POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
AS AN IMPROVEMENT RESOURCE IN
ODDS-BEATING HIGH SCHOOLS

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http://www.ny-kids.org
"Healthy adolescent development is more about the avoidance of problems than about the growth of competencies”

(Steinberg & Morris, 2011,)
Sense of attachment to caring adult.

Sense of connection to school or agency.

Social emotional learning & competency development.

Membership in peer group with pro-social orientations.

Social capital networks for assistance, supports & resources.

Harmonious & synergistic environments.
FIVE SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

1. Instructional Guidance Systems
2. Mechanisms for Professional Development and Learning
3. Ties Between Schools, Parents and Communities
4. Leadership Oriented to Change and Improvement
5. School Climate Conductive to Student Learning

Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu and Easton (2010)
ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Community
School (Organizations)
Family
Child
WHAT IS AN ODDS BEATER?

Selection Criteria:
- Regents Graduation Rates
- Advanced Regents Graduation Rates

Populations:
- African-American/Black
- Hispanic/Latino
- English language leaners
- Economically disadvantaged
Visualizing Odds Beaters

Typical Performer

Odds Beater

Expected Performance
STUDY DESIGN

Multiple Case Study
• 7 odds-beating
• 3 typically performing

• Data Collected
  ✓ Interviews: 63
  ✓ Focus Group: 68
  ✓ School Tours: 10
  ✓ Surveys: 411
  ✓ Documents: 77

• Participants
  ✓ District Leaders: 40
  ✓ School Leaders: 26
  ✓ Teachers: 124
  ✓ Support Staff: 57
  ✓ Specialists: 55
FINDINGS

1. Relationship Key to School Functioning
2. Emphasis on Social-Emotional Development
3. Youth-Driven Identity Development and Goal Setting
4. Well-Rounded Youth as Driving Goal
When the bell rings all teachers are expected to be at their doors, just greeting kids and talking to them. It’s going to let you know which kiddos maybe look sad, maybe who’s cursing in the hallways that needs to be attended to? So, it’s a small piece, but it’s the pieces like that that kind of promote the overall culture and bring out good kids.

- Alfred Almond Principal
EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We definitely use a strengths-based approach. We work on this individual student’s strengths and we really try and ride with that, as far as we can; that builds up confidence, skills, and their willingness to be here. It really helps bring them in.

– Freeport Student Support Staff Member
When [students] leave this building, the high school, are they ready to be successful in whatever they have chosen to do? We understand, in this day and age . . . you should know what you're interested in, what you're good at, some things you might have skills in, and some preparation here to help you then go further, whether it be college or trades or whatever you have in mind.

- Maple Grove Superintendent
WELL-ROUNDED YOUTH AS DRIVING GOAL

It's not just that they're our English students they're also the athletes. When their name gets called on the announcement for something that they have done ... saying 'Hey, you did well with this,' or 'I spoke to this person and they said that your art piece is amazing, I didn’t know that you were an artist.' .... It really creates that sense that we're in it together, and we want you to grow not just in the subject we teach you, but rather, as a whole.

- Port Chester Teacher
CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF SCHOOL-BASED PYD

- Relationship Building
- Emphasis on Social-Emotional Development
- Youth-led Identity Development & Goal Setting
- Well-Rounded Youth
- Youth-led Identity
- Emphasis on Social-Emotional Development
- Relationship Building
IMPLICATIONS

- Schön’s (1983) concept of the “the felt path of experience.”

- Shift in perspective of development as “nonacademic” factor in support of academic achievement to development as goal in its own right.

- PYD as a sixth support for school improvement.
## Table 2: Demographics of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>z-score</th>
<th>Enrollment&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Grade Span</th>
<th>Urbanicity</th>
<th>% Economically Disadvantaged&lt;sup&gt;13&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>% ELL</th>
<th>% Hispanic Latino</th>
<th>% Black/African-American</th>
<th>PPE&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfred-Almond</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$18,497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crown Point</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$21,644</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freeport</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>2,229</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Suburban/Urban</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>$22,314</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malverne</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Suburban/Urban</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>$30,539</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maple Grove</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17,922</td>
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<tr>
<td>Port Chester</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Suburban/Urban</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$19,941</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sherburne-Earlville</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$22,507</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average of the Three Typically Performing Schools&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Rural (1)/Suburban (2)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$22,260</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$23,361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>12</sup> Grades 9-12 only


<sup>14</sup> Total per pupil expenditures as reported in the 2016-17 fiscal supplement

<sup>15</sup> An average of the demographic characteristics for the group of typical performing high schools is presented instead of the characteristics of each school in order to conceal their identities.