

WELCOME

# Rural Research-Practice Partnerships: Collaborating for Continuous Improvement

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NYKids 

 NYSSBA  
2020   
SHARING a VISION for EDUCATION

# Get ready to...

- ✓ Appreciate the important role school board members have as change agents in supporting system-wide continuous improvement
- ✓ Know how NYKids (an example of a Research-Practice Partnership) can support district-wide collaboration and leadership for improved outcomes
- ✓ Take away some key strategies to mitigate obstacles to continuous improvement in P-12 schools



# Leading something new isn't easy...





## Poll Question

Would you

- A) stay seated and watch the “lone nut” put on his show?
- B) jump in to start dancing with him?
- C) wait until other people jump in to join?

# Poll results

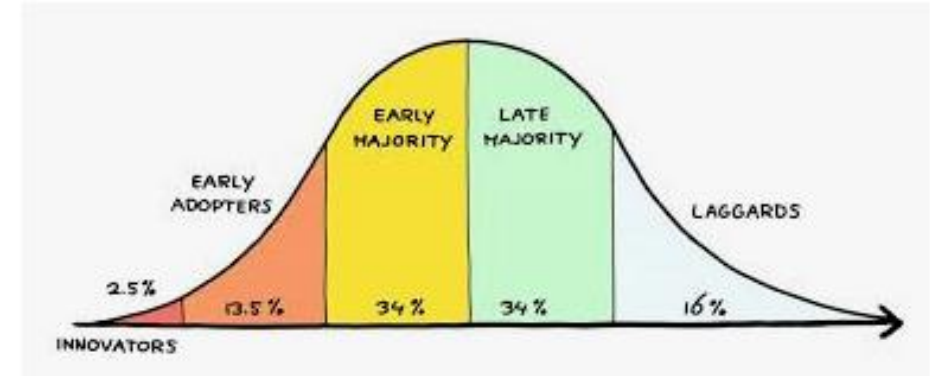


# How Changes Spread

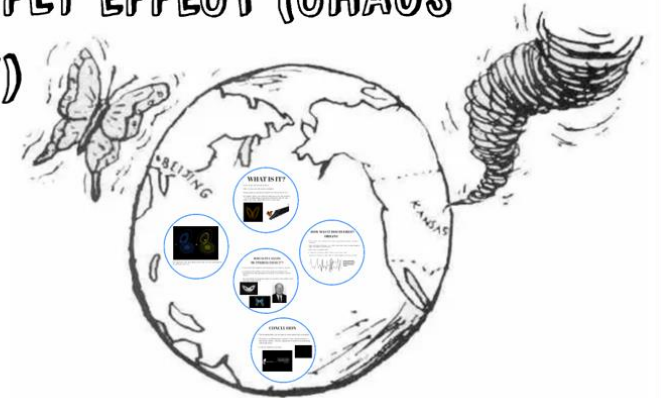
- ✓ People embrace change at different rates
- ✓ How they feel about change may vary depending on the specific change being proposed
- ✓ Careful explanations around key attributes of change ideas can help people become more open to change and affect the spread of innovations
- ✓ One change in a system can have multiplier effects across systems

Lorenz, E. (2000). *The butterfly effect*. World Scientific Series on Nonlinear Science Series A, 39, 91-94.

Rogers, E. M., & Murcott, S. (1995). Attributes of innovations and their rate of adoption. *Diffusion of Innovations*, Simon & Schuster, NY.



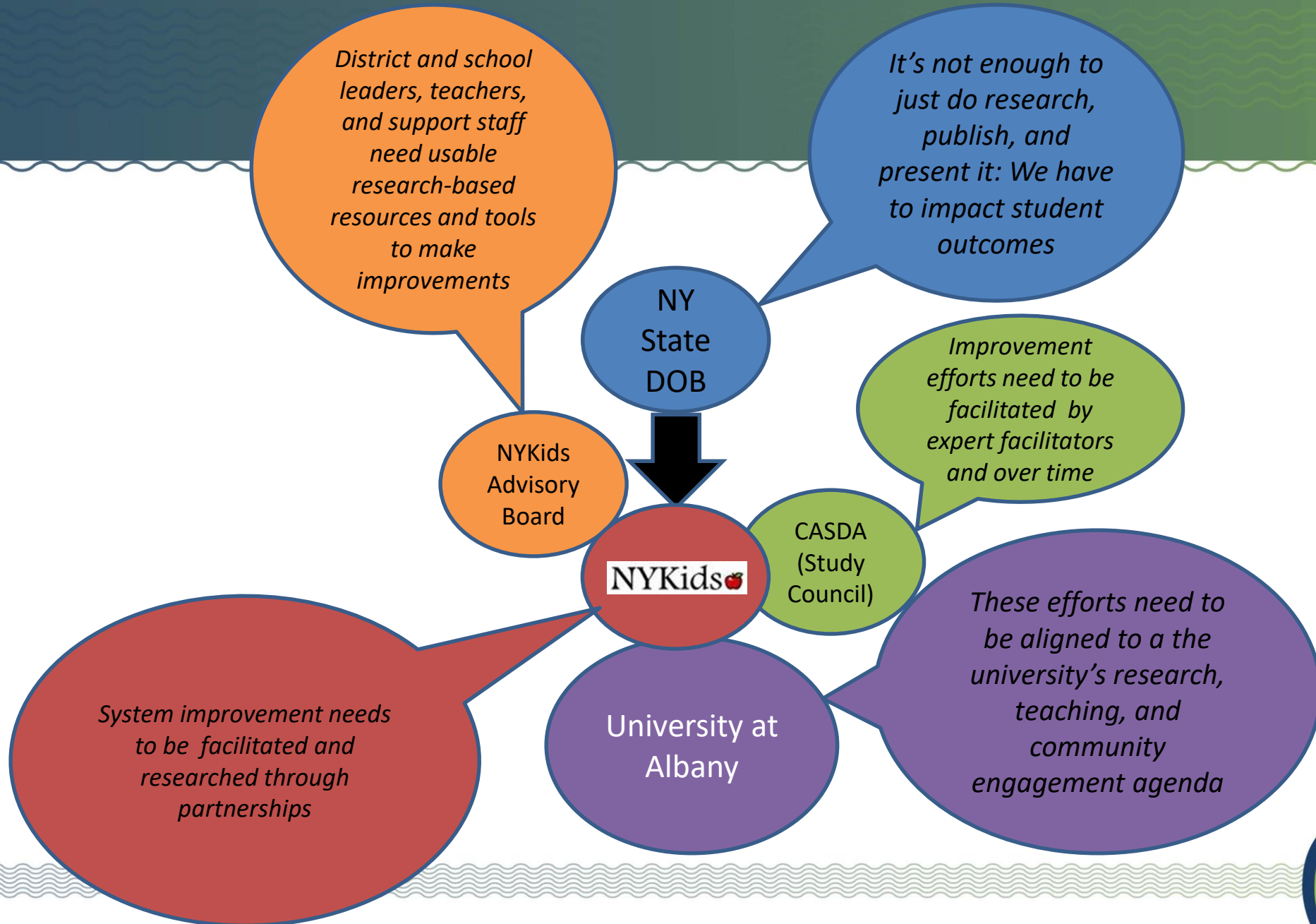
**BUTTERFLY EFFECT (CHAOS THEORY)**



# Research-practice partnerships

- RPPs are long-term collaborations between practitioners and researchers that are organized to investigate problems of practice and solutions for improving schools and school districts (Coburn, Penuel, & Geil, 2013)

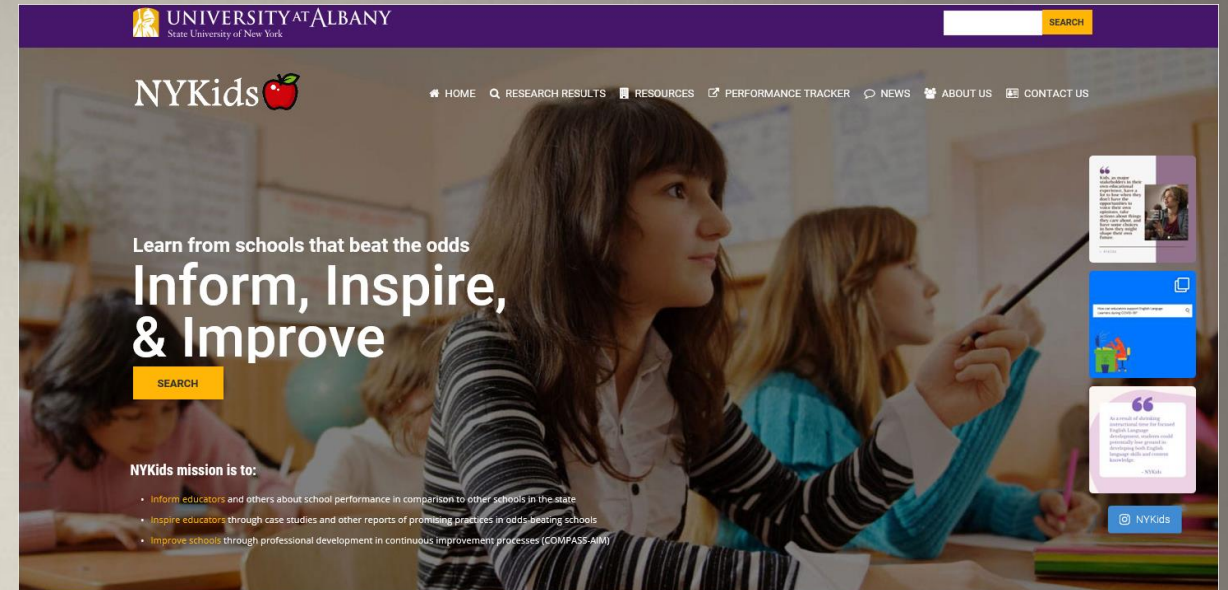






# NYKids, a research-practice partnership, with a mission to:

- **INFORM** educators and others about school performance in comparison to other schools in the state
- **INSPIRE** educators through case studies and other reports of promising practices in odds-beating schools
- **IMPROVE** schools through professional development in continuous improvement processes (COMPASS-AIM)

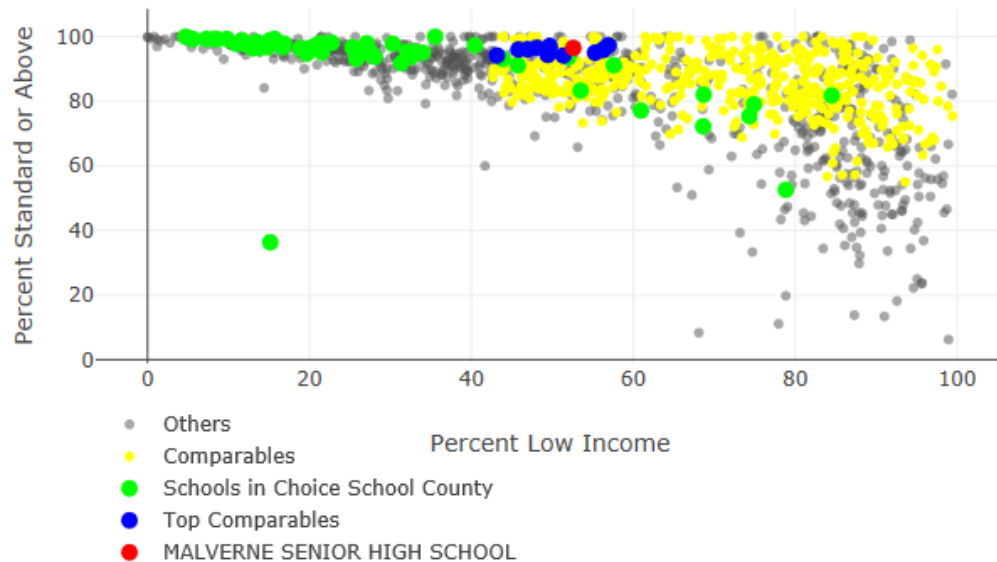


<https://ny-kids.org/>

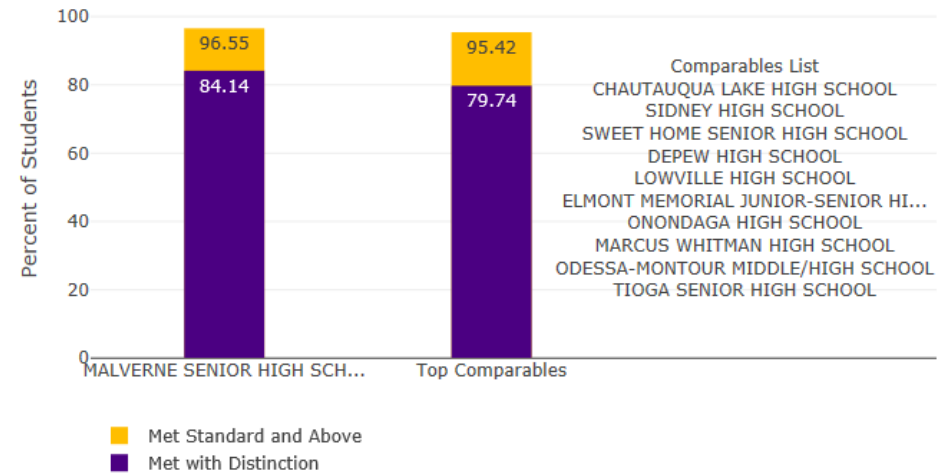
# Inform: Display user-friendly performance data

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

Performance by Percent Low Income



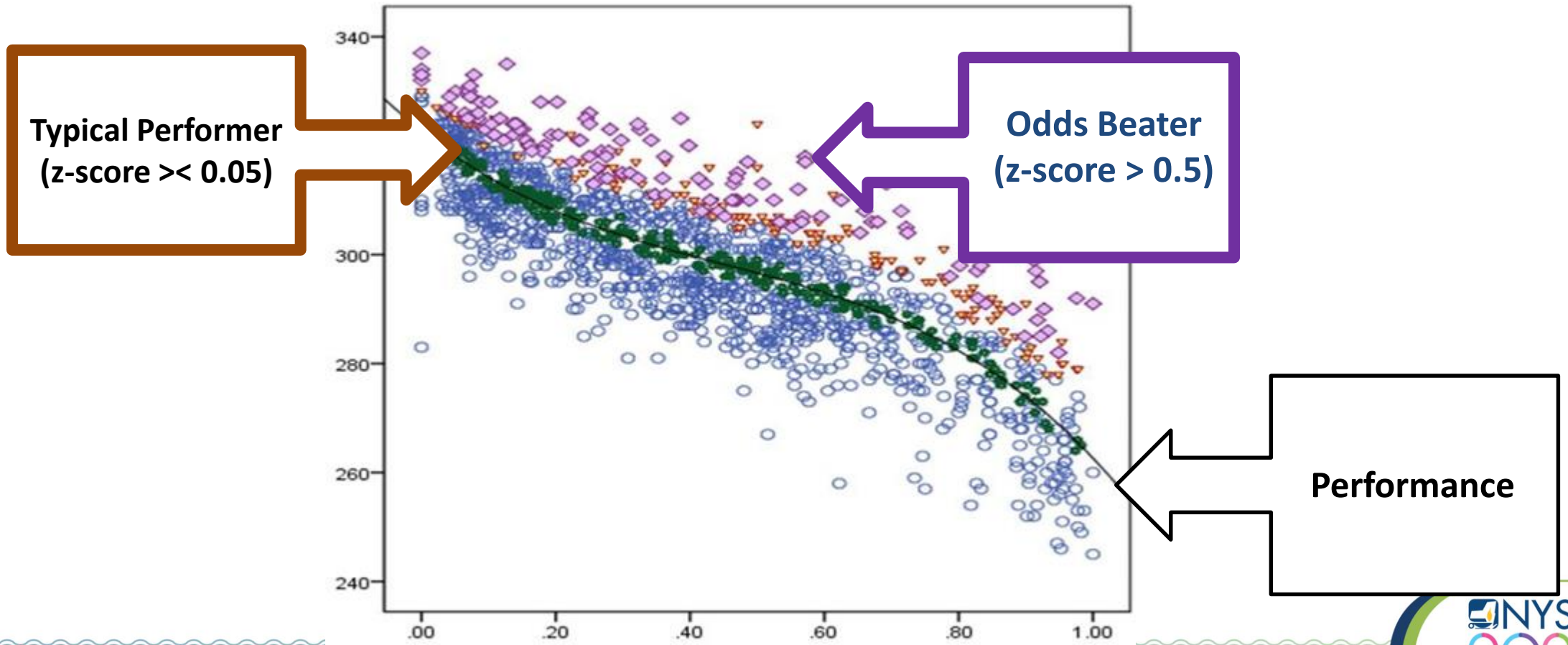
Opportunity Gap Bar Chart



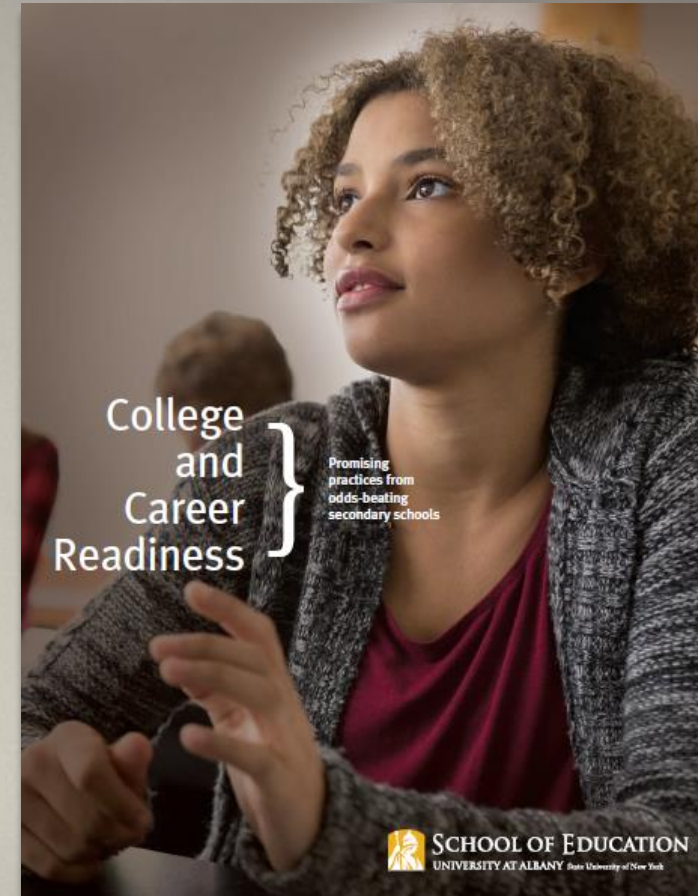
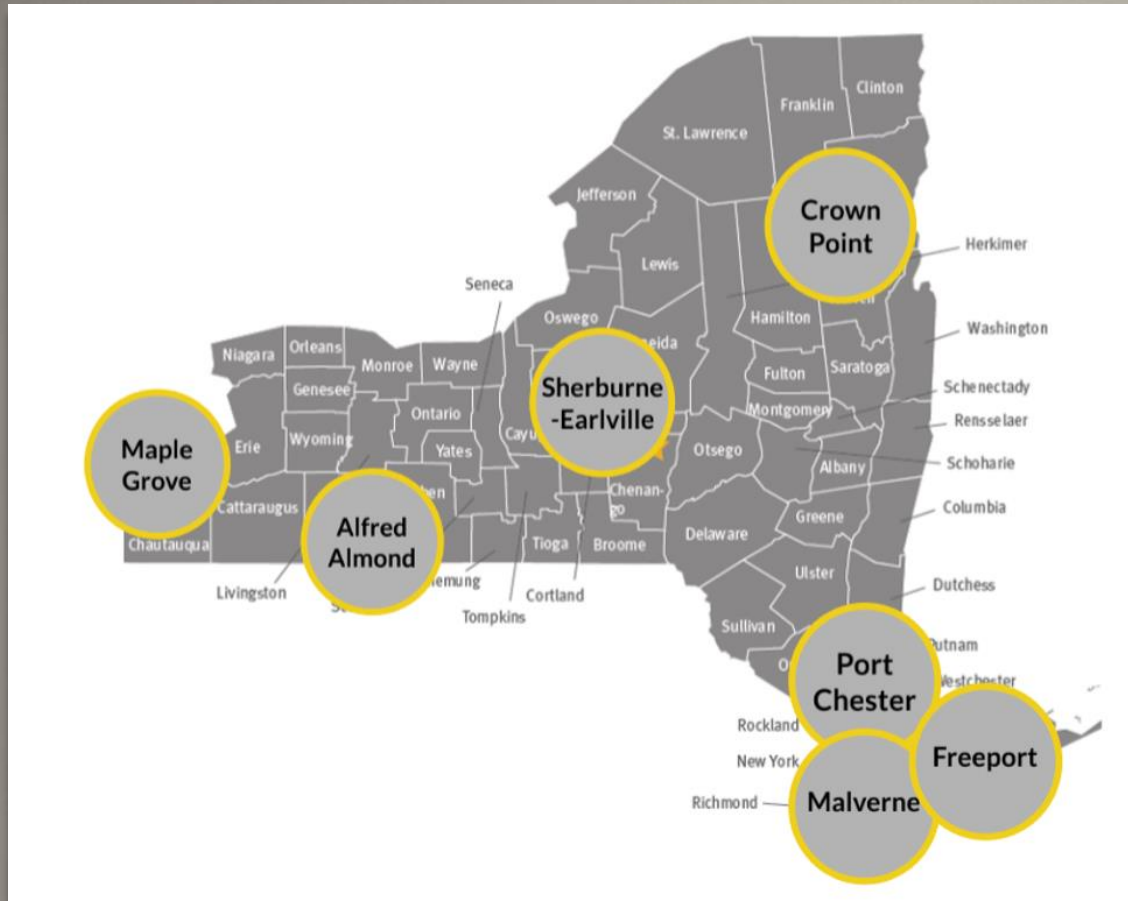
Show Opportunity Gap Comparison Bar:



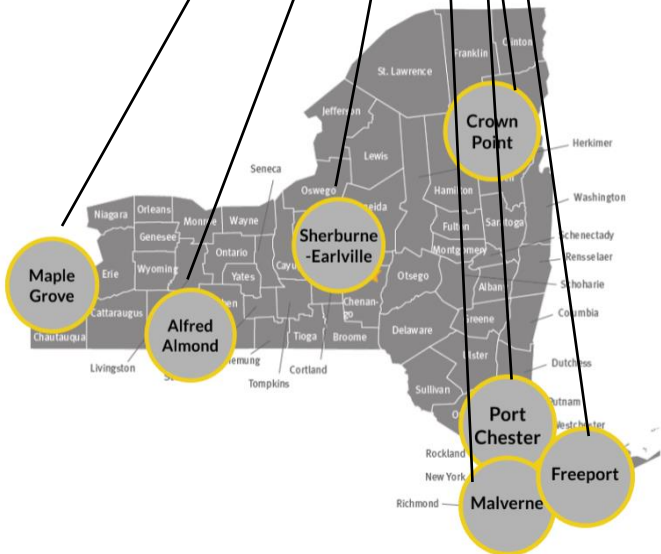
# Inspire: Investigate odds-beaters







# Fort Plain Junior-Senior High School





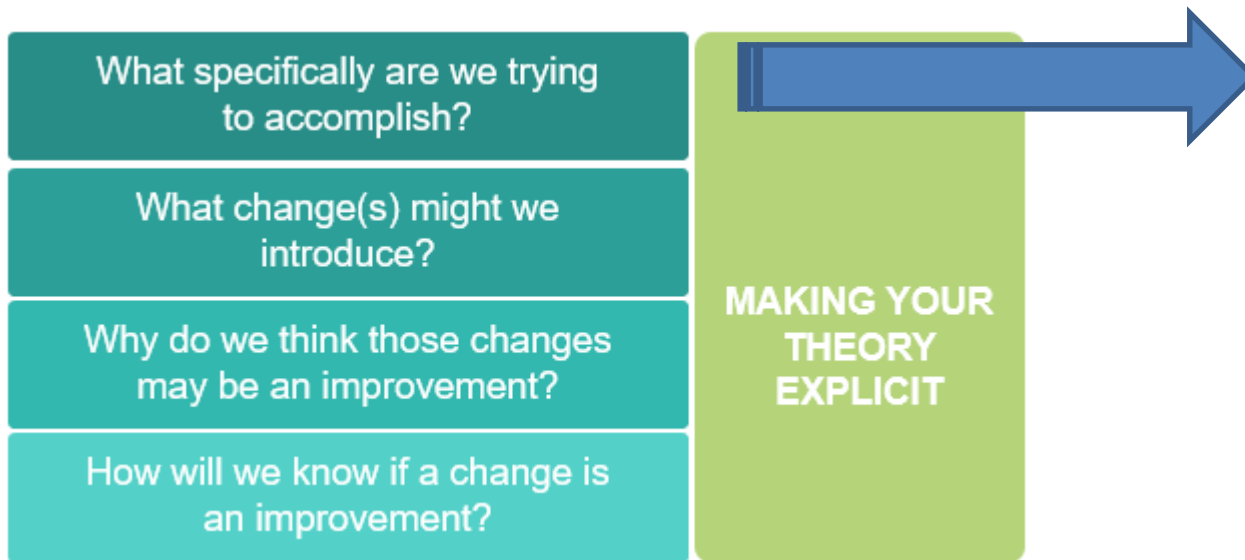
# Improve: Bridge research and practice

- Fort Plain - Small rural school district (330 students)
- Poverty levels 64% (and under-reported) above the state average (54%)
- Graduation rate: Between 83 – 88%
- Duration of involvement in RPP:
  - Team formed 2015 with new superintendent. Team meets throughout the year (a minimum of 4 times)
- Improvement team members:
  - Principal, school counselor, 2 middle level teachers, 2 high school teachers, 1 special area teacher, 1 teaching assistant





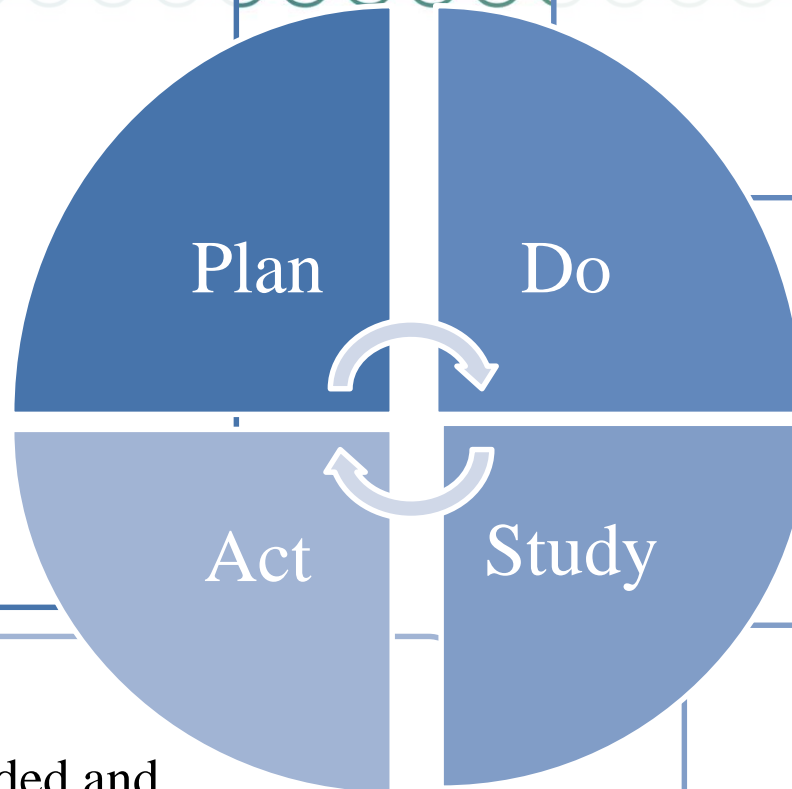
# The Model of Improvement



Example Aim from Fort Plain Jr.-Sr. High  
***To improve attendance by the end of the 2017-2018 school year by monitoring student absences and tardys, supporting students' social and emotional well-being, and fostering more positive parent communications***

- **Compare** processes and practices to evidence-based practices
- **Assess** priorities based upon local constraints and affordances
- **Select** evidence-based practices to test
- **Set SMART** goals/AIMS

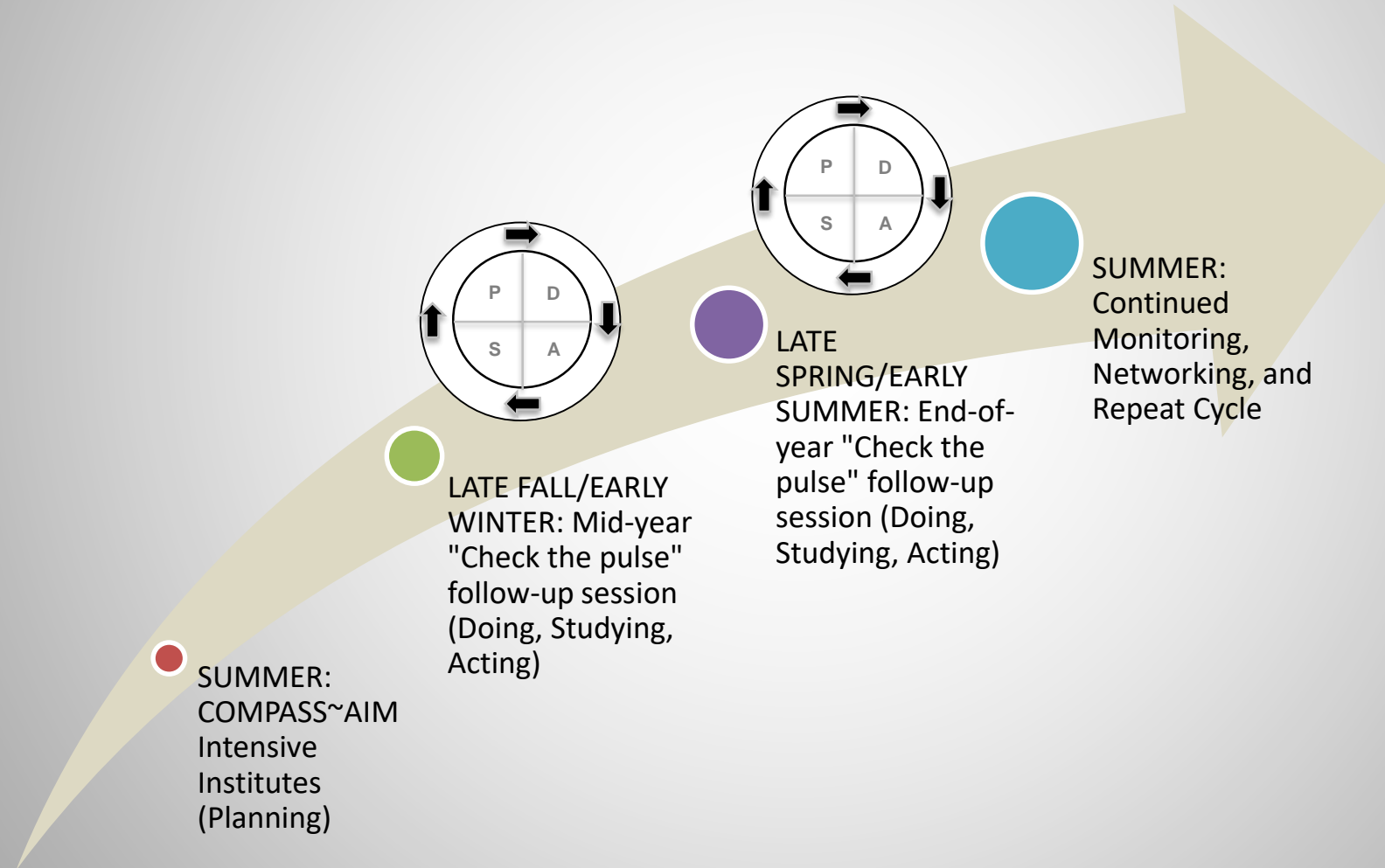
- **Action Plan**
- **Implement Plan**



- **Recalibrate** as needed and continue cycle

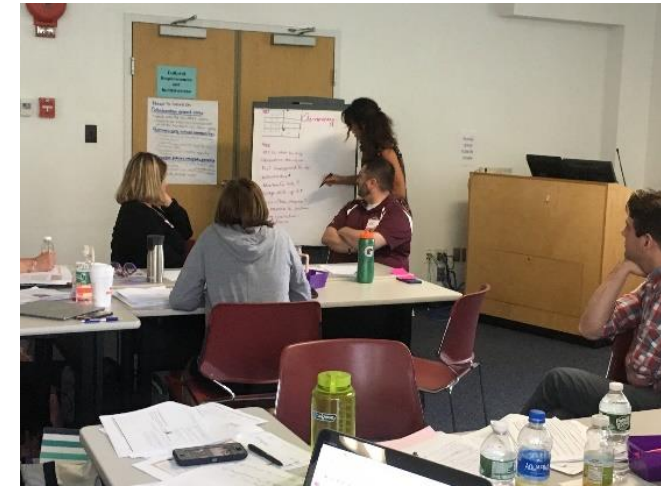
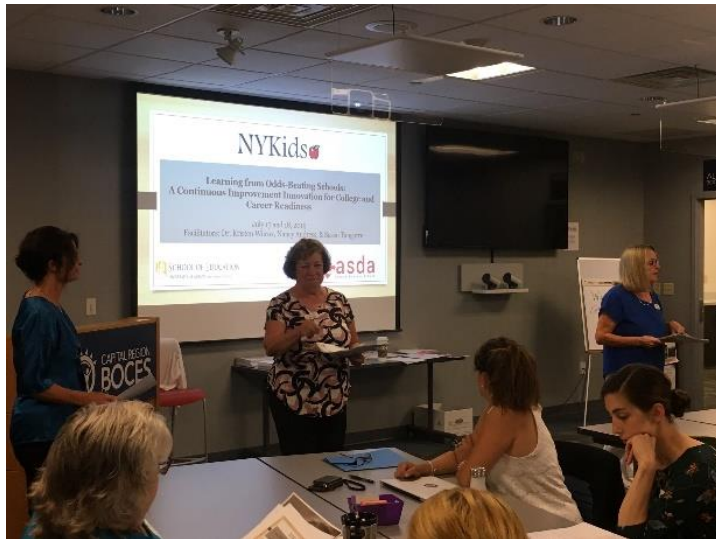
- **Monitor** ("check the pulse")

# How Does Our Process Work?





# COMPASS Workshops



**Step 1: Comparing Practices**

2 decisions for each row:

A. Is your school more like column A or column B? **CHOOSE ONLY 1**

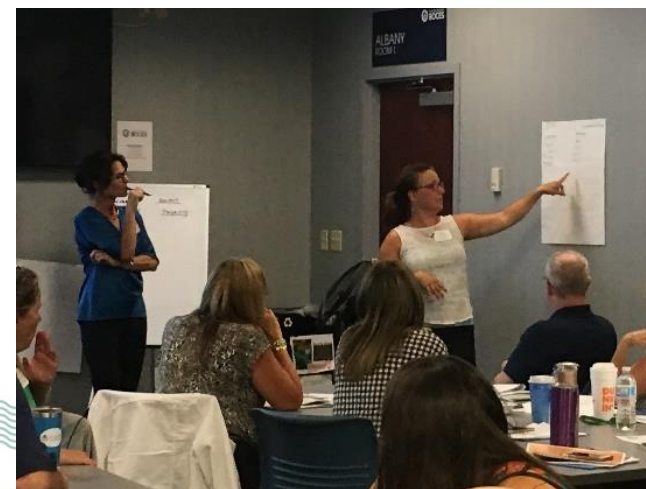
B. Is it very similar or somewhat similar to the description in whichever column you chose?

In this example, the rater chose the description in the first column and decided that it was "somewhat similar" to his/her school, so circled # 2.

Aspect	A. My school is more like this			B. My school is more like this
Relationship Building	Relationship building between educators and students not a priority consistently articulated by leaders and educators, though individual educators take actions to build student relationships on an individual basis.	very similar	2	Relationship building between educators and students is a priority consistently articulated by leaders and educators. Formal expectations, policies and structures facilitate relationship building widely across the school.
	B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle # 1 or #2?	1	2	B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle # 3 or #4?

Follow this same procedure for all aspects of each element. You should have 4-5 scores on each page. Once you have determined your 4-5 scores, add them up and put the total in the space designated in the last row. Then divide by 4 or 5 to get your average score.

For example, this rater chose 2 for relationship building and 3, 2 and 2 for the other two dimensions for a total of 9:  $2+3+2=9$ . Dividing 9 by 4 gives an average score of 2.25.



# Questioning Process – Once Aims are Established, Ask the 5 questions:

1. What are the potential next action steps to achieve this aim?
2. Who needs to be involved and how can they be engaged in implementation?
3. When would the work towards this aim take place? Deadlines?
4. What would the evidence of success look like?
5. How will goals be shared with others?

**COMPASS ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET Element #4 – Driving a Whole-Child Intervention Loop/Attendance**

Fort Plain Central School District

2017-18

School: Fort Plain Junior Senior HS

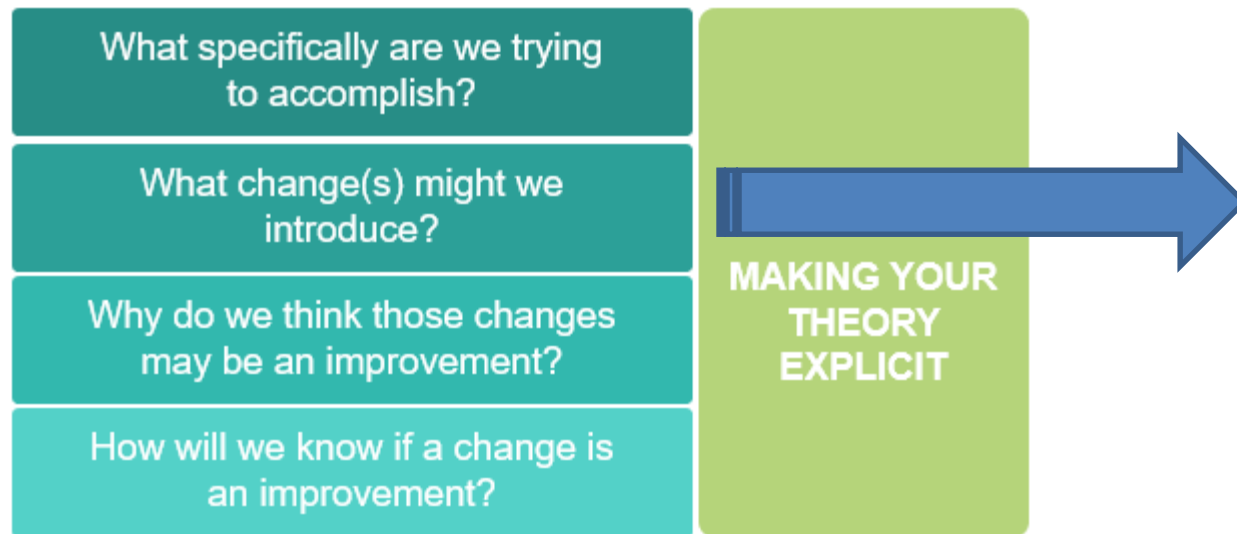
School Team: COMPASS

**SMART Goal:** To improve student attendance by the end of the 2017-2018 school year as evidenced by the following priorities: monitor student attendance, support students social and emotion well-being, and foster positive parent communication.

Specific Activities & Action Steps	Who is Responsible	Time Frame or Target Dates	Results - Evidence of Success
<i>at steps will be initiated to achieve this SMART goal?</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining the action step?</i>	<i>What is a realistic time frame for each phase of this activity/goal?</i>	<i>What evidence will you present to show that you are making progress toward your activity/goal?</i>



# The Model of Improvement



Example Change:

*Develop and Implement  
an Academic Coaching  
Center*



# The Model of Improvement

What specifically are we trying to accomplish?

What change(s) might we introduce?

Why do we think those changes may be an improvement?

How will we know if a change is an improvement?

**MAKING YOUR THEORY EXPLICIT**

Evidence from odds-beaters

**A CASE IN POINT**

## Batavia High School

### Taking Initiative

The Batavia school district is committed to analyzing data, but with a difference: "We keep a lot of data...but we're not just a repository," says the administrator. Students' state assessments are scanned, and an item analysis done so teachers can use the data for instructional decisions.

Analyses of data are by building, by class, and by student. From this information, teachers are able to pinpoint particular areas that need adjustment. However, it is not only state assessment data Batavia teachers reference to inform changes. They are also required to look at student work together. They discuss the strengths and weaknesses displayed and what strategies and best practices will help students. Using data effectively "by making sense of it" to make good instructional decisions is a district priority. As one teacher explains, "It may have been painful at first, but we're realizing that looking at the data is a good thing. [It helps] us to understand where our weaknesses are and how to change and correct what we are doing."

Teachers use both formal and informal means of monitoring student progress, with several departments administering common mid-term assessments. The English department developed common benchmarks that parallel the tasks on the English Language Arts Regents Exam. A particular focus on improving the graduation rate has been facilitated through ever-refined methods for accessing data quickly, but also in tapping the expertise of an outside consultant to look deeply into the factors contributing to graduation rates. This project included analyzing the records of students who had not completed high school, which revealed ninth grade as being a time when the high school started "to lose students." As a result, identifying at-risk students as early as middle and elementary school and implementing needed programs for them has become a district-wide initiative. Using evidence to show the importance of proactively targeting resources before students come to high school reinforces the notion that ownership for high school success must be shared K to 12. (Oickson, 2008a)

Batavia High School students consistently outperform students in schools with comparable demographics on NYS Assessments, for example, the 2006 Regents Global History Exam

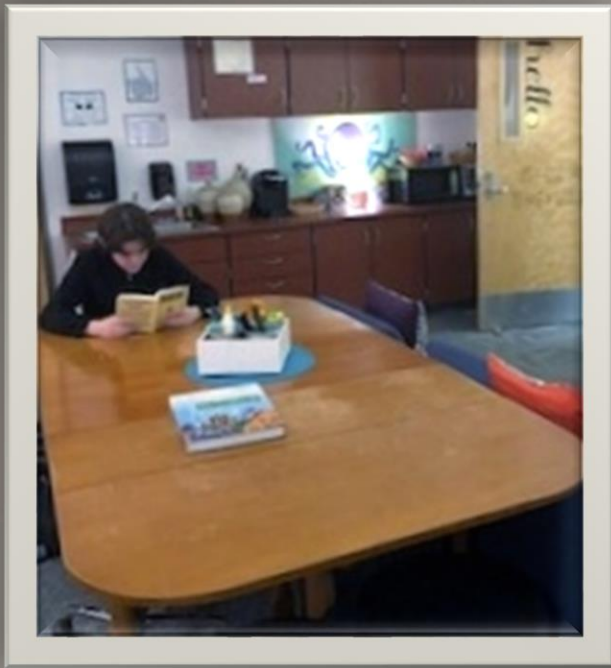
% Schoolwide Low Income	% Students Who Met Standard and Exceeded
0	100
100	40
Batavia High School	~85





# Academic Coaching Center



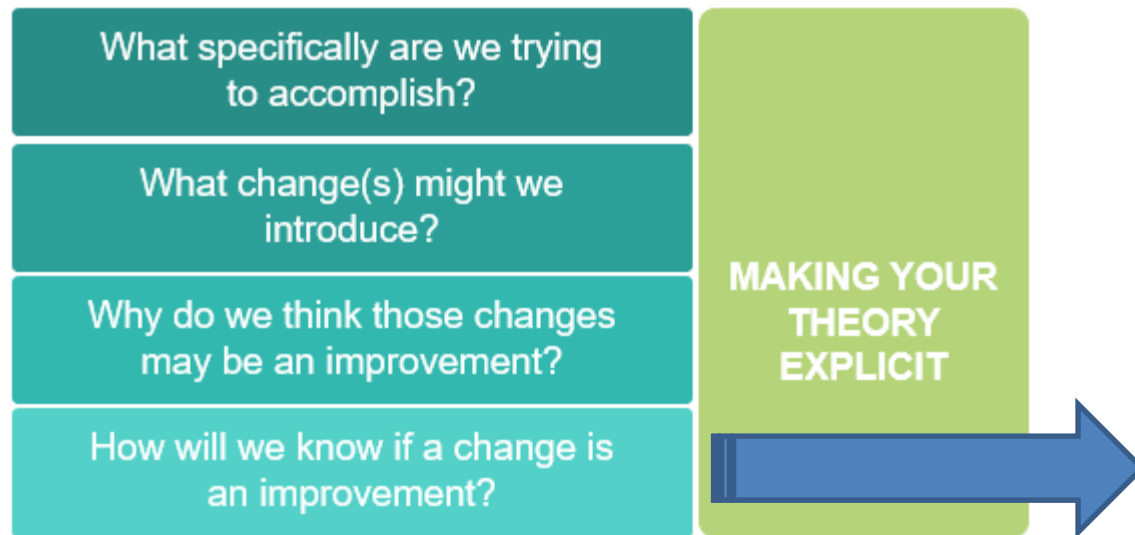


*"The ACC isn't just a room to me. Personally, it feels like home." - ACC Student*





# The Model of Improvement

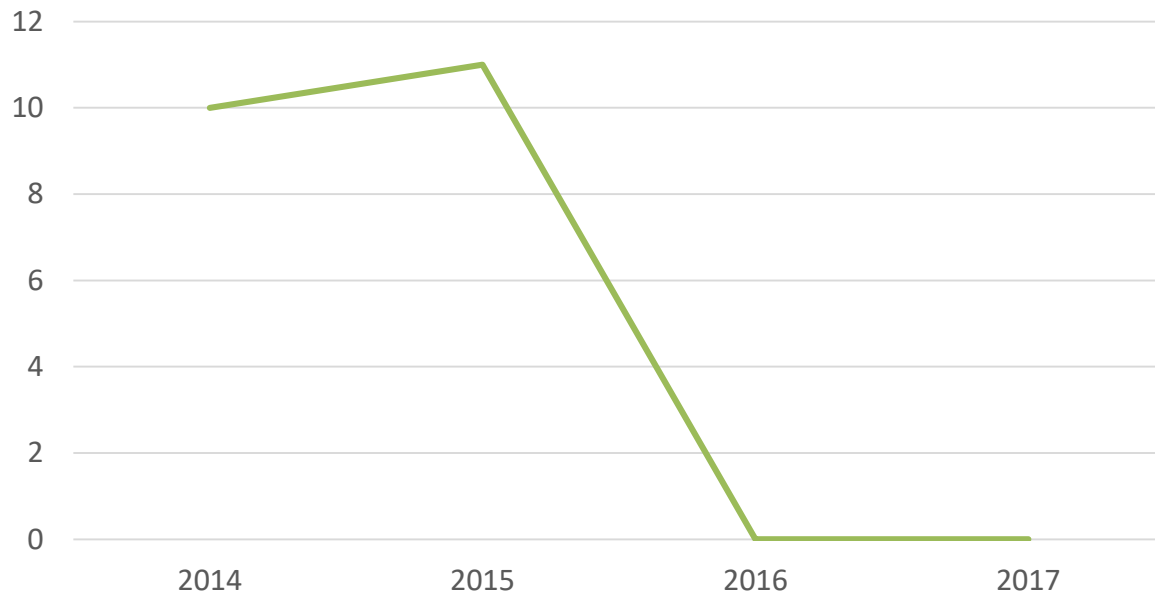


Example Evidence/Measures:

- Student interview responses
- Absences and tardys
- Summer school attendance
- Academic achievement

Distally – increased graduation rates

# Sample Leading Measures



FP Jr-Sr HS- Numbers of students in summer school

Student	2016-17 Absences/Tardys	2017-18
1	38/63	24/14
2 (medical excuse 16-17)	18/71	26/0
3	7/11	2/0
4	4/2	2/0
5	31/24	31/31
6 (drop out and re-entry)	21/18	33/18
7	16/0	5/0
8	19/4	17/7
9	19/3	18/19

# Achievement

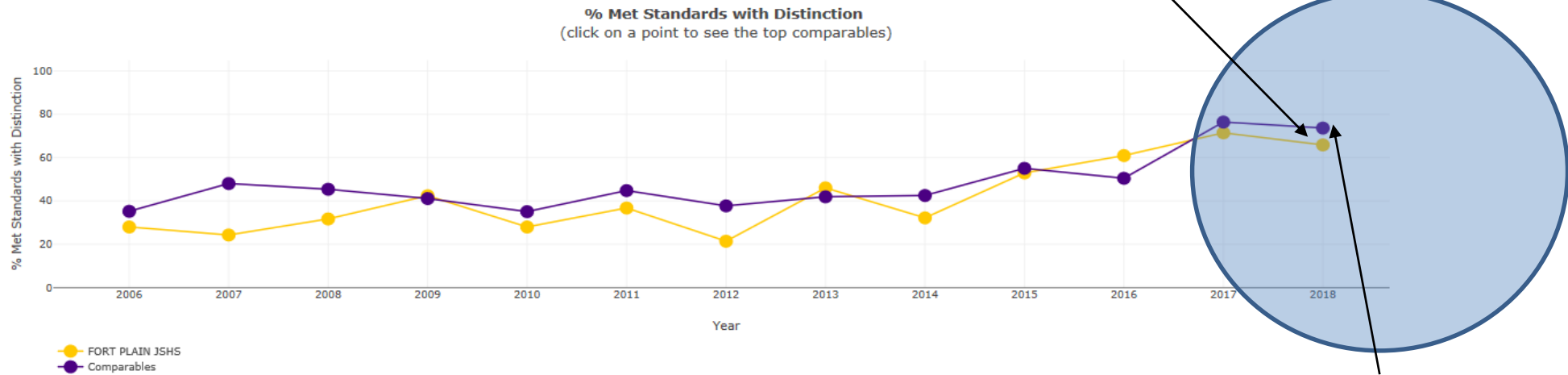
## ELA Regents Exam

FORT PLAIN CSD

- ELA 7
- ELA 8
- MATH 7
- MATH 8
- SCIENCE 8
- SOCIAL STUDIES 8
- Regents ELA
- Regents Global History
- Regents Math
- Regents Science
- Regents US History
- Graduation Rates

Comparable options: Yearly Changing Comparables

FORT PLAIN JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (YELLOW)



TOP COMPARABLE SCHOOLS IN THE STATE (PURPLE)



# Lessons About Leveraging RPPS For Improvement

- District leaders in collaboration with board of education representatives and principals can articulate clear, nondiscretionary goals for the district as a whole, for each school, and for subgroups of students.
- The schools then can establish a common framework of research-based strategies for achieving those goals
- The researchers and professional development facilitators offer content and improvement expertise to support the organization in becoming a continuously improving organization



# Key Strategies

- ✓ Use continuous improvement processes and tools supported by open communications between school board members, district and school leaders, teachers, and support staff
- ✓ Partner with researchers and PD experts to help scaffold the use of CI processes and tools and help set the tone for authentic valuing of expertise and knowledge of different stakeholders
- ✓ Schedule and prioritize periodic opportunities for reflection on progress – embracing failing forward and celebrating successes
- ✓ Create new structures and teams to use CI gradually and build from strengths and already-existing routines and structures
- ✓ Encourage transparency about the system– with the core improvement team acting as a conduit to help drive efforts within and across schools rather than outside actors driving change

## Poll #2 Question

Based on this presentation, your next step will be to

- A) wait for someone in the school district to come up with a plan to partner with a RPP
- B) jump in to start connecting with a RPP like NYKids
- C) wait for some other school or district near yours to get involved in a RPP before you do?



# Poll results



See more on our work with Fort Plain in this article: [Wilcox, K. C., Lawson, H. A., & Angelis, J. I. \(2017\). COMPASS-AIM: A University/P-12 Partnership Innovation for Continuous Improvement. \*Peabody Journal of Education\*, 92\(5\), 649-674. doi: 10.1080/0161956x.2017.1368654](#)



# Thank you and Questions?

Contact us at: [nykids@lbany.edu](mailto:nykids@lbany.edu) or (518) 442-5171

Head to <https://ny-kids.org/school-improvement/> for more resources on COMPASS-AIM

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