



The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time



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NYSSBA Annual Convention

NYKids
(Know Your Schools~for NY Kids)



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Overall Finding

In schools with higher than expected graduation rates educators are looking *beyond* graduation to students' post-secondary needs – and meeting those needs with clear goals, strong relationships, individual attention, and flexibility.



About NYKids (Know Your Schools~for NY Kids)*

- Interactive displays of state assessment data
- Research to identify best practices
- Usable results
- Accessible resources
- Processes to support improvement by leadership teams

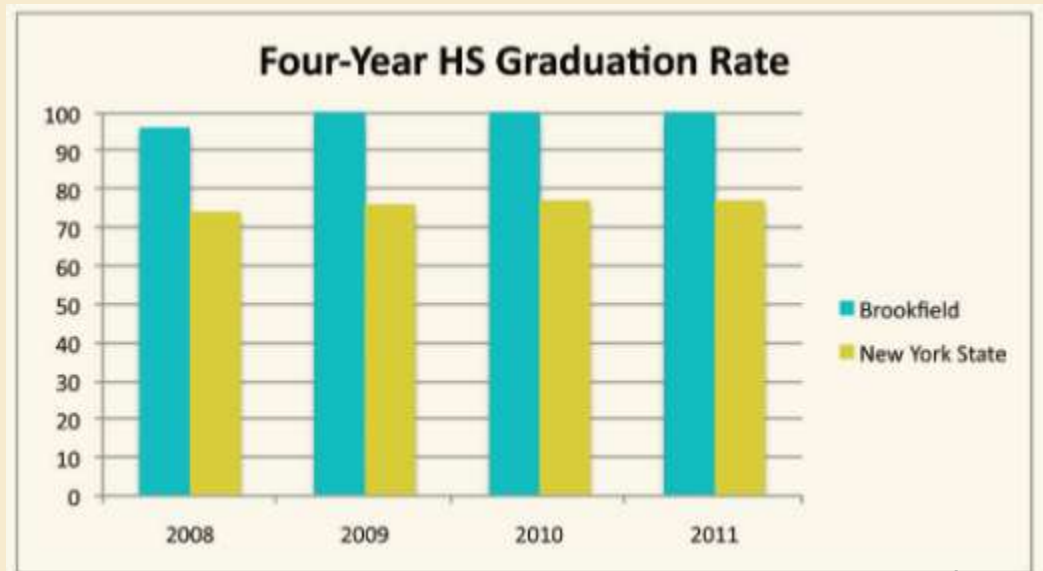
Inform – Inspire - Improve

*formerly Just for the Kids~New York

NYKids

The Basics

- Performance over time
- NYS Report Card Data
- Consistently higher or average performing
- Find the differences in practice



NYKids

2005-2014 – 6 studies

- Elementary schools (2005)
- Middle schools (2007)
- High schools (2008)
- Middle school science (2009)
- Critical needs at the elementary level (2011)
- High school graduation (2013)



High School Grad Study Sample

- High school 4-year graduation rate
- Cohorts of 2004 - 2006
- At least 2/5 at-risk groups
- Regressed against school size, stu stability, ethnicity, SES
- 8 higher performing, 5 average performing

Mean Z Score, Higher Performers (HPs)	1.23
Mean Z Score, Average Performers (APs)	0.1

High School Sample cont.

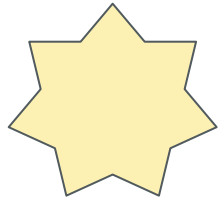
- Favor poverty (F/RL)
 - HPs high needs; APs average needs
- Open admissions
- ~NYS average per pupil expenditures
- Primarily rural, exurban HPs (APs ~)



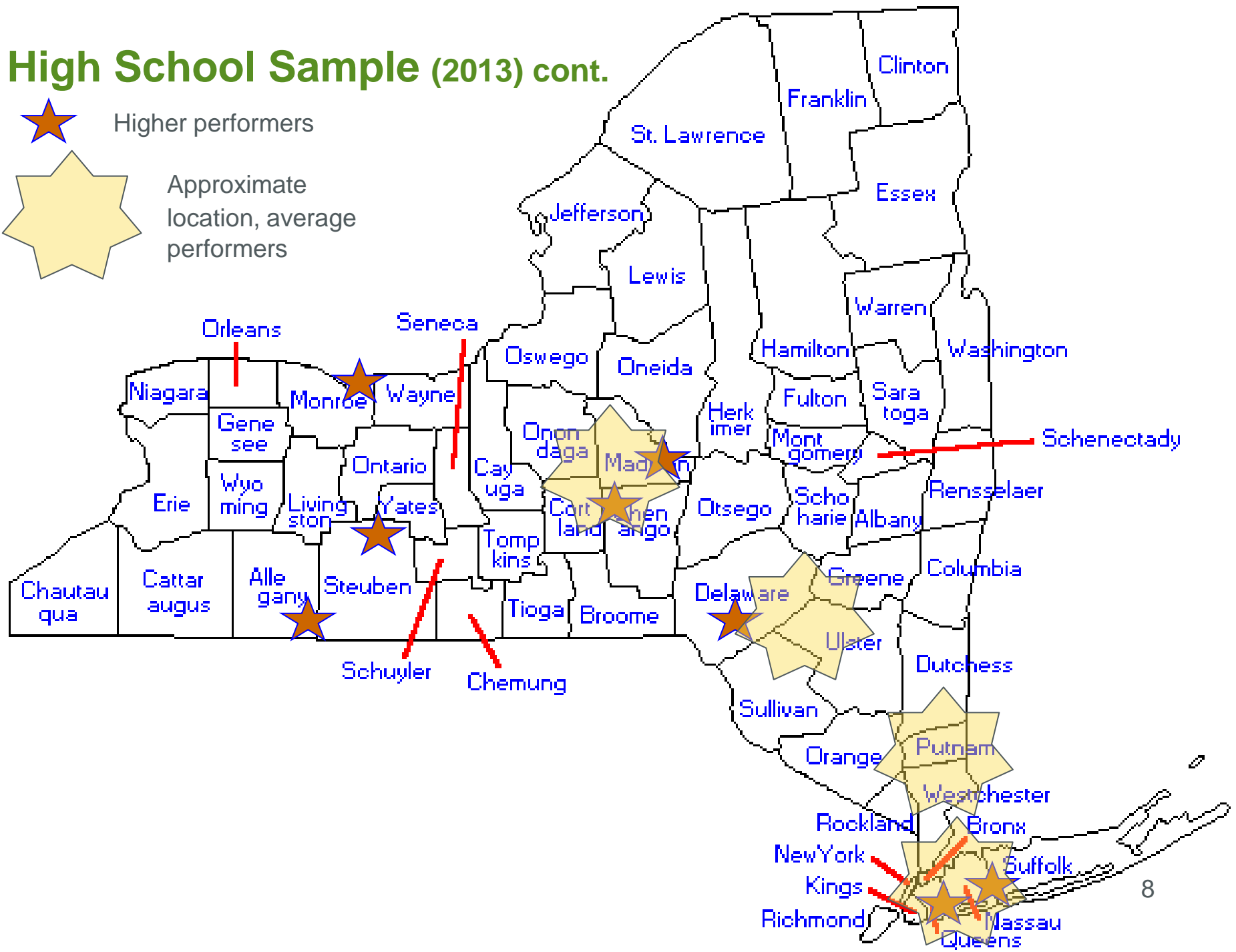
High School Sample (2013) cont.



Higher performers

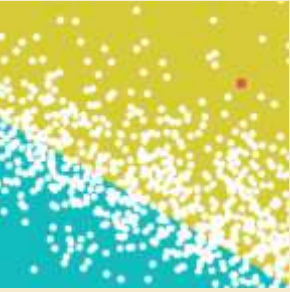


Approximate location, average performers



HP High Schools

- **Amityville Memorial HS**, Amityville UFSD
- **Brookfield HS**, Brookfield CSD
- **Downsville HS**, Downsville CSD
- **Eastridge HS**, East Irodequoit CSD
- **Elmont Memorial HS**, Sewanhaka HSD
- **Otselic Valley J/SH**, Georgetown-S. Otselic CSD
- **Prattsburgh HS**, Prattsburgh CSD
- **Whitesville HS**, Whitesville CSD



School	# Stu 9-12	% F/RL	% EL	% AA	% H/Latino	% Wht	% Other	4-Year Grad Rate	N/R Ratio	PPE
Amityville	701	39	6	57	29	11	3	81	H	\$26,032
Brookfield	77	45	0	1	1	99	0	100	H	\$20,712
Downsville	85	63	0	1	1	99	0	96	H	\$40,380
Eastridge	989	46	12	18	12	65	4	91	A	\$19,406
Elmont	1307	27	1	78	13	1	8	97	L	\$18,176
Otselic V.	148	53	0	0	0	99	0	95	H	\$22,602
Prattsburgh	133	46	0	4	1	95	0	98	H	\$20,161
Whitesville	86	33	0	0	0	100	0	88	H	\$23,025
HP average	630	44	1	19	7	71	4	93	H	\$23,812
AP average	947	37	4	17	16	58	9	85	A	\$24,138
NYS		49	8	19	22	49	10	77	8	\$20,410

Data are from 2010-11 State Report Cards.

Methods

- Made 2-day site visits (2-person teams)
- Interviewed teachers, administrators, and specialists (special ed, guidance, social workers); 144 total
- Collected documents
- Analyzed, wrote a case study for each site*
- Analyzed, wrote cross-site analysis*
- Analyzed, created best practice framework*

* Available at: www.albany/nykids



Inspire

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Overall Findings

Alignment of goals and curriculum,

Bridging divides within the school and between school and community,

Crafting engaging instruction, and

Driving a whole-child intervention loop.





The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Alignment of goals and curriculum

What is your school like?

For each row, read the two statements and choose the description that is more like your school; then go to **B** in the column you selected and circle 1, 2, 3 or 4 to indicate how much the description is like your school.



A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Decision making at both school and district are hierarchical and not necessarily aligned around shared goals.				Shared leadership is consciously cultivated around aligned goals.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4
A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Setting of goals, analysis of data, and revision of curriculum occur infrequently and do not always involve classroom teachers.				Teachers and other school personnel constantly engage in systematic, evidence-informed goal setting, data analysis, and curriculum revision.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4

Alignment of goals and curriculum

- Working toward mastery and post-secondary education
- Teacher Leadership for Common Core alignment
- Using evidence to inform goal setting and curriculum development
- Beyond-the-school networking

We set higher goals locally.

- Prattsburgh teacher

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Success is about changing the attitude of students to strive for excellence, not just passing.

- Amityville administrator

I can't say enough about the three Common Core ambassadors that have gone to Albany . . . then come back and turnkeyed the information.

- Brookfield administrator



We have senior projects and job shadowing – those are helpful in guiding the students for their futures.

- Whitesville teacher

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Alignment of goals and curriculum

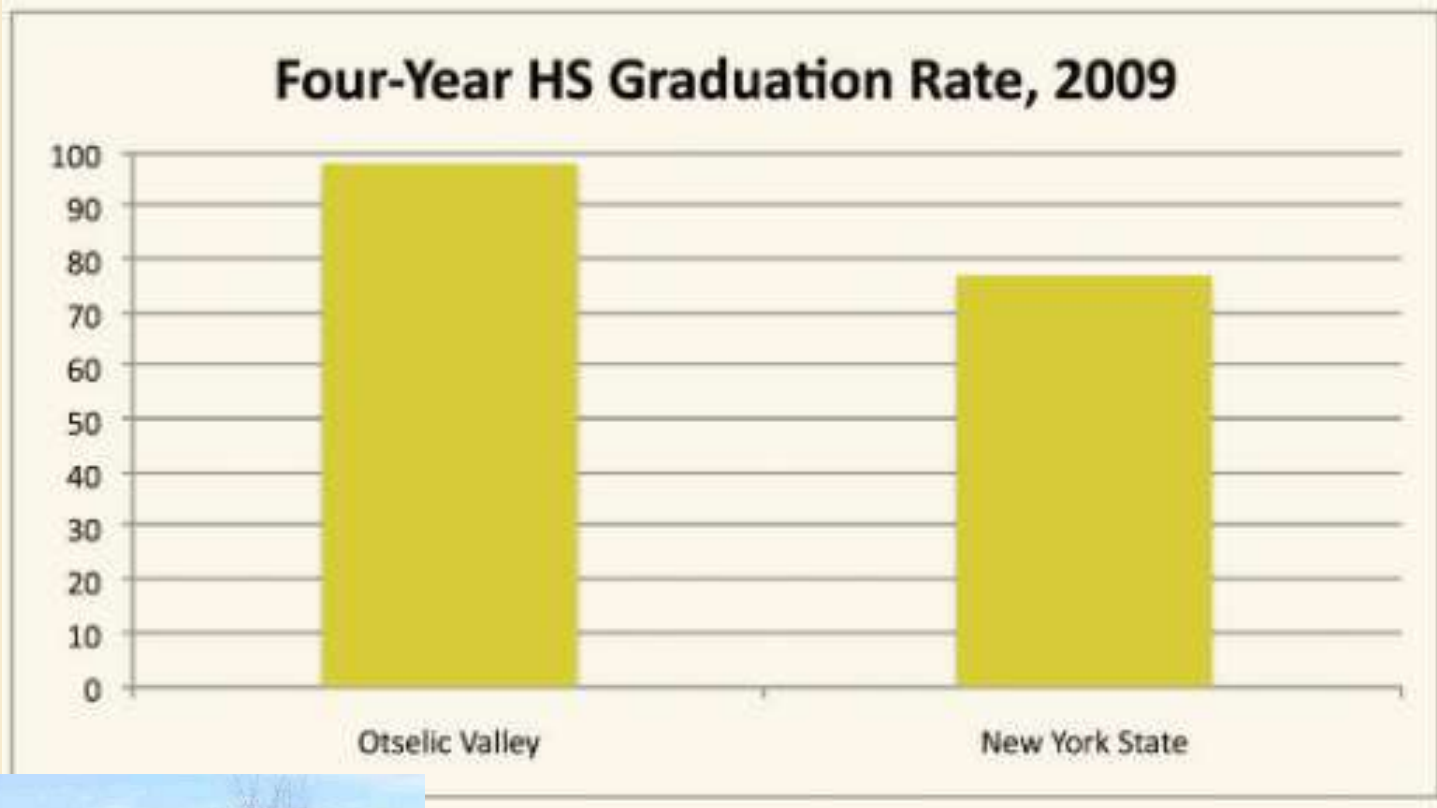
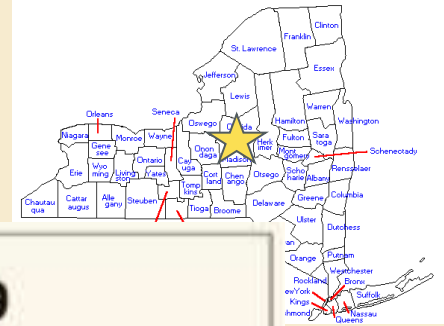
AP

HP

Teacher collaboration limited to a department or grade; does not routinely cross boundaries	Faculty continuously seek to network locally and beyond
Supporting students to reach mastery seen as limited by lack of resources	High expectations promoted through ambitious, student-centered goals
Hierarchical decision making	Shared leadership
Infrequent goal setting, data analysis, and curriculum revision	Constant, collaborative, systemic evidence-informed goal setting, data analysis, and curriculum revision.

Otselic Valley High School



We are all in this together.



- High Needs
- 53% FR/L
- Rural
- Isolated

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Bridging divides within the school and between school and community

A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Educators work largely independently of one another with little clarity as to how their efforts coalesce to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs.				Teachers and administrators share leadership and collaborate continuously around social/emotional and academic supports students need, reaching across possible divides of titles, subject areas, and grade levels.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4
A: My school is more like this			OR	A: My school is more like this		
School staff experience difficulty surmounting barriers to partnering with families.				Educators have developed friendly, systematic approaches to reaching out to families and building trust.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Bridging divides within the school and between school and community

- Collaborating with colleagues
- Connecting home and school
- Developing school and community relations
- Linking social and academic support for students

Our strength is having to pull together as a community.

- Otselic valley teacher

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Find out what the barriers are. Is it financial? . . . Living arrangement? The social workers and counselors work closely with kids and families and teachers to find out what the barrier is. . . . Do you need to be evaluated for [special ed] and never were? Are there vision issues?

– Elmont guidance personnel

All success has to come from establishing a relationship with your students . . . Creating a culture of support. I think students, even in the roughest times, have at least a handful of adults that they can go to. . . . There's safety, both physical and emotional.

- Eastridge teacher

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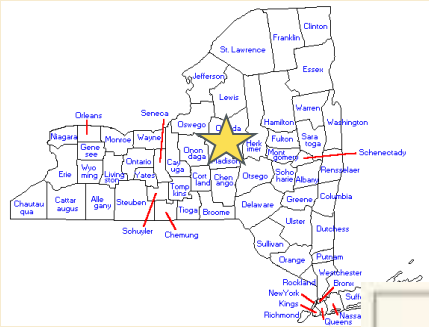
Bridging Divides

AP

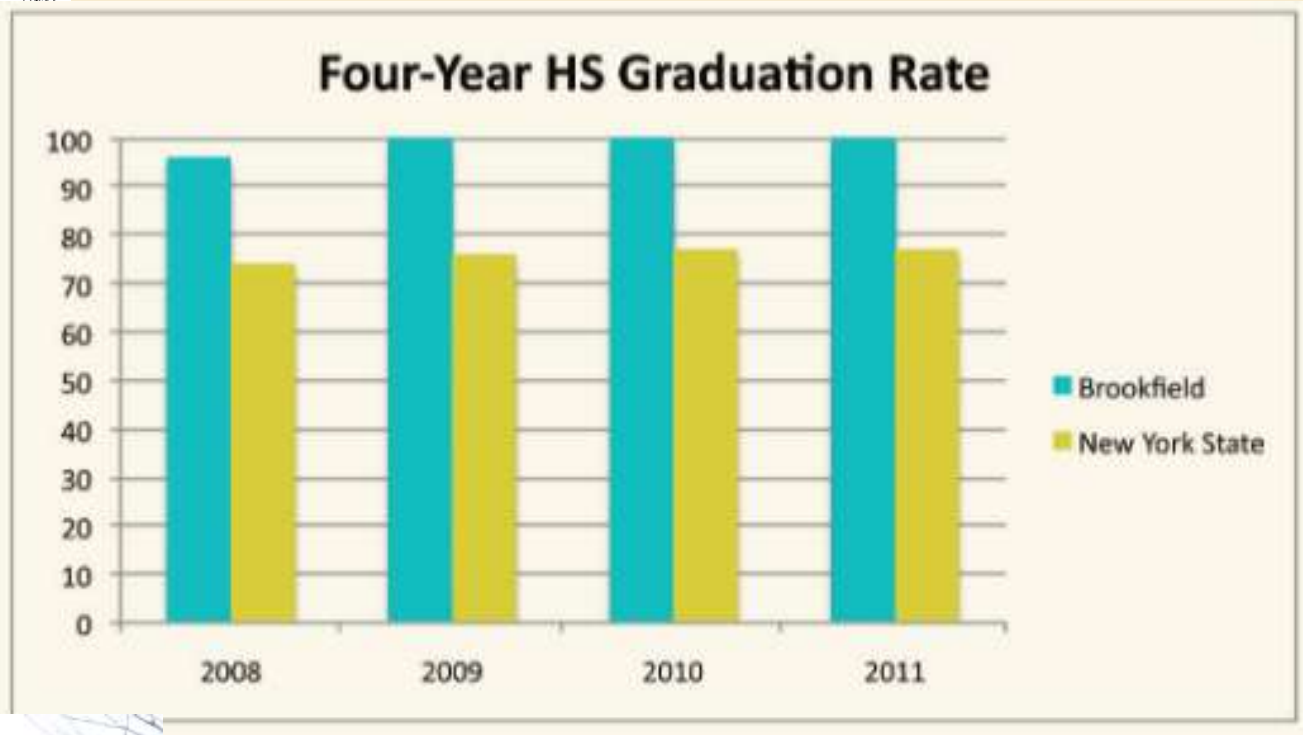
HP

Resistance to new mandates	Teachers and administrators work together to enact new mandates
Educators work mostly independently of one another	Shared leadership and collaboration around social/emotional and academic supports
Difficulty surmounting barriers to partnering with families	Friendly, systemic approaches to reaching out to families in place.
Communication disconnects hamper staff trust building	Pride in student success pervades school and community

Brookfield Central High School







- 77 students
- 45% F/RL
- SES diverse
- P-12 building



We teach our kids to think. Always remember that.
- Retired teacher quoted by multiple current educators.

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Crafting engaging instruction

A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Instruction is traditional, typically teacher lecture dominant, and not crafted around students' needs, interests, and 21 st Century learning goals.				Instruction is designed to be relevant to students' lives, focused on developing higher-order, critical thinking and inquiry skills, and engaging, through the use of technologies and differentiation.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4
A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Most learning is expected to take place in traditional classroom settings.				Multiple learning pathways have been established, providing alternatives beyond the traditional classroom experience.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4

Crafting engaging instruction

- Instruction designed to promote higher-order thinking
- Evidence-informed and technology-enhanced instruction
- Strategies for active and broad participation
- Experiential opportunities

A good teacher is someone whose students are engaged, involved in the learning activities, thinking, responding, . . . challenging themselves. It's the engagement of students in the learning activities that marks the good teacher.

– Brookfield principal

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

A priority is keeping current with the types of instructional strategies that will engage the students we have.

- Amityville assistant superintendent



It's crazy how much technology I'm using in the classroom today. . . . We were working with chalkboards until we got these boards four or five years ago. What a difference!

- Prattsburgh teacher

They receive free lunch and a notation on their transcript that they did work study in a classroom, and we give them half a credit for the activity.

- Brookfield principal

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Crafting engaging instruction

AP

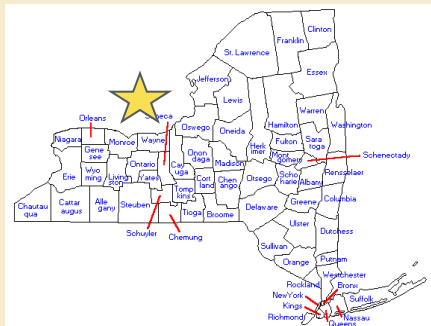
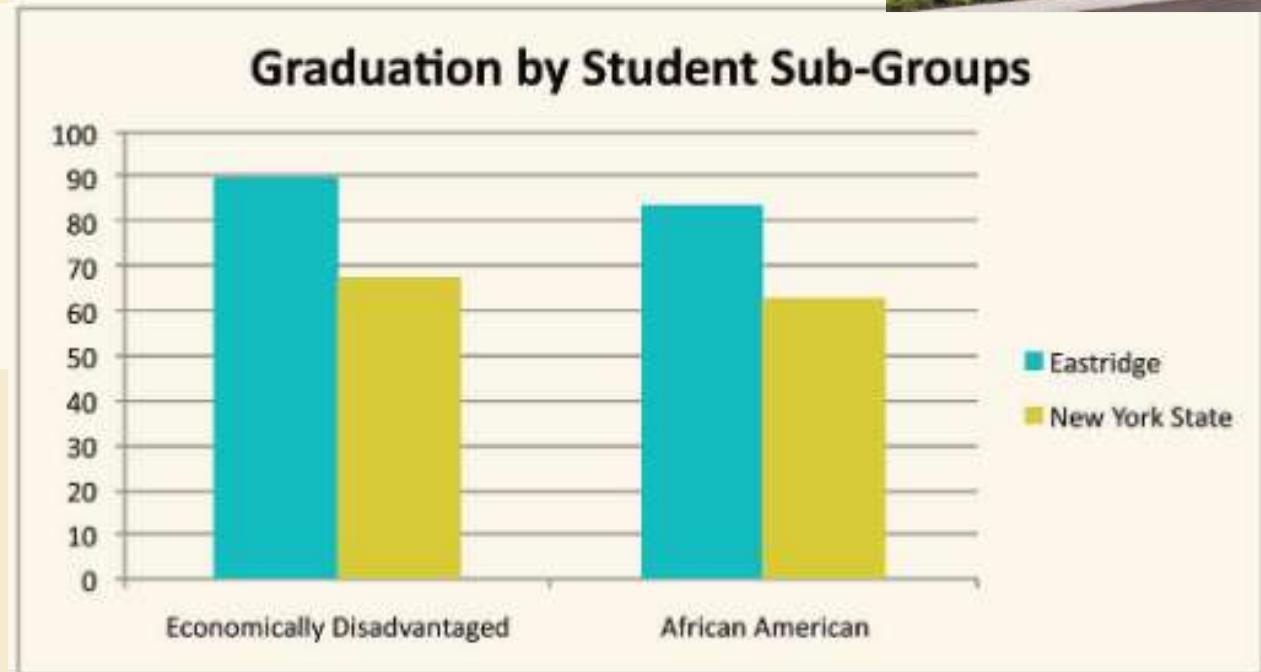
HP

Traditional instruction, often lecture, not focused on students' needs, interests, or 21 st century goals	Instruction relevant to students, focused on higher-order, critical thinking, engagement, inquiry, differentiation, and technology use
Educators care about students but focus may not be on high quality, engaging instruction	Emphasis on high-quality teaching for students at risk of dropping out
Most learning in traditional classroom	Multiple learning pathways, including beyond classroom or school
Lack of school-wide strategies for using performance data	Data analysis plus personal knowledge of student guides instruction and adjustments

Eastridge High School



Percentage of economically disadvantaged and African-American students graduating in four years, Eastridge and New York State, 2011.







I'm not going to tell a student, "You can't try something that we advertise as a more rigorous program." It's never too late to change your approach to scholarship.

- 989 students
- 46% F/RL
- 18% AA
- 12% Hispanic
- 95% avg. NYS PPE

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Driving a whole-child intervention loop

A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
Attendance records are available, but analysis and intervention plans are not in place or are not implemented consistently or immediately.				Systems are in place to closely track student attendance online and intervene early, including going to the home and contacting family.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4
A: My school is more like this 			OR	A: My school is more like this 		
School personnel are aware of the increasing need for social services and recognize the difficulty for families to access them but do not play a key role in helping families access and sustain participation.				Even if the school cannot provide some of the social services students need, school personnel proactively work with families to help them locate the necessary services.		
B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2	very similar 1	somewhat similar 2		B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4	somewhat similar 3	very similar 4

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Driving a whole-child intervention loop

- Organized and collaborative data monitoring and analysis
- Timely and targeted interventions

The spreadsheet we use is a living document on every student junior to senior year: how many credits they need, the exams they still need, PSAT and SAT scores. That's definitely the lifeline. We have weekly meetings every Wednesday with ed services and the assistant principal who's the head of the alternative program. We talk about students we're worried about. We compare notes, test scores, [and updates]. – Eastridge school administrator

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

We do meet every Wednesday morning to talk about any student where we have concerns -- what's being done for this kid, do we recognize the issue? Somebody steps up and helps to formulate [strategies] to make this successful. It's not a written plan for every kid. We do have educational contracts for kids that lay out progressive steps, maybe discipline or academics, [indicating] 'This is where you need to be by when.' - Prattsburgh superintendent



An amazing thing happened [as] teachers saw the value of evidence-informed instruction.

– Downsville principal

We believe we need to early detect the issues and needs of our kids.

- Whitesville superintendent

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

DDriving a whole-child intervention loop

AP

HP

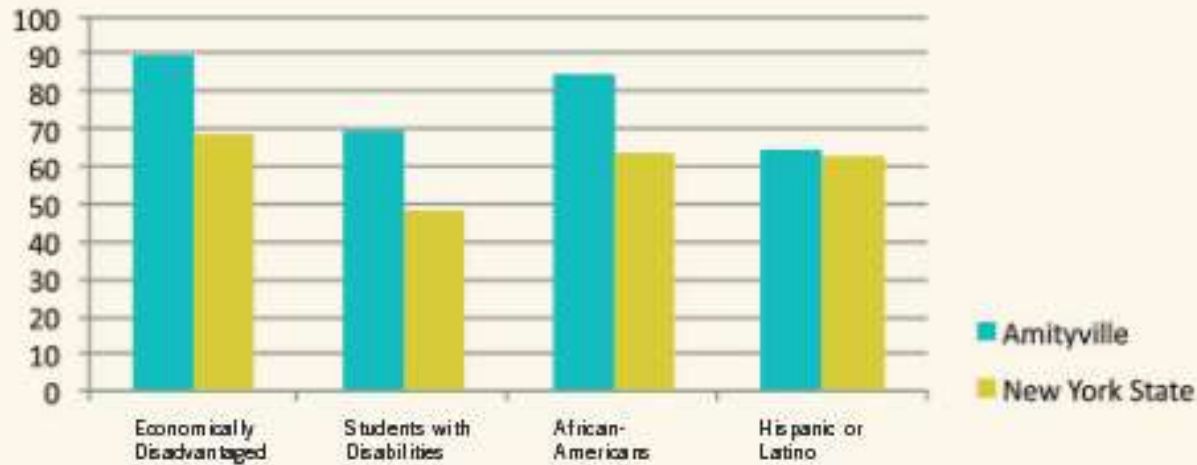
Extra support not frequent and not necessarily aligned with classroom learning objectives	Extra support closely linked to classroom learning objectives
Academic reports (e.g., report cards) issued quarterly	Academic reports issues every few weeks, drawing on baseline, quarterly, mid-term and other assessments
Analysis and intervention based on attendance data not implemented consistently or immediately	Systems closely track attendance and staff intervene early
Schools not a key player in helping families access needed social services	School teams proactively work with families to locate needed services



Amityville Memorial HS

Percentage of students in four at-risk subgroups graduating in four years, Amityville and New York State, 2010.

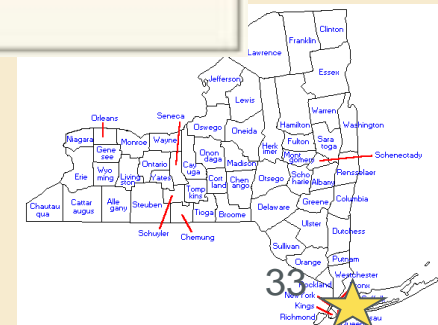
Graduation by Sub-Groups



- 701 stu.
- 39% F/RL
- 57% AA
- 29% Hisp.

We need to look at different models. . . . When you 're talking about kids who are 16 . . . or 19 and you tell them to go to a class for remediation, it's not going to work unless they are highly motivated.

- principal.



Improve

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools

Critical Needs Elementary Self-Survey

Exit this survey

Dear Visitors,

Based on the findings of our elementary school critical needs study, we developed this survey as a tool for school- and district-based educators to take the pulse of their own organizations in terms of the four key elements of what works for critical needs students in elementary school.

For more about each element, see the full report (available as a PDF) on the NY Kids Website. To access it, please copy and past the following URL into your Web browser:

http://www.albany.edu/hykids/files/NY_Kids_Critical_Needs_Elementary_Full_Report_2011.pdf

and we invite you to use this survey with colleagues in your own setting.

Note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. As you will see in this brief survey, no questions as to your name or other identifiable personal information is required.

Thank you for your responses.

Sincerely,
The NY Kids Team

Please indicate how well you think your school or district is addressing the following:

[Not at all well; somewhat well; well; very well]

*1. Close Engagement with and Understanding of the Population . . . What is your school like?

Consider how well you think your school or district is addressing each of the following:

	not at all well	somewhat well	well	very well	N/A
(1) We are a "family" that takes care of and takes responsibility for children's emotional and social growth AND academic achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) We consistently and actively forge parent/legal guardian relationships, and our efforts are supported by school-level activities that recognize and celebrate our community's diversity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(3) Teachers, teacher-leaders or coaches, principals, and district administrators consistently analyze student performance data and use those	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Inform

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Where to find more information: www.albany.edu/nykids

- Data displays
- Case reports, all HP schools (55)
- Cross-case reports, each study (6)
- Best practice frameworks (most current 5)
- Documentary evidence (in BP framework)
- Key word collections
- Self-assessments
- Institutes to support school teams to use these resources to use data to plan, monitor, improve (SMART Goals)

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best Practices Case Study: *Supporting High School Completion*

Linda

Best Practices Case Study: *Supporting High School Completion*

Kathy Nickson, March 2013

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Eastridge High School ***East Irondequoit Central School District***

School Context

The East Irondequoit Central School District, in Monroe County (NY), serves approximately 3600 students in two primary schools, two intermediate schools, one middle school, and one high school. At first glance, the district appears to encompass a suburban community of single family homes bordering two bodies of water and the north side of Rochester. A closer look, however, reveals many families struggling economically, with approximately 50% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The district has little in the way of an industrial base and

Organized by 5 themes

- Curriculum & academic goals
- Staff selection, leadership, and capacity building
- Instructional programs, practices, and arrangements
- Monitoring: Compilation, analysis, and use of data
- Recognition, intervention & adjustments

	High School Completion (2013)	Critical Needs, Elementary (2011)	Middle School Science (2009)	High School (2008)	Middle School (2007)
Organizing Themes	Best Practices				
Curriculum & Academic Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals look beyond graduation in four years to success in post-secondary education and career. • The curriculum is constantly and collaboratively revised in response to state mandates, identified needs, and student and community interests. • Expectations for all students are high, e.g., mastery on Regents exams, challenging courses. <p>Learn more...</p>				
Staff Selection, Leadership, & Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School culture is distinguished by strong relational trust and close collaboration. • The hiring process pays close attention to only hiring educators who will fit well with the school and district. • Teachers and administrators are dedicated to their students and their success in and beyond high school. <p>Learn more...</p>				
Instructional Programs, Practices, & Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective instruction is defined as tailored to capture student interest and actively engage them. • Students, especially those at risk of failing to graduate, are provided options for meeting requirements and staying in school. • Co-curricular activities are not only important but are seen as an opportunity to mentor, connect with, and keep students 				

NY Kids Home

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Best Practice Frameworks

Publications and Presentations



Home

NY Kids

Welcome to a resource to support school improvement in New York State.

Using the links below and to the left, you can access:

- [Reports](#) about what makes elementary, middle, and high schools work well
- Details about [best practices](#) at each level, with evidence to support them
- [Case studies](#) of the higher-performing schools whose practices are featured
- [Tools](#) (e.g., surveys) to help you look at your own school's practices

You can also access one of our "collections:"

- [Response to Intervention \(RTI\)](#)
- [English Language Learners](#)
- [Parent/Community Involvement](#)
- [Professional Learning Communities \(PLCs\)](#)
- [Role of the Board of Education](#)

NEW

COMPASS - a toolkit and workshop series for school building leadership teams. Teaches a continuous improvement process drawing on research findings most relevant to a school's needs and situation.

[Tell me more.](#)

New Results from High School Graduation Study (2013) [click here.](#)



Best Practices from High-Performing High Schools, by Kristen C. Wilcox and Janet I. Angelis

Best Practices from High-Performing Middle Schools, by Kristen C. Wilcox and Janet I. Angelis

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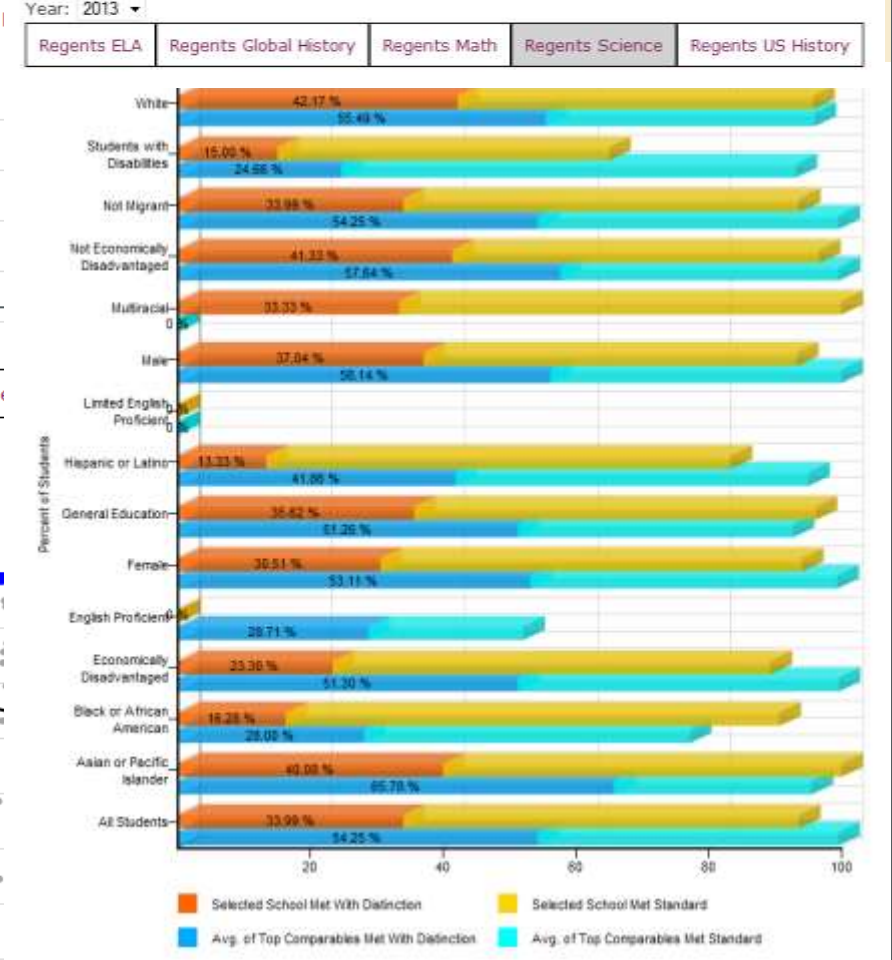
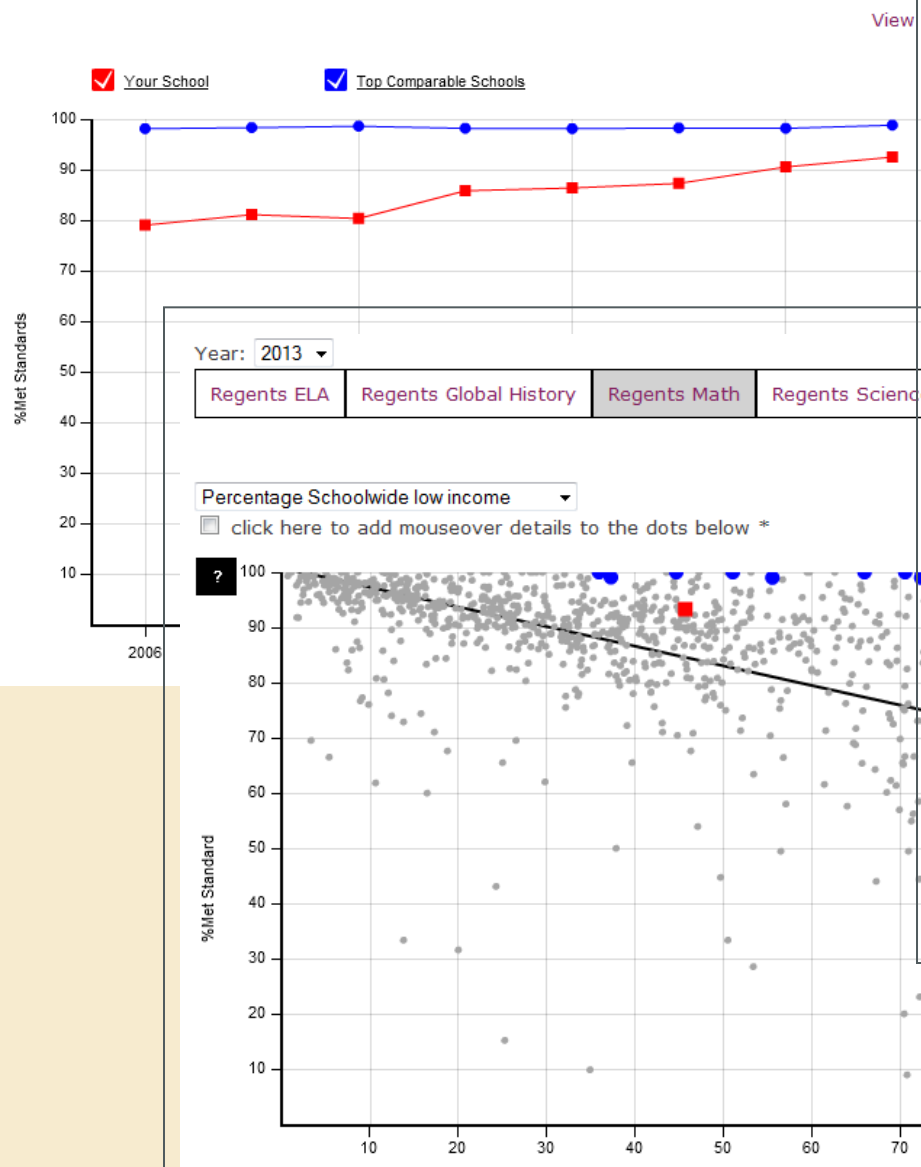
EASTRIDGE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

EAST IRONDEQUOIT CSD District

constant base year comparables

- Regents ELA
- Regents Global History
- Regents Math
- Regents Science
- Regents US History

Interactive displays of data



Tools to Assess, Plan Improvement

What Makes Elementary Schools Work for Critical Needs Students }



 What makes middle schools work }



What Makes High Schools Work for Graduating At-Risk Students on Time }



Know Your Schools~for NY Kids

COMPASS (Compare, Assess, Select Levers to Improve, Set Goals) Tool Kit

for Improving Graduation Rates



Questions? More info?



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