

College and Career Readiness: Students' Perspectives on Preparing for Life beyond High School

Methods and Procedures Report

Kristen Campbell Wilcox
Lisa (Fang) Yu
Aaron Leo

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School of Education
University at Albany
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222

Contents

Study Rationale	3
Research Questions	3
Methods	4
Sample Selection	4
Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample Schools	5
Table 2. Four cohorts of 9 th graders for comparison	5
Figure 1. Overall Graduation Rates in Crown Point High School and New York State.....	6
Figure 2. Graduation Rates of Economically Disadvantaged Students in Crown Point High School and New York State.	7
Figure 3. Overall Graduation Rates in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.	7
Figure 4. Graduation Rates of African-American Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.	8
Figure 5. Graduation Rates of Economically Disadvantaged Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.	8
Figure 6. Graduation Rates of Hispanic Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.....	9
Data Collection.....	9
Table 3. Student characteristics	9
Table 4. Data sources	10
Data Analysis.....	10
Confidentiality, Participant Payment, and Funding	11
References	12
Appendix A. Interview Protocol	13
Appendix B. Focus Group Protocol	15
Appendix C: Interpretive Memo	17
Appendix D: Codebook	18
Appendix E: QCA Analysis	25

Study Overview

Study Rationale

The provision of a high-quality public education for ethnically and linguistically diverse and economically disadvantaged students has been a goal in U.S. public schools for several decades. Although federal legislation (e.g., the No Child Left Behind Act, 2001; Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015) and policy changes at the state level have provided incentives for educators to improve outcomes across all student subgroups, achievement and opportunity gaps have persisted, leading to renewed efforts for change.

To this end, scholars have called attention to the paucity of students' voices in school improvement efforts (Cook-Sather, 2002). As major stakeholders in their own educational experiences, students can be viewed as essential informants and partners in creating more equitable and effective schools and school systems (Levin, 2000).

We designed this study to highlight students' perspectives and it was informed by the following related lines of inquiry (LOIs):

1. Student voice, agency, and leadership
2. Culturally responsiveness and school culture, climate, and management
3. Peer, school personnel, parent/family, and community organization relationships
4. 21st century skills, competencies, and knowledge and in and outside of school opportunities for learning

Research Questions

In light of prior research, research questions guiding this study included:

1. A) What opportunities do young people identify as existing for them to i) exercise voice (i.e., seeking and offering opinions or perspectives); ii) make choices (i.e., planning and executing plans; selecting pathways); and iii) exercise leadership (i.e., contributing and taking responsibility for projects or efforts to bring about change for themselves and others in the school/community) in the school?
B) What value do they ascribe to these opportunities vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?
2. A) In what ways do young people experience recognition of i) their cultural, linguistic, or other unique backgrounds in school activities, events, etc.; ii) the use of/sensitivity to their prior knowledge and experience in the design of the curriculum; and iii) the use of/sensitivity to their prior knowledge and experience in the design and delivery of classroom instruction?
B) What value do they attribute to these opportunities vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?

3. A) What do young people perceive as the nature of the i) school culture (e.g., norms, values, and beliefs), ii) climate (e.g., safety, atmosphere) in the school, and iii) management (e.g., policies, practices, and routines/operations)?
B) What value do they ascribe to these school characteristics vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?
4. A) How do young people perceive their relationships between i) themselves and their peers, ii) school personnel and their parents/families, iii) school personnel and community agency representatives? between themselves and i) their peers; ii) school personnel; iii) their parents/families; and iv) other community members?
B) What value do they ascribe to these relationships vis-à-vis their development and success in and beyond high school?
5. A) What i) skills (academic and non-academic), ii) competencies (e.g., higher-order, creative thinking, etc.) and iii) knowledge (academic and non-academic) do young people identify as learning in school, and how do these compare with out-of-school learning experiences?
B) What value do they ascribe to these skills, competencies, and knowledge vis-à-vis their development and success in and beyond high school?

Methods

Sample Selection

In New York State, students' mastery of the State Learning Standards is assessed using the New York State Regents Examinations. In order to earn a high school diploma, a student must earn a minimum of 22 credits allocated across specific courses and pass at least five Regents Examinations. Students meeting these minimum requirements receive a Regents Diploma. A subset of high school graduates who pass three additional Regents Examinations, requiring completion of more advanced coursework, receive a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation.

In the NYKids Phase I study, we used both Regents and advanced Regents graduation rates to identify positive outlier schools (also called odds beaters). Specifically, we used the percentages of a 9th grade cohort that earned a Regents Diploma or an Advanced Regents Diploma either four or five years later and these were based on three successive cohorts of 9th graders – 2010, 2011 and 2012. As a result, seven schools were selected as positive outliers because their graduation outcomes among African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, English language learners, or economically disadvantaged students were significantly better than schools of similar demographics in New York State.

Building from the Phase I study school sample, we identified two schools – Crown Point Central High School and Malverne Senior High School – to investigate in this study. The schools are situated in different types of communities – one rural and one suburban – and have maintained their positive outlier performance over several years. The other schools included in the Phase I study were not included in this study because they serve similar student populations,

fall into the same urbanicity category with the selected schools, or were so negatively impacted by the COVID19 pandemic in the 2019-2020 school year that they could not participate fully.

Table 1 provides demographics of Crown Point, Malverne, and New York State averages.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample Schools¹

School	Enrollment ²	Grade Span	Urbanicity	% Economically Disadvantaged	% ELL ³	% Hispanic/Latino	% Black/African-American	PPE ⁴
Crown Point	75	K-12	Rural	61	0	0	0	\$22,622
Malverne	548	9-12	Suburban/Urban	51	2	24	54	\$30,708
NYS	NA	NA	NA	57	9	27	17	\$24,040

We tracked the performance trajectories of Crown Point and Malverne by comparing their most recent graduation rates. For the sake of consistency, we continued using an average graduation rate of three successive years as the metric for comparison instead of a one-year rate, which might represent an anomaly. Also, we used the percentages of students that earned a Regents Diploma or an Advanced Regents Diploma but did not include those who earned only a Local Diploma in this study.

We analyzed four cohorts of 9th graders' graduation outcomes. Cohort 1 included 9th graders who started high school in the years 2010-2012 (the cohort used in the Phase I study); Cohort 2 included 9th graders who started in the years 2011-2013; Cohort 3 included 9th graders who started in the years 2012-2014; and Cohort 4 included 9th graders who started in the years 2013-2015. The four cohorts are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Four cohorts of 9th graders for comparison

Database	Membership Description
Graduation Cohort 1: 2010-2012	
2015-16	2012 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome
2014-15	2011 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome – August 2015
2014-15	2010 Total Cohort – 5-Year Outcome
Graduation Cohort 2: 2011-2013	
2016-17	2013 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome
2015-16	2012 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome – August 2016
2015-16	2011 Total Cohort – 5-Year Outcome
Graduation Cohort 3: 2012-2014	
2017-18	2014 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome
2016-17	2013 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome – August 2017
2016-17	2012 Total Cohort – 5-Year Outcome
Graduation Cohort 4: 2013-2015	

¹ Data retrieved from <https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php>.

² 2018-19 Report Card data. Enrollment grades 9-12 only.

³ ELL- English language learner

⁴ Total per pupil expenditures as reported in the 2018-19 Fiscal Accountability Supplements.

2018-19	2015 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome
2017-18	2014 Total Cohort – 4-Year Outcome – August 2018
2017-18	2013 Total Cohort – 5-Year Outcome

As in the analysis in the Phase I study, different proportions of 9th graders who started high school in three successive years were selected in each cohort. In Cohort 1 for example, we used the proportion of 2012 9th graders who earned a regular or advanced Regents Diploma by May 2016 (i.e., “on-time” graduates). We also used the proportion of 2011 9th graders who completed a regular or advanced Regents Diploma by August 2015 (i.e., “summer” graduates). This looser definition of “graduate” allows us to include students who needed to complete a few additional credits or other requirements over the summer following their fourth year in high school. We also used the proportion of 2010 9th graders who earned a regular or advanced Regents Diploma by May 2015 (five years after entering high school), which considers that some students move through high school at a slower rate than four years.

In addition to the overall rates, we also compared and contrasted the graduation rates of four key subgroups that were highlighted in the Phase I study. These subgroups are African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students. We compared their graduation rates against the New York State average, as well.

Performance Trajectory of Highlighted Schools

Figures 1-6 display the performance trajectories of the two highlighted schools in this study. These schools have continued to exceed the New York State average graduation rates since the completion of the Phase I study.

Crown Point Central School

Crown Point Central School has maintained a higher graduation rate when compared to the New York State average rate since 2014. With a comparison of the four cohorts of 9th graders, the overall graduation rate in Crown Point has also ascended from 90.7% for Cohort 1 to 91.9% for Cohort 4.

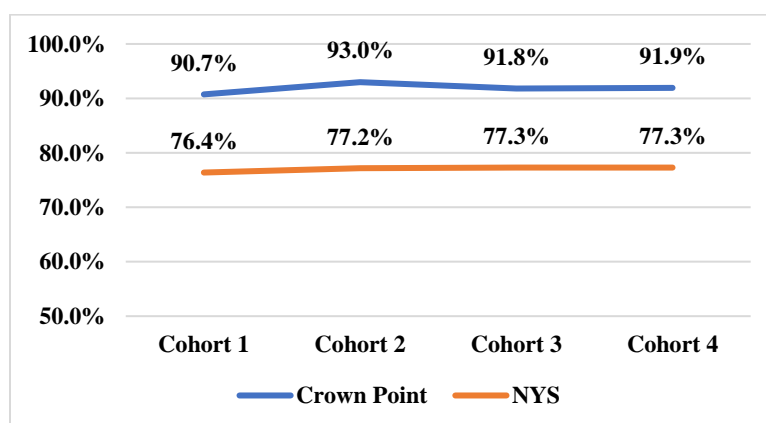


Figure 1. Overall Graduation Rates in Crown Point High School and New York State.

Regarding subgroup comparison, we only compared the graduation rates of economically disadvantaged students as the information regarding the other three subgroups was not available

from the state Graduation Rate Database. Figure 2 shows that the three-year graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students has remained relatively stable despite a minor dip from 86.2% for Cohort 1 to 85.7% for Cohort 3. It then climbed to 86.1% in the next three years for Cohort 4.

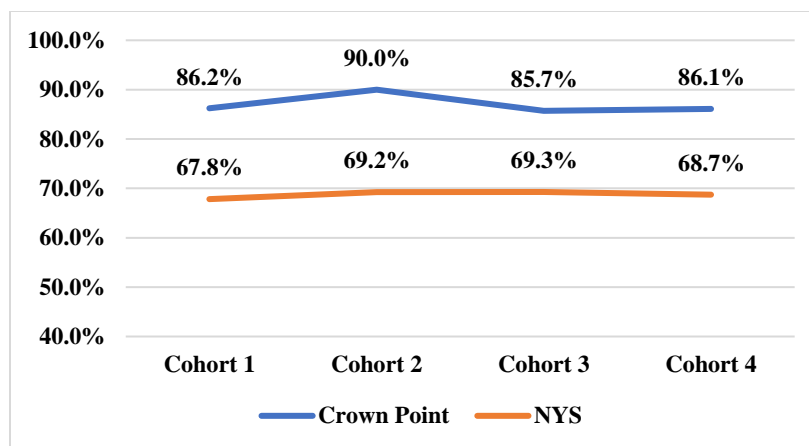


Figure 2. Graduation Rates of Economically Disadvantaged Students in Crown Point High School and New York State.

Malverne Senior High School

Like Crown Point, the overall graduation rates in Malverne have exceeded the New York state average for all four 9th grade cohorts. It has also increased slightly from a rate of 89.9% for Cohort 1 to 93.2% for Cohort 4.

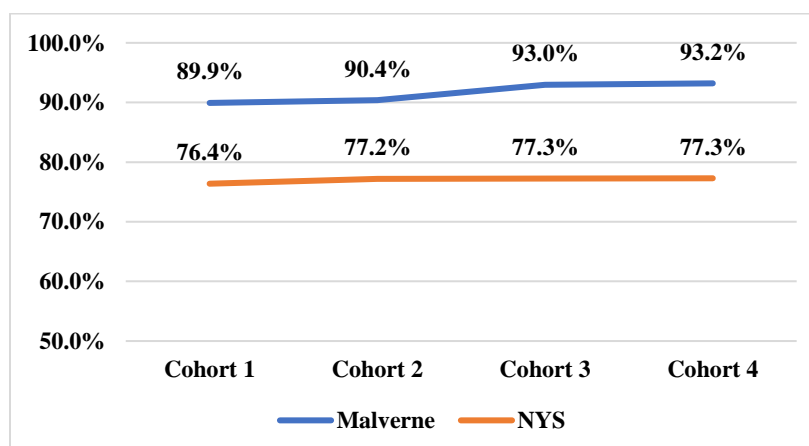


Figure 3. Overall Graduation Rates in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.

This upward trend also extends to subgroups of students including African-American and economically disadvantaged students. The graduation rate of African-American students in Malverne has risen steadily since 2014 and has been substantially higher than the New York State average for all four cohorts. Likewise, the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students has risen from 86.1% for Cohort 1 to 92.3% for Cohort 4, and this, too, is better than the state average rates for all four cohorts.

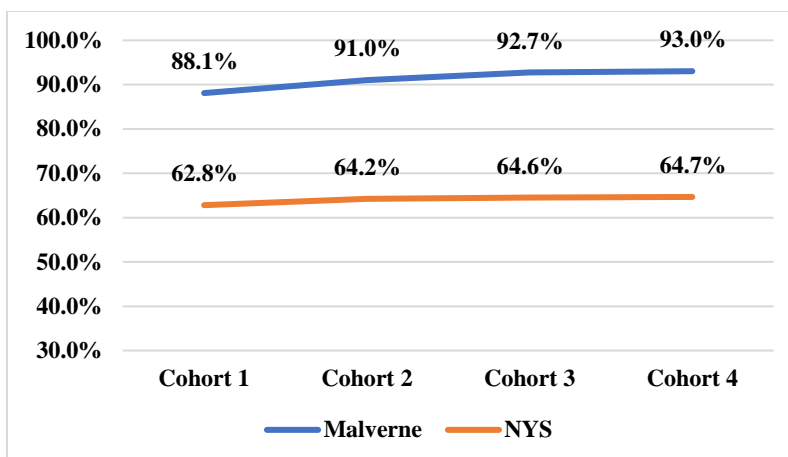


Figure 4. Graduation Rates of African-American Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.

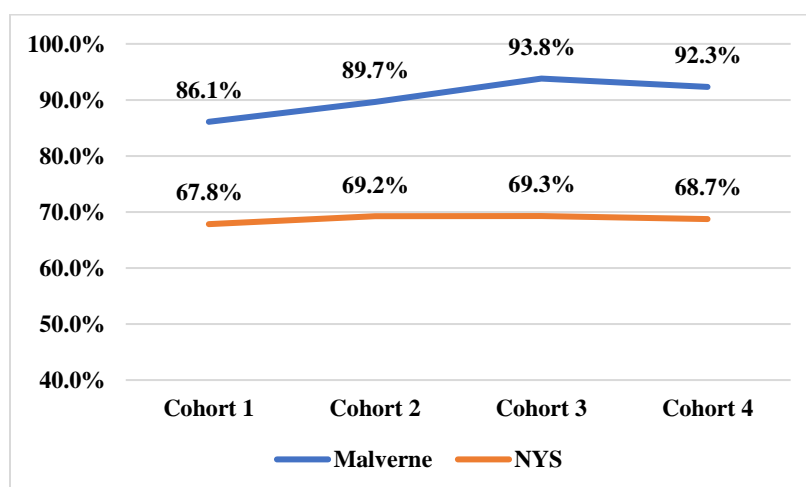


Figure 5. Graduation Rates of Economically Disadvantaged Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.

Our analysis of the graduation rates of Hispanic students found that it dropped off slightly in the most recent 9th grade cohort (Cohort 4) when compared to the previous three cohorts. However, it still exceeded the state average graduation rates of Hispanic students for all four cohorts.

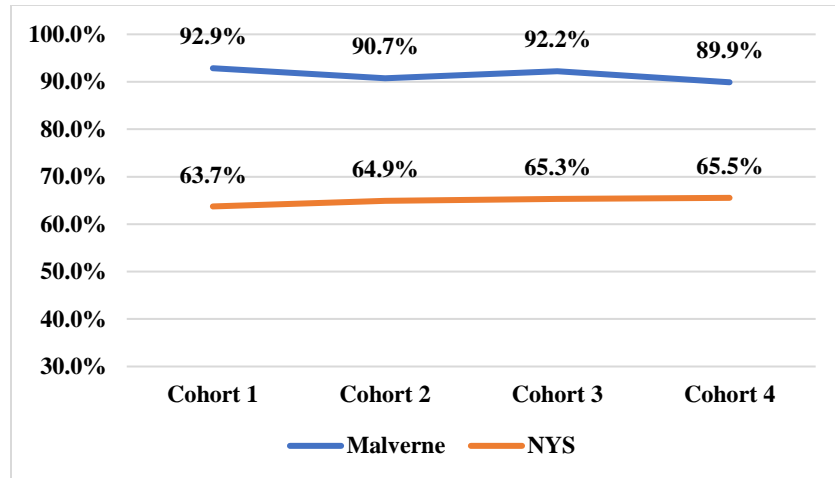


Figure 6. Graduation Rates of Hispanic Students in Malverne Senior High School and New York State.

Data Collection

We followed an Institutional Review Board approved recruitment protocol to gain consent from superintendents and principals for this study. Next, we followed parent and student consent and assent procedures with school site visits arranged once these documents were signed and delivered to the research team. A total of 22 students participated in Phase II of this study (see Table 3).

Table 3. Student characteristics

Student Pseudonym	Gender ⁵	Grade	Ethnicity
Crown Point			
Elliot	Male	12 th	White
Mark	Male	11 th	Asian American
Jessica	Female	11 th	White
Harold	Male	11 th	White
Jake	Male	12 th	White
Lucas	Male	11 th	White
Janelle	Female	11 th	Hispanic/White
Cristy	Female	12 th	White
Mackenzie	Female	12 th	White
Alex	Female	12 th	White/African American/Native American/Cuban
Kyle	Male	11 th	White
Malverne			
Tina	Female	12 th	Guyanese

⁵ Gender and ethnicity categories are based upon participant self-identification

Erin	Female	12 th	Hispanic/Latina/White
Robyn	Female	12 th	White
Steven	Male	12 th	White
Sean	Male	12 th	White
Elizabeth	Female	12 th	Guyanese
Nick	Male	12 th	Latino
Mary	Female	12 th	African American
Elena	Female	11 th	Not Identified
Olivia	Female	11 th	African American
Henry	Male	12 th	African American

A team of up to two researchers visited the sample schools to conduct focus groups and interviews with students of different genders, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Interviews and focus groups were completed within one hour and audio recorded with participant consent. During interviews researchers prompted student participants to draw on and use post-it notes to indicate places of import to them in and outside of school (called “ecological-maps”). The research team also prompted students to draw on and use post-it notes to indicate key events during high school on a timeline. In addition, the team collected documents from school websites and in hard copy such as code of conduct manuals, program descriptions, and school event calendars. See Table 4 for all data collected in this study.

Table 4. Data sources

Schools	Number of interviews	Number of focus groups	Number of artifacts	Number of documents
Crown Point	11	4	41	6
Malverne	11	1	35	8
Total	22	5	76	14

Data Analysis

Analysts coded data deductively (using a priori categories based on the theoretical framing and literature review) as well as inductively (when new codes were emergent and fell outside the a priori categories). This technique, often referred to as a constant-comparative method, allows for analytic flexibility as the analyst identifies unexpected categories and dimensions of those categories (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

The process of analysis and interpretation of data occurred in several stages to address reliability, credibility and transferability threats inherent to qualitative research.

Stage 1) Establishing the codebook: One analyst coded a single interview and a single focus group (amounting to 15 pages of text) utilizing qualitative data analysis software (NVivo, 2018) and generated the initial codebook, a combination of a priori codes and emergent “grounded” codes (see Appendix D). Next, other analysts coded these same two source files using the same codebook. The analysts ran an intercoder reliability check across coded files (again using the NVivo software) in order to address threats to internal consistency/reliability. Intercoder reliability measured at 85-90%.

Stage 2) Once all data coding was completed, analysts drew code reports from NVivo (QSR, n.d.) and generated data matrices, including major patterns within cases organized in axial codes (i.e., themes), so that cross-case comparisons could be made. Throughout this stage, analysts engaged in triangulation across all data sources including documents, artifacts, and researcher-generated interpretive memos. Negative evidence, or outlier data, were sought and noted in the data matrices, and researcher memos addressed rival explanations for all interpretations of both patterns and anomalies.

Stage 3) At least two analysts generated a descriptive case study of each school case, thus engaging in researcher triangulation. The analysts shared the case studies with participants, requesting feedback on any inaccuracies, thus engaging in member checking and confirmation of quality of data and interpretations. Any inaccuracies or misinterpretations were discussed until analysts and participants were in agreement regarding the final version of the report.

Stage 4) Analysts identified patterns across cases through qualitative content analysis (QCA) (Ragin & Rihoux, 2004) procedures whereby patterns were identified by salience (i.e., significance to participants), frequency, and strength of impact (see Appendix E). Next, analysts crafted the cross-case report with the intent to richly describe patterns (as well as anomalies) vis-à-vis the research questions. Analysts shared the cross-case report with participants using the same member checking procedure as the case studies. The principal and student participants were invited to share their own reactions to the report and their recommendations for improving high schools for others in their communications with the researchers.

Confidentiality, Participant Payment, and Funding

With the permission of the superintendent and principal, positive outlier schools are identified by name. However, all student participants' names are kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. To help coordinate interviews, organize interview space, and make other local arrangements, participating schools were provided a \$500 stipend. This study was funded by the State of New York. Only the authors are responsible for the conduct of and reports generated from this study.

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Appendix A. Interview Protocol

1. To start, please state your name, your grade, and how long you have been a student at this school.
2. Let's start with something you have with you that says something about you.
 - a. Please describe it
 1. What is special about this item to you?
 2. What are some things this item tells about you?
3. I'd like to get a sense of places, people, and experiences that are most important in your life in and outside of school. On this piece of paper, you will see a box representing this school. With other post-it notes or using your marker to draw other places, please map out where you hang out outside of this school in a typical week
 [If prompt needed: For example: Where you live (your home); community centers, church, etc.]
 - a. Who do you interact with in these places?
 - i. What kinds of things do you do together?
 - b. How would you describe your relationships with these people?
 - c. What kinds of things do you learn or do in these places?
4. Focusing in specifically on your life inside of this school. On this piece of paper, you will see a big box representing this school. With post-it notes or using your marker to draw other places, please map out the most important/favorite places you go inside of school in a typical week.
 [If prompt needed: For example: the gym, music room, guidance counselor's office, etc.]
 - a. Who do you interact with in these places?
 - i. What kinds of things do you do together?
 - b. How would you describe your relationships with these people?
 - c. What kinds of things do you learn or do in these places?
5. Next, I'd like to get a sense of your experiences in this school over time. On this piece of paper you can see a timeline starting with 9th grade and ending with 12th grade.
 On the timeline (but above the line), try to think of a time you had an experience in school that helped you prepare for your future in some way.
 [If prompt needed: It could be about learning something academic, or learning how to get along with someone, or something else.]
 - a. Please describe the experience
 - i. Who was involved?
 - ii. What did you learn from that experience?
6. Again on this timeline (but below the line), please mark when you had an experience outside of a classroom that helped you prepare for your future in some way.
 - a. Please describe the experience
 - i. Who was involved?
 - ii. What did you learn from that experience?

7. On the timeline, please mark (in red) when you came up against a difficult challenge (could be academic or non-academic – i.e., social)
 - a. Please describe the challenge (What happened at that time?).
 - b. Who was involved with helping you get through the challenge?

8. On the timeline, please mark (in blue) a time when you felt that something related specifically to you (e.g., your ethnic, linguistic, cultural heritage; gender; etc.) was taken into consideration in school.
 [If prompt needed: For example, if an adult asked for input into things to include in a course like a reading, or if you were invited to share something about yourself, your family, or other group, in a discussion or activity, or something else along those lines.]
 - a. Please describe the experience
 - i. Who was involved?
 - ii. What did you learn from that experience?

9. Over your entire high school experience, can you think of a time when you were given an opportunity to voice your opinion, make a choice about your own or others' experiences in school, or lead something?
 - a. Please mark that that (in purple) on the timeline and describe those experiences.
 - i. Who was involved?
 - ii. What came of this experience?

10. What are your plans after high school?
 - a. How did you come up with those plans? Did anyone assist you with creating them? If so, who?
 - b. How well prepared do you feel you are to accomplish your plans?
 - c. How well do you feel your teachers and other adults at the school have helped you be prepared to accomplish your plans?

11. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about what your high school experience has meant to you in preparing for your future?

Appendix B. Focus Group Protocol

1. To start, please state your name and your grade and how long you have been a student at this school
2. How would you describe this school to a new student? Please write one or two words on a post-it note that describes this school and place it in the center of the table. Please tell me about these words. What made you think of them?
 - a. What kinds of things stand out to you about the teachers and other adults who work here?
 - b. What stands out to you about the kinds of things like different academic programs/classes, sports, clubs, etc., offered to you here?
 - c. What stands out to you as the biggest priorities or most important things in this school?
 - d. Anything else stand out to you?
3. If there were a thing you could change in this school, what would it be?
 - a. Please describe any opportunities you or others have had to make changes or work with the principal(s), teachers, and other adults in the school to make changes? Please describe.
[If no response – If you had any opportunities to make changes or work with the principal(s), teachers, and other adults in the school to make changes what would they be?]
4. What would you say your teachers and other adults in this school expect of you?
[If prompt needed: It can be about academics, behavior with adults or your classmates, involvement in school activities.]
 - a. Please share an example when those expectations were made clear to you.
 - b. Who communicated those expectations and how?
 - c. In what ways are expectations of you different or the same as for others? (different by gender, language background, etc.) Please provide an example.
5. *(OPTIONAL QUESTION – DEPENDING ON TIME) Please tell me about a time you were given a choice about how you would learn something (like through reading versus a hands-on activity), what you learned about (like through a text chosen by your teacher or one you chose), or how you would show what you learned (like in a quiz versus writing a paper).*
 - a. *How often do you get opportunities to make choices like that?*
 - b. *How did those experiences affect you (motivationally or otherwise)?*
6. When, if ever, have you been asked to share or use something you learned outside of school or something important from your own background here in school? Please describe.
 - a. Who was involved?
 - b. How did those experiences affect you (motivationally or otherwise)?

7. *(OPTIONAL QUESTION – DEPENDING ON TIME) When, if ever, have you been offered an opportunity to share your ideas or opinions, start something new, or lead a group or effort at this school? Please describe what happened.*
 - a. *Who was involved?*
 - b. *How did those experiences affect you (motivationally or otherwise)?*
8. What happens if you break a rule or do something you are not supposed to do in this school?
 - a. Who responds and what do they do?
9. How do your parents, family members, or other adults interact with people in this school? Please provide an example.
 - a. Who do they interact with?
 - b. How does this interaction affect your experience in school?
10. What kinds of things do your teachers and other adults in this school say it takes to be successful after high school? Please write one or two words on a post-it note that describes what it takes to be successful and place it in the center of the table. Please tell me about these words. What made you think of them?
 - a. Is this way of thinking of success the same or different than your own view on what it takes to be successful?
11. *(OPTIONAL QUESTION – DEPENDING ON TIME) Would anyone like to share your plan for after high school?*
 - a. *Who has helped you with making that plan?*
12. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about what your high school experience has meant to you in preparing for your future?

Appendix C: Interpretive Memo

Site: _____

- In the interviews, what do we think we are seeing and hearing so far with regard to our research questions?
- For what themes are we hearing convergence in the responses? For what themes are we hearing divergence?
- What do we need to follow up on?
- Do we have evidence from multiple sources (e.g., interviews, observations, documentation) around particular processes and practices or ideas? If not – follow up...

Q1. A) What opportunities do young people identify as existing for them to i) *exercise voice* (i.e., seeking and offering opinions or perspectives); ii) *make choices* (i.e., planning and executing plans; selecting pathways); and iii) *exercising leadership* (i.e., contributing and taking responsibility for projects or efforts to bring about change for themselves and others in the school/community) *in the school*?

B) *What value do they ascribe to these opportunities vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?*

Q2. A) In what ways do young people experience recognition of i) *their cultural, linguistic, or other unique backgrounds in school activities, events, etc.*; ii) *the use of/sensitivity to their prior knowledge and experience in programming and curriculum*; and iii) *the use of/sensitivity to their prior knowledge and experience in the design and delivery of classroom instruction*?

B) *What value do they ascribe to these experiences vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?*

Q3. A) What do young people perceive as the nature of the i) *school culture* (e.g., norms, values, and beliefs); ii) *climate* (e.g., safety, atmosphere) in the school; and iii) *management* (e.g., policies, practices, routines/operations)?

B) *What value do they ascribe to these school characteristics vis-à-vis their development and success beyond high school?*

Q4. A) How do young people perceive relationships between themselves and i) *their peers*; ii) *school personnel*; iii) *their parents/families*; and iv) *other community members*?

B) *What value do they ascribe to these relationships vis-à-vis their development and success in and beyond high school?*

Q5. A) What types of i) *skills* (academic and non-academic); ii) *competencies* (e.g., higher-order, creative thinking, etc.); and iii) *knowledge* (academic and non-academic) *do young people identify as learning and prioritized in school, and how do these compare with out-of-school learning experiences*?

B) *What value do they ascribe to these skills, competencies, and knowledge vis-à-vis their development and success in and beyond high school?*

Appendix D: Codebook

Name	Description
Challenges	times of challenge; the qualities or triggers of the challenge
academic	challenges related to school; academic, social, extracurricular or otherwise
family	challenges from home; family health; etc.
personal	personal and/or individual challenges or difficulties
transitions	challenges transitioning from elementary or middle school to high school
Community characteristics	characteristics of the community e.g., size, proximity to resources/opportunities, demographics. Advantages or disadvantages of the community
Critical experiences	indicated time when something helped prepare for the future
Cultural responsiveness	experiences or opportunities or strategies that tap into prior knowledge and experience; attention to cultural or linguistic background; context-fit content
Discipline and Behavior	
Diversity	
Expectations	
behavior	expectations for behavior
differentiated	same or different expectations of students from different backgrounds
good work ethic	includes doing homework
helpful	expectations that students will help others
high achieving	expectations for high achievement
prepared	expectation that students are prepared for life beyond high school and outside of the community
reach potential	expectations for students to reach their own potentials
respectful	expectation for students to be respectful

Name	Description
time management	expectations that students will learn to manage their time and self-regulate to accomplish something
well-rounded	expectations that students will be well-rounded -- academic and social involvement
Future and planning	any data associated with future planning; what comes after high school
assess prep for	assessments or evaluations of the level or adequacy of preparation for future, whether college or career
career planning	planning for career or working on skills that would help in a future job
college planning	activities or opportunities to help with college planning
Family/friend assist planning	family or friends assist with planning
financial concern	taking financial concerns into account in post-graduation planning
guidance couns assist planning	guidance counselor assists with planning
military	plans for entering the military; reasons for doing so
parents assist planning	parent assistance with planning
principal assist planning	principal assists with planning
teacher assist planning	teachers assists with planning for future
Identity	
Important spaces	
in school	
cafeteria	cafeteria -- eating areas as important place on school grounds
elementary or middle classrooms	elementary or middle school classrooms as frequented spaces
guidance counselor office	

Name	Description
gym athletic facilities	gym, athletic facilities, athletic fields, etc.; important places on school grounds
library media room	library or media room as important place on campus
locker room	locker room as frequented space
math classroom	math classroom as frequented space
science or science lab	science classroom or science lab as frequented space
social studies classroom	SS classroom as important place on school grounds
study hall	study hall or free period room as important place on school grounds
out of school	important places outside of school
community establishments	places students go including cafes, restaurants -- local establishments open to the public
parks	important spaces including parks, recreational areas in the community
Learning	
in-school learning	
college-level classes	opportunities to take college-level classes. These could be distance/online opportunities or classes offered at the school.
content area learning	content learning in social studies, English, math, science, health, PE
extracurriculars	extracurricular opportunities in school -- clubs, sports
skills, competencies and knowledge	
applied math skills	opportunities to apply math skills to real world problems
co-construction constructivist	
college and career planning	college and career planning opportunities including college fair

Name	Description
content knowledge	
decision making	
financial management	learning related to financial management; making choices about how money is spent; banking; etc.
literacy language communication skills	development of literacies including reading, writing, speaking, listening; ability to communicate ideas
problem-solving	
social skills	
stress management	
study habits	learning around study habits; managing deadlines and tasks
teaching others	
teamwork	students learning how to work as a team, cooperate, collaborate -- what contributes to this in their in-school learning opportunities -- includes in extracurriculars, e.g., sports teams
tenacity	students learning that they need to be tenacious; they need to learn to surmount challenges
sports	
strengths	
teachers' strategies instructional techniques	
vocational or technical school	opportunities for VTec learning
weaknesses	weaknesses in skills, competencies, and knowledge learning
out-of-school learning	types of out-of-school learning, e.g., hands-on experience

Name	Description
application of school learning	the extent to which school learning is applied outside of school; examples of this occurring
community service	opportunities to engage in community service projects and activities
efficacy or confidence	students experience efficacy -- a sense of accomplishment and capability to do something; gaining confidence in the ability to accomplish something
professional community roles and work	out-of-school learning opportunities that engage ss in what it is like to work in a particular professional community or environment; the kinds of roles people take in those professional contexts and the types of work they engage in
self-motivation	
technology	technology use or learning out-of-school
time management	
Priorities	
academic achievement	
college or workforce preparation	
exposure to the arts	the provision of opportunities to appreciate the arts
Extracurriculars, clubs	priorities include extracurriculars; club participations; non-academic
plan for future	
work ethic or habits	
Relationships	key people students relate to and with; the kinds of things that are important in these relationships
community members	community member involvement in the school, e.g., fire chief or police officer visit, etc.
doctors, health professionals	
guidance counselors	
online or distance teachers	

Name	Description
parents and family members	
peers	important or regular peer relationships
alumni	
school and district leaders	relationships that students have with school and district leaders (i.e., principals, superintendents, et al.)
teachers	
emotional support	teachers seen as providing emotional support; guidance through personal struggle
facilitators	teachers as facilitators for students to pursue something, e.g., an extracurricular or service opportunity
family	teachers seen as family
friends	
mentors	
School characteristics	
AP, college-level classes	availability of Advanced Placement or other college level classes
culture, climate	the culture and climate of the school; values and atmosphere of school
internship programs	school offerings of internship programs; apprenticeship programs
like family	school like a family; feeling that everyone knows everyone
transition from ms to hs	school characteristics in terms of the transition from middle to high school
Student agency	
choice	
leadership	
voice	ability or opportunity to articulate a concern, a suggestion, an opinion, etc.
Success	

Name	Description
alignment with school's definition	the extent to which students' definition or perceptions of success and/or what's needed to succeed matches those espoused by educators
engagement or focus	success associated with being engaged and focusing on the work
hard work	success associated with hard work or effort
leadership	success associated with leading or taking a leadership role
luck	success associated with luck
mindset	success associated with mindset or attitude related to persistence, belief that one can accomplish
respectful	success associated with respectfulness
responsibility	success associated with taking responsibility
talent	success associated with talent or natural ability
time management	success associated with time management or self-regulation
teacher assist planning	teachers assisting student with planning for their futures
Teachers' characteristics	how students talk about teacher characteristics, e.g., helpful
adaptable	willing to change homework assignments; due dates, etc., based on student schedules and needs
concerned about whole person	show concern; worry about students' feelings
conscientious	willing to stay after school; work with individual students who are struggling
encouraging	motivating or encouraging students to meet their potential or pursue learning goals, try new activities, etc.
helpful	seen as helpful -- willing to help
supportive	

Appendix E: QCA Analysis

LOI 1 Voice, Choice, Leadership (Crown Point)	Salience	LOI 1 Voice, Choice, Leadership (Malverne)	Salience
voice, choice, leadership limitations/constraints based on reputations/bias	0.5 ⁶	choices in extracurriculars, clubs, activities, and offerings	1
choices - academic - course offerings/mode/assessments	0.5	leadership opportunities in class and through extracurriculars	1
choices - non-academic - school facilities, menu, etc.	1	choices about school management, policies or within classroom	0.5
choices enhanced through formal program involvement (CFES)	1	encouragement of student voice in class and through extracurriculars	1
choice dependent on trust and responsibility - earned	1	students motivated by teachers to work hard and develop successful academic habits	1
choice associated with preparing and planning for future and identity development	1	educators serve as role models for students	1
leadership - formal - in school and out of school - community engaged opportunities for all	1	cultivating student agency with the purpose of future planning	1
leadership expected to pay it forward to others - mentoring and modeling for younger students and others (mentoring/modeling)	1	treating students like adults - in classes also in spaces of school where students can hang out and socialize	1
leadership in one's life - planning and self- advocacy	1	teaching students to be self-advocates	1
LOI 2 Cultural Responsiveness, School Culture, School Climate		LOI 2 Cultural Responsiveness, School Culture, School Climate	
in-school and out-of-school learning (OSL) connections	0.5	connection with out-of-school learning (OSL)	0.5
connections to other peers in and outside of school	0.5	school-community connections	0.5
service orientation	1	caring culture where students feel that adults are looking out for them	1
experiential/ applied learning experiences drawing on strengths/interests	1	attention to social-emotional and mental health	1

⁶ 0=low salience, frequency or strength; .5 = moderate salience, frequency or strength, 1 = high salience, frequency or strength

culture: hard work, self-regulation, and positive mindset	1	high expectations for all students	1
culture: responsibility and respect	1	rigorous classes that delve into range of issues	1
climate: listening and caring (and connected to theme on relationships)	1	diverse student climate emphasized and highlighted by school	1
		close-knit and small -- everyone knows each other, gets along	1
LOI 3 Relationships		LOI 3 Relationships	
peers supporting peers	1	strong relationships with peers through extracurriculars	1
connections with alums	0.5	relative absence of hierarchies, bullying	0.5
close knit connections with adults	1	strong relationships with educators; casual and comfortable interactions	1
family and community member connections, guidance, and mentoring	1	parent-community connection to school	0.5
		guidance counselor support	1
LOI 4 Knowledge, Skills		LOI 4 Knowledge, Skills	
OSL hands-on experiences and professional knowledge identity	1	learning from diverse student population	1
communication skills (see first theme)	1	wide range of extracurricular offerings provide opportunities for learning	1
practical life skills (e.g., financial management)		early and strong focus on college readiness; preparing students for next step	1
self-regulation, social and emotional intelligence (see first theme)	1	focus on career -- encouraging students to pursue interests and creating opportunities to learn new things, interests	0.5
organized events/opportunities to gain knowledge about life outside of school	1	importance of time management, persistence, and diligence to meet high expectations of teachers	1
		connecting school learning to “real life situations”	0.5