

## About Know Your Schools ~for NY Kids

One goal of NYKids is to help schools learn from other schools whose students consistently perform well. Prior studies identified best practices in high school, middle school, middle school science, elementary school, and critical needs students at the elementary level. Results of all studies are available at [www.albany.edu/nykids](http://www.albany.edu/nykids). Each study provides a report of findings, case studies, best practice frameworks, sample evidence from higher-performing schools, self-surveys, and more. In addition, planning tools and institutes can be arranged to help school teams make better use of all the resources.

## For more information:

contact [swiles@albany.edu](mailto:swiles@albany.edu) or call 518-442-5171

Know Your Schools ~for NY Kids is a project of the University at Albany School of Education. Guidance is provided by a state-wide Advisory Board; funding is provided, in part, by the State of New York and the University at Albany.

# The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Promising  
practices from  
higher-performing  
high schools

# Graduating on Time



More than 80% of students with disabilities graduate from Amityville High School in four years — well above the 50% state average four-year graduation rate for students with disabilities.



Brookfield High School consistently graduates 100% of its students in four years despite a nearly 50% free and reduced-price lunch rate.



Although it serves the most diverse population in its five-high school district, 95% of Elmont High School's African-American students consistently graduate in four years, compared with the state average of 62%.

## How do these and other high schools like them support their most at-risk populations to stay in school and graduate on time?

Answers can be found in the results of a recent study of outlier schools — those whose most at-risk students (ethnic and language minorities, economically disadvantaged, and special needs students) graduate in four years in higher percentages than expected. The study is the sixth in a series conducted by researchers of the Know Your Schools~for NY Kids project at the University at Albany School of Education.

## Results

A full report plus individual case studies for eight higher-performing schools can be found at:

[www.albany.edu/nykids](http://www.albany.edu/nykids)

ALL REPORTS  
ARE  
DOWNLOADABLE

## About the Research

Conducted in 2013, this 13-school cross-case study investigated factors that promote higher than average high school completion among groups of students generally at risk of failing to complete high school (ethnically and linguistically diverse and special needs students). Eight schools were identified as “higher performing” based on consistently higher than predicted graduation rates among at least two groups of at-risk students; five other schools consistently achieved average graduation rates among the same groups. Schools were selected based on the four-year graduation rates for the cohorts of 2004 (expected to graduate in 2008), 2005 (to graduate in 2009), and 2006 (to graduate in 2010). Because students in low socioeconomic composition schools also graduate at lower rates, the sample favored such schools, using free and reduced-price lunch rates as the measure of school poverty. In 2011, the mean free and reduced-price lunch rate for the higher performers was 44%; for the average performers, 36.8%. The state average was 49% for that year. Average-performing schools were matched as closely as possible to the higher performers in terms of student poverty levels, geographic location, size, and student ethnicity.

## The Eight Consistently Higher-Performing Schools Studied:

**Amityville Memorial HS**  
Amityville UFSD

**Elmont Memorial JSHS**  
Sewanhaka Central HSD

**Brookfield Central HS**  
Brookfield CSD

**Otselic Valley JSHS**  
Georgetown-South Otselic CSD

**Downsville Central HS**  
Downsville CSD

**Prattsburgh Central HS**  
Prattsburgh CSD

**Eastridge HS**  
East Irondequoit CSD

**Whitesville HS**  
Whitesville CSD