for planning purposes.	
d) A feedback system to provide information about a student's strengths and weaknesses that involves families in their student's learning.	
<b>4) <u>Student Support Structures</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIS at JRSRHS with classroom teachers</li> <li>• Response To Intervention (RTI)</li> <li>• Organizational skills support in grade 7</li> <li>• Co-Teaching: Regular/Special Education and Teaching Assistants</li> <li>• Middle School discussions</li> <li>• Greenhouse program development</li> <li>• Reduction of study halls</li> <li>• Transition program for grades 6-7 (pilot)</li> </ul>
a) Programs that effectively provide appropriate academic and social/emotional support for students who experience difficulty in school.	
b) Instruction and experiential learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of all students.	
<b>5) <u>Organizational Support Structures</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic department meetings (admin. and coordinator, 7-12 departments)</li> <li>• AIS Progress reporting system (AISM)</li> <li>• Student representative on Board of Education</li> <li>• Commitment to School Alliance for Continuous Improvement (SACI)</li> <li>• Web site enhancements</li> </ul>
a) Opportunities for collaborative effort to develop shared goals, implement strategies, and assess progress.	
b) Environment organized to provide for optimal student success.	
c) Opportunities for leadership development for students, staff, faculty, and community.	
d) A system of monitoring and evaluation for all new and current initiatives.	



## VIII. SUGGESTED INITIATIVES

*Suggested initiatives are possible steps to implement the Statements of Commitment. Within the implementation process, suggested action steps may be revised, implemented as suggested, or replaced with other means of achieving the Statements of Commitment.*

Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Suggested Initiatives
<b>1) <u>Curriculum</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand ways to facilitate communication to align K-12 curriculum</li> <li>• Continue Benchmark/Learning Target development</li> </ul>
a) Consistent and viable K-12 curriculum to communicate the essential content for all teachers and learners. b) Curriculum aligned throughout the district to ensure continuous development of skills and content.	
<b>2) <u>Instruction</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend 6 + 1 to grades 10-12</li> <li>• Increase the use of various research-based instructional strategies</li> <li>• Communicate learning expectations to all students</li> <li>• Expand opportunities for authentic learning experiences, e.g.: publishing, contests, science fair, math symposium</li> <li>• Implement <i>Instructional Strategies that Work</i> with Janie Pollock</li> </ul>
a) Use of various research-based instructional strategies to provide quality instruction to all students. b) Clearly specified learning outcomes to communicate curriculum related expectations to all students.	
<b>3) <u>Assessment/Feedback</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine ways to assess taught vs. learned curriculum without adding more testing</li> <li>• Collaboratively look at student work</li> <li>• Provide meaningful longitudinal data (quantitative and qualitative) about the student's progress. Example: strengths and weaknesses, special experiences, awards, recognition, extracurricular, etc.</li> <li>• Assess student progress and performance according to the Benchmarks/Learning Targets.</li> <li>• Enhance the Tully CSD post-graduate relationship. Examples: an alumni network, and surveys to assess how Tully CSD prepared the graduate for their chosen next steps.</li> <li>• Find ways to integrate and incorporate Encore (special areas in the JRSRHS), especially at the Middle Grade levels</li> <li>• Develop and communicate assessment expectations</li> </ul>
a) A district-based assessment system that provides timely feedback to students about their understanding of specific skills or knowledge.	
b) Assessment of what each student is learning that informs instructional responses to address identified gaps.	
c) Assessment information about incoming students at all grade levels available to instructional staff for planning purposes.	
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VIII. SUGGESTED INITIATIVES (continued)	
Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Suggested Initiatives
<b>4) <u>Student Support Structures</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and assess effectiveness of Academic Intervention Services (AIS) programs</li> <li>• Review and assess effectiveness of programs for social/emotional support</li> <li>• Review and assess need for reading teacher at high school</li> <li>• Review and assess effectiveness of support programs for formally identified students (Special Education)</li> <li>• Investigate student mentorship program</li> <li>• Review and assess retention practices K-12</li> <li>• Formalize transition initiatives for grades 6-7 and 8-9</li> </ul>
a) Programs that effectively provide appropriate academic and social/emotional support for students who experience difficulty in school.	
b) Instruction and experiential learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of all students.	

VIII. SUGGESTED INITIATIVES (continued)	
Key Area of Performance/ Statements of Commitment	Suggested Initiatives
<b>5) <u>Organizational Support Structures</u></b>	
a) Opportunities for collaborative effort to develop shared goals, implement strategies, and assess progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support ways to allow teachers to examine data individually and collectively to develop instructional strategies to improve student learning</li> <li>• Support cross-curricular integration at JRSRHS Develop a process to share student information between ES and JRHS</li> <li>• Assess &amp; systematize the process for student involvement in communication</li> <li>• Involve community stakeholders in CDEP implementation.</li> <li>• Develop a district wide system to support the use of data for program evaluation, improvement of instruction, communication to students and families. Examples: Collect &amp; assess data to evaluate program effectiveness Identify and prioritize which data to collect Review and assess current data collection system Establish a team to look at data Establish an office of data collection Involve staff K-12 in communicating, using, and sharing data</li> <li>• Develop procedures to document program plans and practices</li> <li>• Use SACI process to develop a system to assess all initiatives</li> <li>• Training and support for teachers to use technology to enhance communication with parents</li> <li>• Review and assess the state of the district climate Examples: solicit feedback from families, students, graduates, staff and administrators</li> </ul>
b) Environment organized to provide for optimal student success.	
c) Opportunities for leadership development for students, staff, faculty, and community.	
d) A system of monitoring and evaluation for all new and current initiatives.	