

Diversity, Poverty, and Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of Higher-Achieving Elementary Schools

Kristen Campbell Wilcox University at Albany

AERA

San Francisco

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The Rationale



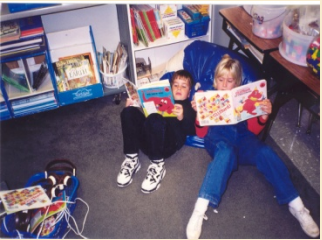
- The disparity in academic performance between whites and African Americans, Hispanics, and English language learners (ELLs) has been attributed to a variety of factors. These factors include, among others, high levels of poverty in some diverse schools, unequal allocation of resources in diverse communities and schools, inadequate systems to prepare high quality teachers for diverse schools, and unequal use of high quality curricula in diverse classrooms ([Darling-Hammond, 2010](#)).
- Efforts aligned with the goal to improve the academic performance of ethnically and linguistically diverse students and close achievement gaps have resulted in narrowed instruction and little improvement in academic performance ([Nieto, 2011](#); [Perie & Moran, 2005](#); [Rivera & Waxman, 2011](#)).

The Theoretical Frameworks



Resilience theory

([Borman & Overman, 2004](#); [Condly, 2006](#); [Elias & Haynes, 2008](#))



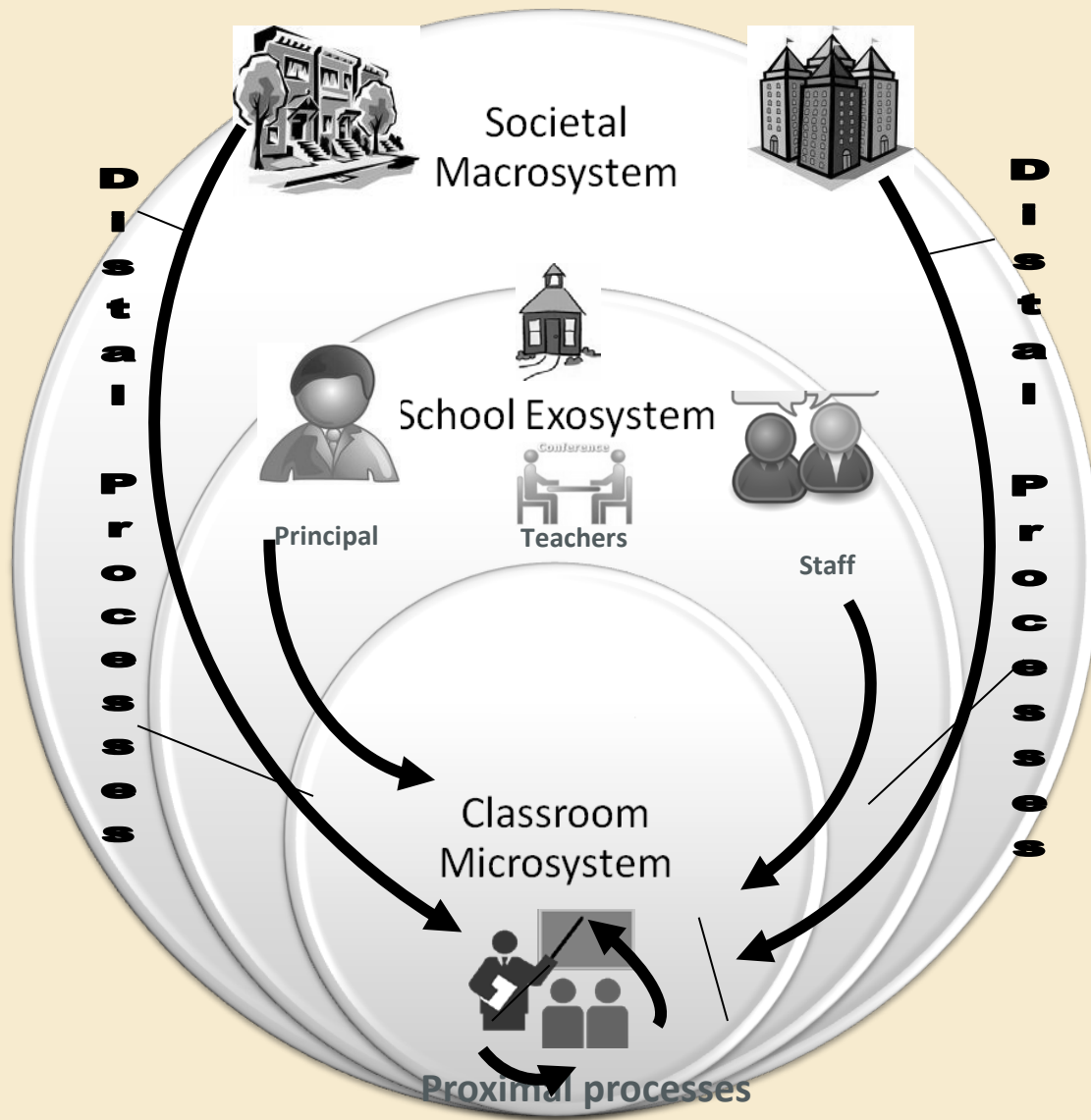
Resilience - ability to be successful even in the face of adversity
([Greene, Galambos, & Young, 2003](#)).



- A combination of individual and social protective factors interact in complex ways to give rise to resilience in adverse conditions and resilience is not extraordinary, but rather as inherent to all natural systems, including human ones ([Folke, Colding, & Berkes, 2003](#); [McTigue, Washburn, & Liew, 2009](#); [Prince-Embury, 2008](#)).



- Children who receive proactive, sustained support that develops adult-child relationships and individual competencies such as self-control are more likely to surmount adversities and achieve better in school than those who do not ([Condly, 2006](#); [Prince-Embury, 2008](#)).



Resilience theory is related to strains of research in the physical and social sciences rooted in **socioecological frameworks** that conceptualize human social systems (including schools) as complex and composed of multiple coevolving ([Brofenbrenner, 1993](#); [Wardle, 1996](#)).

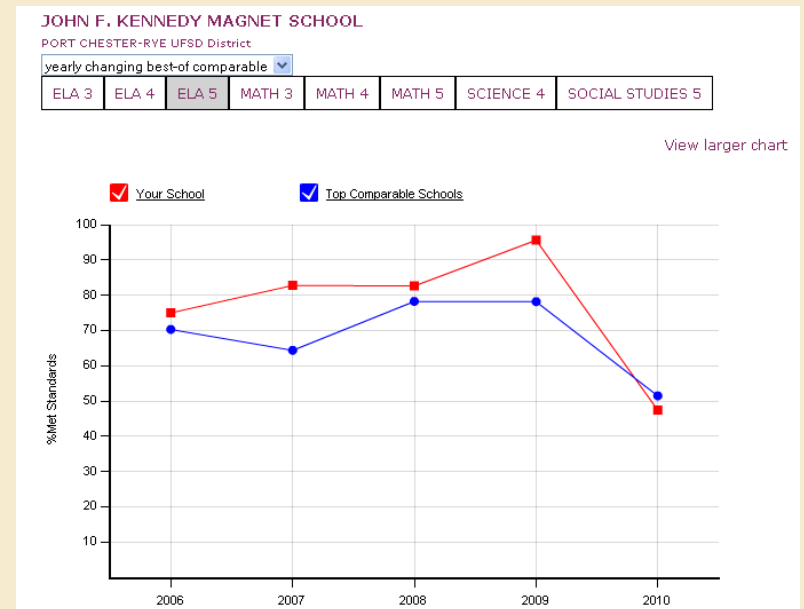
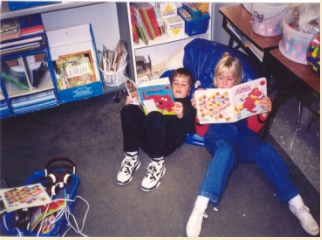
The Literature



- Both individual student characteristics and the context wherein a student is educated can affect individual student achievement outcomes ([Coleman, 1979](#)).
- High poverty and high ethnic and linguistic diversity in a school correlate with lower student achievement ([Oakes, 2005](#)).
- Research is needed to investigate what “linkages” (p. 47) exist between levels (e.g., classrooms, schools, and districts) in higher-performing schools and how those linkages might relate to diverse students’ academic achievement ([Datnow, Lasky, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2005](#)).
- The current study, rooted in a socioecological framework and drawing on resilience theory does this by adjusting the lens of inquiry on the characteristics of proximal (classroom, micro-level) and distal (school and district, exo- and macro-level) processes in higher-performing high diversity schools.

The Design

- Multiple case study
- Performance over time
- NYS Assessments (Math, ELA)



The Sample

- ELA and Math, 2007-9
- Grades 3-6
- 5 subgroups (African-American, Latino/Hispanic, English Learners, Low SES, Special Education)
- 10 Higher-Performing ($>+1$ z scores)
- 5 Average-Performing (near 0 z scores)

Mean Z Score, Higher Performers	+1.86
Mean Z Score, Average Performers	-0.03

The Sample



- Favored poverty (F/RL)
 - 73% of total sample > NYS average
- Open admissions
- PPE near average



Higher-Performing Schools

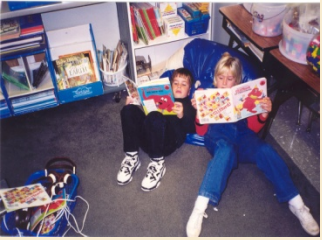


- **Malverne UFSD, Davison Avenue ES**
(Nassau)
- **Mount Vernon City SD, Lincoln ES**
(Westchester)
- **New Rochelle City SD, Columbus ES**
(Westchester)
- **Pine Bush Central SD, Pakanasink ES**
(Orange)
- **Port Chester-Rye UFSD, John F. Kennedy ES**
(Westchester)
- **Rochester City SD, Dr. Charles T. Lunsford School 19**
(Monroe)
- **Roosevelt UFSD, Centennial Avenue ES**
(Nassau)
- **Utica City SD, Martin Luther King Jr. ES**
(Oneida)
- **Valley Central SD, Maybrook ES**
(Orange)
- **Valley Stream 30 UFSD, Forest Road ES**
(Nassau)

Dist.	Schl	Grds	Tot #	F/RL	EL	AA	H/Lt	Wht	Oth	PPE*
Roch City	Schl 19	K-6	309	98	12	2	94	2	1	\$18,956
Utica City	MLK	K-5	273	94	11	52	27	11	10	\$14,940
New Roch	Columbus	K-5	816	78	31	8	82	8	2	\$21,959
PC-Rye	JFK	K-5	725	78	55	10	86	3	2	\$18,413
Roosevelt	Centennial	K-5	440	66	30	54	45	0	0	\$24,585
M. Vernon	Lincoln	K-6	758	60	15	49	24	21	6	\$22,133
P. Bush	Pakanasink	K-5	483	51	3	25	31	36	8	\$16,758
Valley Ct.	Maybrook	K-5	235	42	3	15	20	62	3	\$15,941
Malverne	Davison	K-4	325	34	8	37	25	30	8	\$26,127
VS 30	Forest Rd.	K-6	272	17	8	39	17	6	40	\$20,483
NYS		K-12	2.7 m	48	8	19	22	50	8	\$19,381

Except for PPE (2008-9 data), all data are from 2009-10.

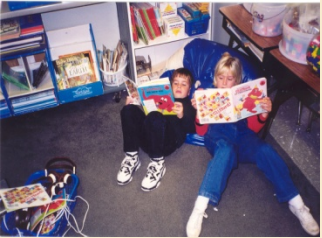
Data Collection Methods



- ✓ 2-day site visits (2-person teams)
- ✓ Interviewed teachers and administrators (semi-structured protocol)
 - (n=211)
- ✓ Collected documentary evidence
 - (n=135)

Data Analysis Methods

- Crafted a case study for each site



Know Your Schools ~
for NY Kids

Best Practices Case Study: Meeting Critical Needs at the Elementary Level

Dianne Walshhampton, April 2011

Columbus Elementary School New Rochelle City School District

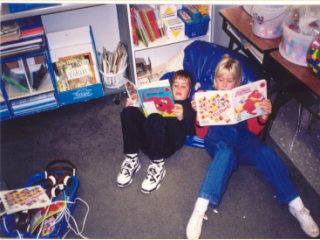


School Context

Columbus Elementary School is part of the New Rochelle City School District, in a suburb of New York City bordering Long Island Sound. The school serves a far greater percentage of high needs students than the state average, with 78% of the population receiving free or reduced-price lunch in 2009-10; 31% of its 816 students are English Language Learners (ELLs), and 82% are Hispanic. Columbus serves the largest enrollment of Hispanic and English Language Learners of

Data Analysis Methods

- Conducted cross-case analysis



HyperRESEARCH 2.8.3

File Edit Cases Sources Codes Reports Hypothesis Windows Help

K12 (9)MSZ

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71 of 71 Select Cases

Allium MS-AP

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attitude-students	AlliumMS_TInstMscInt_5-07_JM.doc	TEXT	9025,9073
belief-tching and learning	AlliumMS_TAISMATHInt_5-07_JM.doc	TEXT	7953,8047
belief-tching and learning	AlliumMS_TGr5-6SSIInt_5-07_JM.doc	TEXT	9000,9282
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247 of 247 Select Codes

View Annotation View Source

CODE LIST EDITOR

Edit Code Apply Code

Master Code List (126 total codes)

- attitude-students
- belief-ability
- belief-tching and learning
- cb - collab teachers
- cb - collab-guidance
- cb-collab-dist
- cb-collab-sch
- cb-collab-spec ed
- cb-collab-students
- cb-ESL students
- cb-school planning team
- COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS
- context
- context - Brd of Ed
- Context - Tcher union
- context- community
- context-parents
- context-prof envir
- context-spec.ed
- curr-content
- curr-ELA
- curr-ESL
- curr-math
- curr-process
- curr-reading
- curr-science
- curr-social st.
- curr-state
- curr-writing
- discipline
- diversity
- EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL WELLBEING
- EVIDENCE BASED DECISION MAKING
- extracurricular
- goals-process
- inst prac-interdisciplinary
- inst prac-math
- inst prac-modelling
- inst prac-science



Findings

Summary

- Close Engagement with and Understanding of the Population
- Literacy- and Technology-Enriched Instruction
- Enlightened Approach to Curriculum and Data
- Fluid Adaptation and Deployment of Resources



Findings

Close Engagement with and Understanding of the Population

- Communal Stances about Difference
- Deliberate and Effective Outreach to Parents
- Consistent Vertical Collaboration

You have to know your population and teach your population, despite the outside factors. You have to know who's in front of you.

– John F. Kennedy teacher

Findings

Our work with families is key. Our faculty and staff understand this. We all stress the notion that “We are family” with our school community.

- Centennial Avenue principal



Principals have individual meetings with classroom teachers and the reading teacher to review progress and determine if what they are doing is working or they need to switch.

- Valley Stream 30 (Forest Road) administrator

Findings

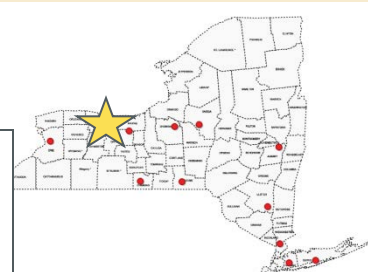
Engagement and Understanding of Population

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<p>Ethic of care and nurture, yet accountability for students' emotional and social growth and academic achievement is not.</p>	<p>School seen as a "family," cooperation expected; all employees take responsibility for children's emotional and social growth and achievement.</p>
<p>Parent connections weak and attributed to community apathy regarding schooling or language deficiencies among parents.</p>	<p>Teachers consistently forge parent relationships; these facilitated through school-level initiatives that recognize and celebrate diversity.</p>
<p>Dialogue (plus action) from teacher to school to district and the reverse infrequent and/or inconsistent, not necessarily centered on student achievement.</p>	<p>Discussions between teacher leaders and principals consistently inform instructional and other resource allocation changes from classroom to district.</p>

Rochester's School 19 Created a Family



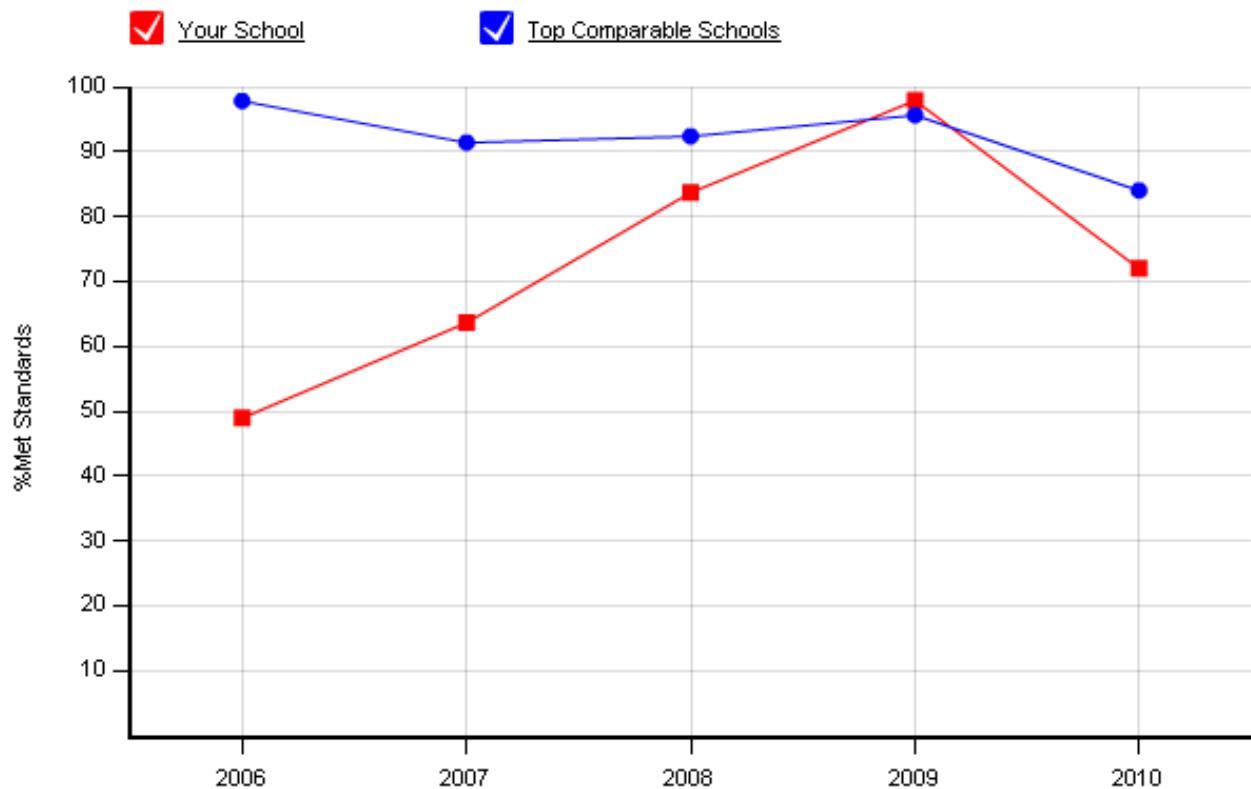
SCHOOL 19-DR CHARLES T LUNSFORD

ROCHESTER CITY SD District

constant base year comparables

ELA 3	ELA 4	ELA 5	ELA 6	MATH 3	MATH 4	MATH 5	MATH 6	SCIENCE 4
SOCIAL STUDIES 5								

[View larger chart](#)



- Grades K-6
 - 309 stu.
 - 98% FR/L
 - 94% AA
 - 98% avg
- NYS PPE



Findings

Literacy- and Technology-Enriched Instruction

- Literacy-Building Early, Intensively and Coherently
- Literacy for English Learners
- Technology-Enhanced Instruction

I strongly believe that a student must know how to read before they enter Grade 3. We do everything in our power within the classroom and within AIS to reach this goal. Direct instruction, AIS, after school tutoring, as well as computer-aided instruction are the delivery systems we use to help our students read before entering Grade 3.

- Martin Luther King Jr. teacher



Findings

The dedicated 90-minute literacy block with a structured mini lesson, reader's workshop, learning centers, guided reading, and writing opportunities has been a key reform. I think it has benefited our students the most and strengthened our ELA instructional program.

– Centennial Avenue teacher

Using the same language, making sure that if we're using an approach in second grade, that the same language in terms of strategies is used the next year. If you don't do that, then you spend the first three months teaching [students] to use your strategies.

- Malverne (Davison Ave) special education director

Findings

Literacy- and Technology-Enriched Instruction

AP

HP

No clear and consistent approach to literacy instruction apparent from teacher to teacher and grade level to grade level.	Balanced strategies build literacy intensively early in the elementary years and with consistency from class to class and grade level to grade level.
ESL instruction typically pull out and seen as discrete from mainstream instruction.	Mainstream teachers specifically adapting instruction for ELs and/or providing native language instruction to improve literacy development.
Technology typically controlled by the teacher and not used in a strategic way to target needed literacy skills.	Technology used to target specific skills at level and pace of student need, continually monitor performance, supplement instruction for special needs students and ELs, and extend instruction to the home.

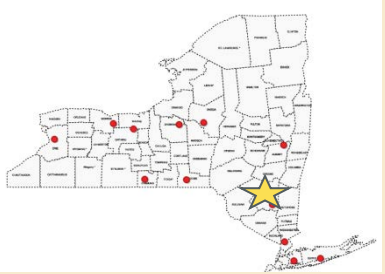
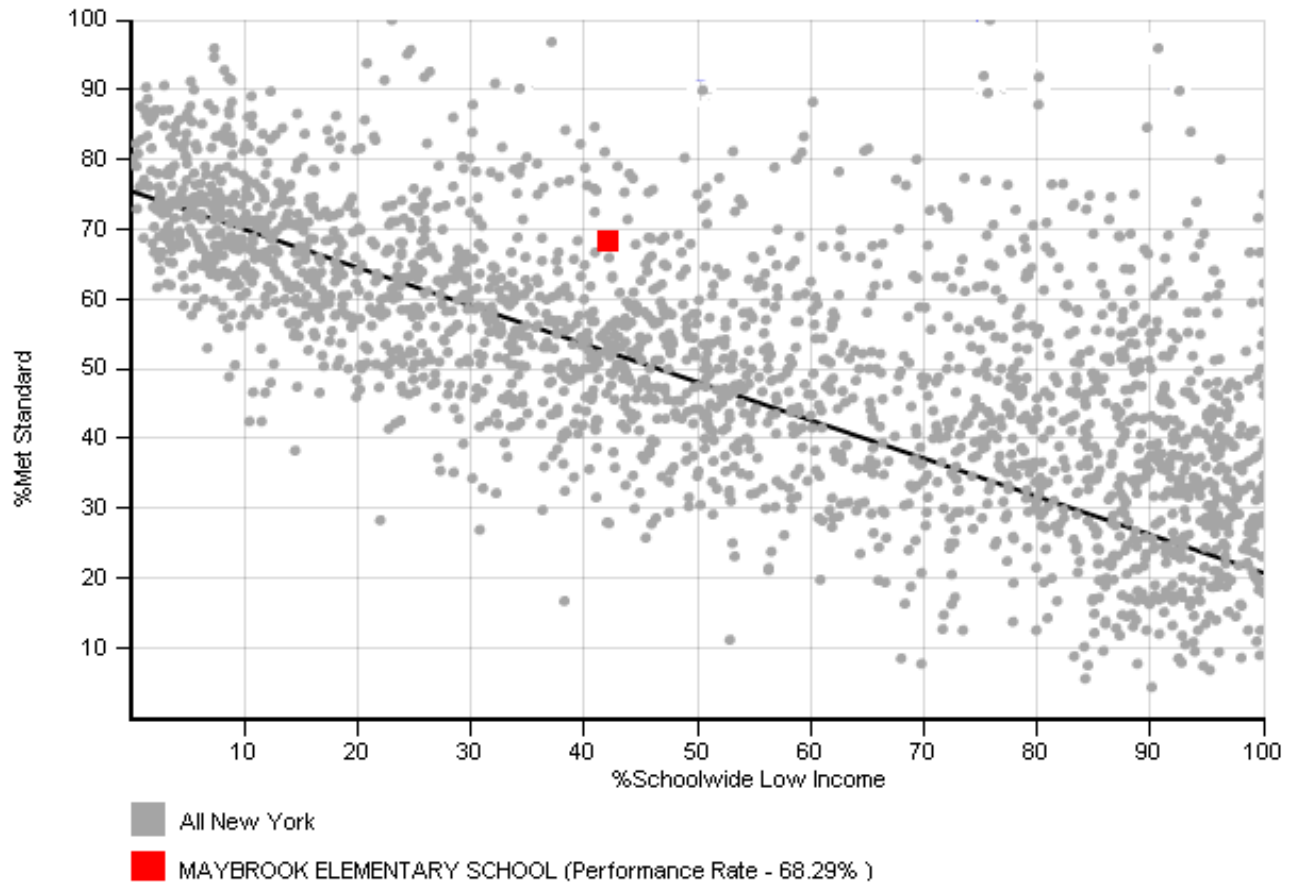
MAYBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

VALLEY CSD (MONTGOMERY) District

Year: 2010

ELA 3	ELA 4	ELA 5	MATH 3	MATH 4	MATH 5	SCIENCE 4	SOCIAL STUDIES 5
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%Schoolwide low income



- K-5
- 235 stu.
- 42% F/RL
- 15% AA
- 20% H/L
- 82% avg NYS PPE

Maybrook Stresses Literacy Instruction



Findings

Enlightened Approach to Curriculum and Data

- Curriculum Enlightenment
- Data Literacy
- Adaptations for Critical Needs Students

[I attribute our success to] overall curriculum alignment, which is district wide in terms of setting clear alignment maps of what students should know and be able to do. These are consistently upheld school wide, district wide, and classroom wide.

– Valley Stream 30 (Forest Road) administrator

Findings

There's a real understanding of what the achievement gap is, where the students are really underperforming, and that comes from a strong ability from the principal and assistant principal to really understand the state data.

- New Rochelle (Columbus) administrator

[Building] data literacy . . . extinguished the ideas and the perceptions that kids can't learn because they just don't have it, and because they just can't do it.

- Port Chester-Rye (John F. Kennedy) administrator





Findings

Approach to Curriculum and Data

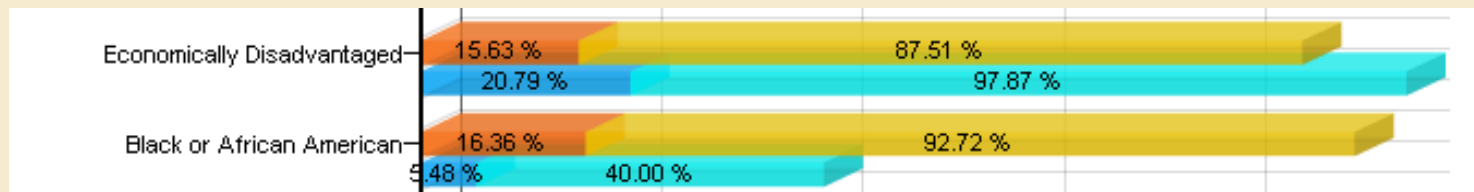
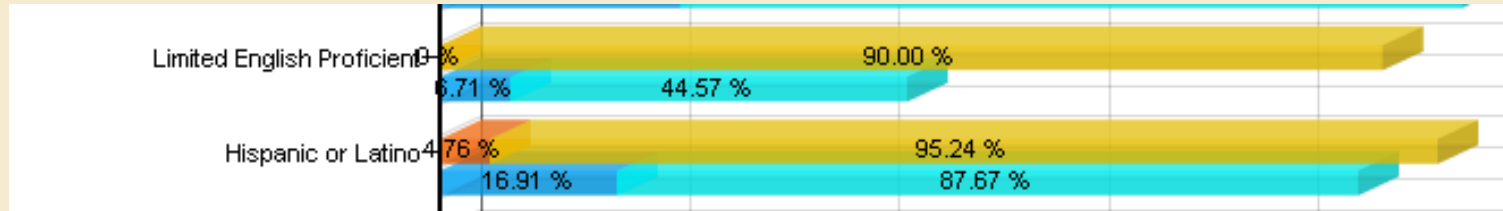
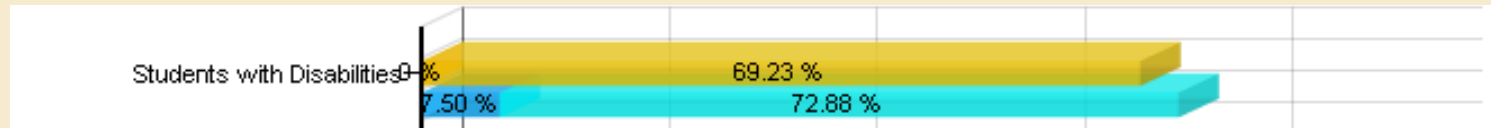
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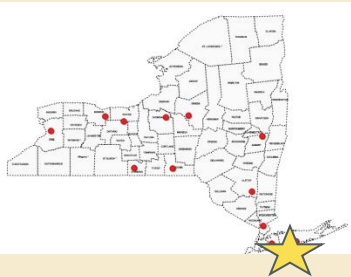
<p>Curriculum revision seen as product oriented, something finished until scheduled for revisiting; curriculum may be out of sync with programs and materials.</p>	<p>Curriculum revision seen as a continuing, revelatory process that includes revamping, rethinking, and retooling to deliver curricula in new ways.</p>
<p>Classroom performance data seen as disconnected from what is important, so results not effectively used; discussions of data between teachers and administrators infrequent and optional.</p>	<p>Variety of useful performance data generated regularly, shared vertically, and acted upon to inform instructional changes and curriculum revision.</p>
<p>No specific adaptations for special education and ESL students articulated in the curriculum.</p>	<p>Curriculum adapted to the needs of special education and ESL students.</p>

Centennial Ave. Unifies the Curriculum

Year:



- K-5
- 440 stu
- 66% F/RL
- 30% EL
- 54% AA
- 45% Hisp.
- 125% avg. NYS PPE





Findings

Fluid Adaptation and Deployment of Resources

- Extensive Range of Interventions
- Pursuit and Targeting of Funding

We're never really sure when we pilot or adopt an initiative or program – a training or approach – how effective it will be. . . . We are even [willing to] take a half step backward if [a program offers] the prospect of being able to take two steps forward.

– New Rochelle (Columbus) administrator

Findings

We look at what the child needs and figure out ways to meet those needs without feeling that we need to label. . . . Let's meet the needs and monitor how they progress. . . . We first look at the need and the services and provide it [label or not]. - Columbus teacher

There's no specific student-teacher ratio; it's more of group instruction, based on needs. It's very amorphous, with a tremendous amount of auxiliary staff and a high allocated budget to retain those teachers.
- Pine Bush (Pakanasink) administrator



Findings

Adapting and Deploying Resources

AP

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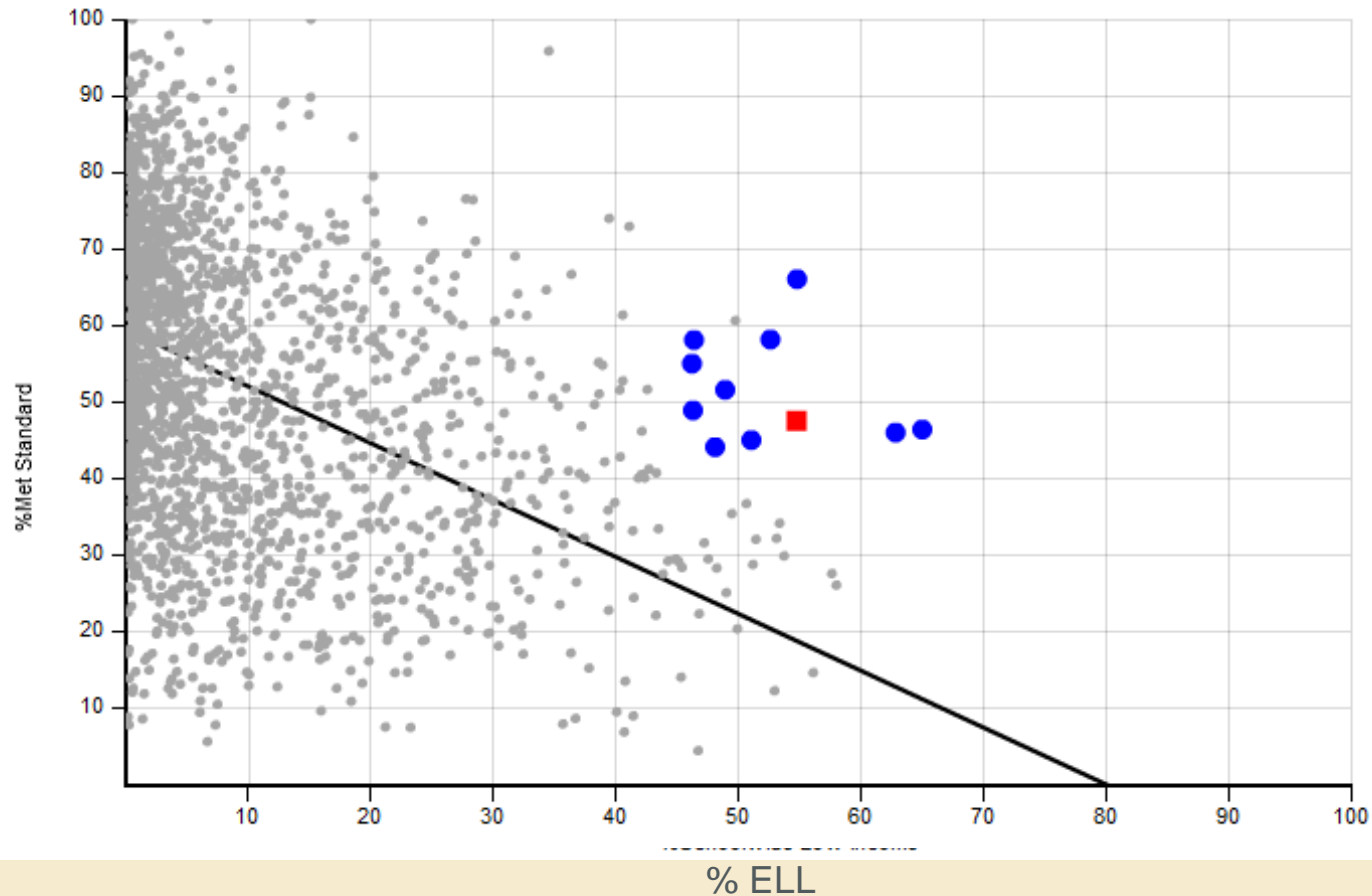
<p>ESL and special education not as inclusionary as it could be; if in transition to more inclusionary, struggling with scheduling and belief constraints.</p>	<p>Flexible stance toward the use of specialists, instructional space, and time maximizes levels of inclusion for EL and special needs students.</p>
<p>RTI in infancy and/or resistance to RTI evident.</p>	<p>Extensive array of intervention strategies used, including effective use of RTI.</p>
<p>Little evidence of successfully garnering grant support for extended day interventions or other special support targeted to ELs and/or special needs students.</p>	<p>Funding for extra support targeted specifically to ELs and special needs students pursued, successfully garnered, and well appropriated.</p>

JFK (Port Chester) Targets Resources

Year: 2010

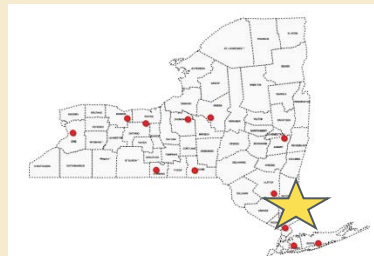
ELA 3 ELA 4 ELA 5 MATH 3 MATH 4 MATH 5 SCIENCE 4 SOCIAL STUDIES 5

%ELL



- JFK
- Other top performers, similar schools

- K-5
- 725 stu.
- 78% F/RL
- 55% EL
- 10% AA
- 86% Hisp.
- 95% avg. NYS PPE



Questions? More info?

kwilcox1@albany.edu



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York