

Promising Practices from New York State's Positive Outlier Elementary Schools: Methods and Procedures Report

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Study Purpose

This study explores how elementary school leaders and educators have approached serving diverse student populations with a focus on positive youth development of children in grades spanning K-6.

This study compares policies, processes, and practices in elementary schools with better-than-predicted student outcomes given the populations of students served.

Sample Selection

Target Sample Population: Elementary schools spanning grades K-6. Some schools with K-3 or K-5 configurations were also included in the sample. New York City schools and charter schools were excluded.

All data were accessed from NYSED’s website, specifically New York State Report Cards: <https://data.nysed.gov/essa.php?year=2024&state=yes>.

Outcome Measures: Positive outlier schools were identified using New York State data across three academic years:

- 2021-22 academic year
- 2022-23 academic year
- 2023-24 academic year

Academic outcome measures

- English Language Arts (ELA) assessments for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 (where applicable)

- Mathematics assessments for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 (where applicable)

(Science or social studies measures were not used because it would have excluded schools based on their grade configuration.)

Participation outcome measures

- Chronic absenteeism for grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (where applicable)

Chronic absenteeism is the percentage of students who are absent from more than 10% of enrolled instructional days of the school year. To identify positive outliers, we used the percentage of students who have fewer than 10% absences per school year.

Statistical Analysis for School Selection: Regression analysis was used to estimate "expected" performance and chronic absenteeism rates as a function of the demographic characteristics of schools' student populations. Schools are classified as "positive outliers" based on consistently performing above predicted levels across the three-year period while accounting for:

- Proportion of students identified as economically disadvantaged
- Proportion of English language learners or Multilingual learners
- Proportion of students from historically underserved racial/ethnic groups

To identify the positive outlier schools, a series of regression analyses were conducted to locate which schools outperformed other schools on Math and ELA 3-6 exams (from 2022, 2023, and 2024) and chronic absenteeism rates, after controlling for the percentages of the student population that were identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) or Multilingual learners (MLLs), Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, and economically disadvantaged, as well as the number of students tested (only for regressions predicting test scores).

In sum, regression analyses were conducted for several groups and subgroups: all students, ELLs/MLLs, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.

This resulted in 168 (8 tests * 3 years * 7 groups) regression analyses for the academic outcomes, and 21 (3 years * 7 groups) regression analyses for the chronic absenteeism outcome.

For each regression analysis, the residual was saved for each school, then the residuals were averaged across each school to create an average residual for both the academic outcomes and attendance. The z-scores (observation – mean)/standard deviation) were computed for each school within the academic outcome average residuals and the good attendance average residuals. Schools with composite z-scores greater than 1.0 (marking statistical significance) were identified as positive outliers.

From those identified schools, researchers removed those schools classified by NYSED as “low need.” Researchers also manually reviewed each school and excluded those which showed low levels of diversity or economic disadvantage in comparison with neighboring schools. The final sample also was designed to include a diverse profile of locales by urbanicity and regions across New York State.

Procedures for Field Teams

To ensure consistent data gathering across multiple sites, UAlbany PI or Co-I staff provided comprehensive orientations for all field team researchers. Field team researchers were presented with:

- Overview of the study framework and research questions
- Guidance on the content and use of interview protocols
- Procedures for focus groups and observations
- Document collection protocols
- Summary interpretation guidelines for school visits

All instrumentation was distributed in electronic formats and compiled in a field manual. Field teams were assigned to the PI or Co-I to oversee case study development.

Data Collection

After securing University at Albany Institutional Review Board approval for this research, we then contacted district superintendents and principals of positive outlier schools to invite them to participate. Once site visits were arranged, teams of up to three researchers visited sample schools for two days to collect documents, conduct interviews and focus groups with principals, teachers, district leaders, support staff, and parents to explore school and district policies, processes, and practices. Interview and focus group protocols are attached as an appendix at the end of this document.

Interview and Focus Group Procedure

- Interviews and focus groups are typically one hour in length

- Conducted by university faculty/researchers with doctoral student assistance
- All team members certified by the Institutional Review Board for human subjects research
- Interviews and focus groups audio recorded with participant consent
- Detailed notes maintained using laptop computers for accuracy
- All audio files transcribed by doctoral students with participant names removed
- Audio recordings then destroyed; transcripts and other data stored on a password-protected server

Data Sources

1. Interviews and Focus Groups with School Personnel

- School Principal and/or Assistant Principal Interview
- Grade-level Teacher Focus Groups (K-2, 3-6 as applicable)
- Support Staff Focus Group (Social Worker, Nurse, Parent Liaison)
- Special Education Teacher Interview or Focus Group
- English as a New Language (ENL) Teacher Interview or Focus Group
- School Building Leadership Team Focus Group
- Parent Liaison Interview
- Extracurriculars Focus Group

2. Interviews with District Personnel

- District Superintendent Interview
- Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Interview
- Director of Elementary Education Interview
- Director of Special Education Interview
- Director of ENL/Bilingual Education Interview
- Director of Student Services Focus Group
- Director of Assessment or Data Focus Group
- Director of Human Resources Focus Group

3. Additional Data Sources

- School tour
- Document collection (policies, curricula, assessment materials)

Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded in multiple phases:

Phase 1: Initial Coding

- Coding based on a priori literature and the conceptual framework
- Major code categories include:
 - Mental health and social-emotional learning programs and practices
 - Academic readiness and performance enhancing strategies
 - Educator recruitment/retention and support systems
 - Parent and community engagement approaches
 - Leadership and organizational capacity
- Individual school case studies developed (Yin, 2014)

Phase 2: Cross-Case Analysis

- Deductive, inductive, and abductive coding methods (Miles et al., 2018)
- Qualitative software programs utilized for coding and pattern matching
- Cross-case matrices and qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) procedures (Rihoux & Ragin, 2008)

Phase 3: Pattern Identification

1. Identification of shared practices across positive outlier schools
2. Analysis of differences between positive outlier schools by demographic characteristics

Credibility and Validity Measures used to enhance credibility (Maxwell, 2013)

- Peer review and debriefing of data and processes
- Data, investigator, theory, and methodological triangulation

- Identification of negative cases and disconfirming evidence
- Reflexivity through investigator memoing and debriefing
- Member checking of case study reports by superintendents and principals

Confidentiality and Ethics

With permission from superintendents and principals, positive outlier schools and districts are identified by name in research reports. Principals and superintendents are referenced by title, while other staff are referenced only by role (e.g., teacher, support staff, district/school leader).

Consent from all participants is obtained prior to data collection, following Institutional Review Board guidelines for human subjects research.

Study liaisons at each site receive an honorarium of \$400 to help coordinate interviews, organize space, and make local arrangements.

References

- Maxwell, J.A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2018). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Rihoux, B., & Ragin, C. C. (2008). *Configurational comparative methods: Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and related techniques*. Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Appendix. Data Collection Instruments

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND/OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL* INTERVIEW

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

*Focus on these for Assistant Principal.

BOLD – required question

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this school?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.**

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years, if at all?**
 - a. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?**
 - a. **What are some of the ways you address these challenges?**
 - b. **Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.**
4. **What are your current school goals?**
 - a. **Please describe how these goals were established?**
 - a. **Who was involved?**
 - b. **Please share some of the ways you have attempted to achieve these goals.**
 - a. **What are your remaining challenges in achieving your goals? How are you tackling those challenges?**

<POLICY CONTEXT >

5. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)**
 - a. **Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?**
 - b. **What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?**
 - a. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**
 - c. **Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

6. **How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)**
 - a. **Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)**
 - b. **What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)**
7. **What social-emotional learning needs are you noticing among your students?**
 - a. **How have students' social-emotional learning needs changed if at all in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>**
 - b. **What efforts are made to develop students' social-emotional skills here?**
 - c. **Please describe any supports you have been provided or you have provided to support students' social-emotional wellbeing.**
8. **Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.**

- a. **Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way in recent years if so, how?** (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
- b. **What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges?**
(Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)

<ACADEMIC READINESS AND PERFORMANCE>

- 9. **How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has it changed, if at all, in recent years?**
<probe -ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, other specials>
 - a. **What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, in recent years?**
 - b. **What, if any, PreK programs does your district sponsor?**
 - a. **How if at all do the PreK programs' curriculum align to the school's curriculum?**
 - c. **What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used and how feedback is offered to teachers.**
 - d. **Please describe any ways instruction has been adapted for struggling students.**
- 10. **Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged? If so, what are they?**
 - a. **Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices? How were these decided upon?**
 - b. **How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?) and what has it looked like in recent years?**
 - i. **Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?**
- 11. ***Please describe any instructional technologies that are mandated or strongly encouraged.** Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies? How were these decided upon?
 - a. **How has the use of these technologies changed over time?**
 - i. **How have you approached generative AI here?**
 - ii. **To what extent have you applied generative AI, if at all?**
 - b. **How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?)**

- i. Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in using technologies in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

- 12. ***What qualities do you look for in teachers and support staff at this school?**
 - a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in teachers and support staff changed in response to student and family needs?
- 13. **How would you characterize your candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?**
- 14. **What efforts do you make to retain good teachers and support staff?**
 - a. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?
If mentoring is mentioned – please describe..
- 15. ***What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you offered to your staff over the past few years?**
 - a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
 - b. **How have you received PD (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)?**
- 16. ***What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
 - c. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
 - d. **How have you received PD (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)**
 - e. To what extent are your own needs for PD being met?
If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

- 17. ***Describe efforts you make to engage parents/caregivers.**
 - a. **How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between school employees and parents/caregivers?**
 - b. Who is involved in engaging parents and caregivers?
 - c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your parents/caregivers in recent years.
- 18. ***Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.**
 - a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
 - c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
 - d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?

- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
- f. **What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<PROGRESS MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT>

19. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?

<If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>

- a. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- b. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- c. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- d. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- e. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- f. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**

<INTERVENTIONS>

20. How would you assess your rates of chronic absenteeism?

- a. **What efforts do you or others make to keep students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable students in school ?**
- b. Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed
 - How did the initiative come about?
 - How is it working?

21. How would you assess the state of student engagement in this school?

- a. **What efforts do you or others make to keep students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable students engaged?**
- b. Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed
 - i. How did the initiative come about?
 - ii. How is it working?

22. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g., AIS, MTSS).

- a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**
 - i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.
 - ii. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.

- b. How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how, if at all, has this changed in recent years?
- c. How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?
- d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?

23. Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.

- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?
- b. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?**
 - i. In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**

24. *Please describe any school-wide positive behavior programs.

<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>

- a. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
- b. How do you determine its effectiveness?
- c. What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?**
- d. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<CONCLUSION>

25. What is on your horizon here? or

Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet student and family needs?

Thank you.

END

BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- [If Focus Group]: While your responses are confidentially held by the researchers, please realize that there will be other focus group participants present during any comments you make who may or may not share information outside the focus group, including information that you may feel is sensitive or private.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<INTRODUCTION>

1. Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.
 - a. What attracted you to this school?
2. How did you get involved in this team?
 - a. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities on this team?
 - b. Have you received any professional learning opportunities to help you fulfill your roles and responsibilities on this team?
 - c. How is the effectiveness/outcomes of your team's work supported and monitored? (probe into meeting time, data systems)

<LEADERSHIP >

3. What are your current school goals?
4. Please describe how these goals were established?
 - a. Who was involved?
5. Please share some of the ways you have attempted to achieve these goals.
 - a. What are your remaining challenges in achieving your goals? How are you tackling those challenges?
6. What have been the top priorities for this leadership team during your time here?
 - a. Please describe who establishes these priorities and how that is done?
 - b. How have priorities changed in recent years, if at all?
 - c. What are your priorities for supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community?

<POLICY CONTEXT >

7. Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)
8. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
9. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - a. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
10. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

11. Describe any ways your team has addressed student behaviors.
 - a. What role did your team play in this work?
 - b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?
12. Describe any ways your team has addressed social-emotional learning.
 - a. What role did your team play in this work?
 - b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?
13. Describe any ways your team has addressed students' mental health.
 - a. What role did your team play in this work?
 - b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?

14. <ACADEMIC READINESS AND PERFORMANCE>

15. Describe any ways your team has addressed students' academic readiness and performance?

- a. What role did your team play in this work?
- b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?
- c. How have you tackled how technology is used in and out of the classroom in this building? (probe: cell phone policies, etc.)

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

16. How, if at all, is your team involved in recruiting new staff?

- a. Please describe how your team is involved, any challenges you have faced, and how you have met those challenges.

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

17. Please describe efforts your team has made to engage parents/caregivers.

- a. How have these efforts changed, if at all, in recent years?
- b. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between school employees and parents/caregivers?
- c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your students' parents/caregivers in recent years.

18. Describe any ways your team has fostered collaborations or partnerships with community agencies.

- a. <If involved in partnership – please describe them– probes below>
- b. What role did your team play in this work?
- c. How have these partnerships changed in recent years if at all?
- d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?

<PROGRESS MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT>

19. Describe any ways your team is involved in assessing students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?

- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it – probes below>
- b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- g. Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.

<INTERVENTIONS>

20. Describe any ways your team is involved in ensuring that students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable students, are in school and engaged?

a. <If involved– please describe involvements>

21. Describe any ways your team is involved in supplemental academic support services programs (e.g., AIS, MTSS).

a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**

i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.

<CONCLUSION>

22. What is on your horizon here? or

a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

SUPPORT STAFF (SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, SOCIAL WORKER, NURSE, PARENT LIAISON)

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

BOLD – required question

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this school?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these values or priorities in practice here.**
3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years, if at all?**

4. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?
 - a. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
5. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.
6. What are your current school goals?
 - a. Please describe how these goals were established?
 - b. Who was involved?
7. Please share some of the ways you have attempted to achieve these goals.
 - a. What are your remaining challenges in achieving your goals? How are you tackling those challenges?

<POLICY CONTEXT >

8. *Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
9. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.
 - a. How have you tackled how technology is used in and out of the classroom in this building? (probe: cell phone policies, etc.)

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

10. How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
 - c. How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching
 - i. Have you changed how you approach social-emotional learning in any way if so, how?
11. Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.
 - a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges?
 - c. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

- 12. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
- a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.
 - b. How well do you feel your professional development needs are being met?
 - i. [If mentoring is mentioned].
 - c. How has the PD offered to you changed over the past few years if at all?
 - i. Please describe any new innovations or technologies implemented to support your professional learning

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

- 13. How would you describe the relationship between students' families and the staff at this school?**
- a. Please describe any efforts you make to engage parents/caregivers.
 - i. Who is involved in this work?
 - ii. What do you communicate with them about?
 - iii. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?
- 14. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.**
- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
 - c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
 - d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
 - e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
 - f. What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

- 15. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?**
- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
 - b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
 - d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
 - e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?

- f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
 - g. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**
- 16. Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.**
- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?
- 17. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?**
- a. In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?
- 18. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g., AIS, MTSS).**
- a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**
 - i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.
 - ii. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.
 - b. How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how, if at all, has this changed in recent years?
 - c. How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?
 - d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?
- 19. *Please describe any school-wide positive behavior programs.**
- a. **<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>**
 - b. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
 - d. **What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?**
 - e. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<CONCLUSION>

20. What is on your horizon here? or

- a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

PARENT LIAISON

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

* Priority

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
2. **What attracted you to this school?**
3. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

4. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these values or priorities in practice here.**
5. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years, if at all?**
6. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?**
 - a. **What are some of the ways you address these challenges?**

- b. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.
- 7. What are the key priorities in this school?
 - a. How have priorities changed over time if at all?
 - b. What are your priorities specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?
 - c. In what ways do priorities for these students differ from all other student groups, if at all?
- 8. Describe the relationships you have with other educators and staff at the school
- 9. How do you collaborate with your colleagues to meet students' needs?

< BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

- 10. How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 11. How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching
 - a. Have you changed how you approach social-emotional learning in any way if so, how?
- 12. Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.
 - a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges?
 - i. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)

<PARENT/CAREGIVER/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- 13. How would you describe the relationship between students' families and the staff at this school?
- 14. Please describe any efforts you make to engage parents/caregivers, especially those who may be hard to reach.
 - a. Who is involved in this work?
 - b. What do you communicate with them about?
 - c. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?
- 15. Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.
 - a. How did it come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this partnership?

- c. How do you describe your role in community partnership initiatives?
 - d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?
 - e. What kinds of barriers do you encounter if any in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Example?
- 16. Please describe how you communicate with community-based organizations with whom you partner?**
- a. **Do you discuss goals, and if so, can you provide an example of goals guiding your partnership?**
17. Please describe, if any, goals around social-emotional learning, student engagement, physical health, and/or mental health?
- a. How has this communication changed over time?
- 18. Describe any processes you use to share data with partners in community-based organizations or agencies.**

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

- 19. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?**
- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
 - b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
 - d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
 - e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
 - f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- 20. Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**
- 21. Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.**
- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - b. How are data disseminated?
- 22. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?**
- 23. In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**
- 24. *Please describe any school-wide interventions or positive behavior programs.**
- a. **<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>**
 - b. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
 - d. **What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?**
 - e. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<CONCLUSION>

25. What is on your horizon here? or

26. Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet student and family needs?

Thank you.

END

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER INTERVIEW / FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

* Priority

BOLD – required question

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this school?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these values or priorities in practice here.**
3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years if at all?**
 - a. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?**
 - i. **What are some of the ways you address these challenges?**

- b. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.**

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 4. *Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)**
- a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?**
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?**
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**
- 5. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**
- a. How have you tackled how technology is used in and out of the classroom in this building? (probe: cell phone policies, etc.)**

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

- 6. How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)**
- a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)**
 - i. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)**
- 7. How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching?**
- i. Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's social-emotional learning?**
 - ii. What resources have you had available to support children's social-emotional learning? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)**
- 8. Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.**
- a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)**
 - i. Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's mental health?**
 - ii. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)**

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

9. **Please describe your special education program and any changes which have been made to the program over the last several years.**
 - a. Who is involved?
 - b. How is the effectiveness of your Special Education program assessed? Have these measurements changed over time?
 - c. **Please describe your experiences trying to meet the needs of culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.**
10. **When you first meet a student, how do you establish goals for them?**
 - a. How are goals evaluated, and who is involved?
 - b. What obstacles do you encounter in achieving these goals, and how do you deal with them?
 - c. What obstacles do your students encounter, and how do you help them deal with those obstacles?
11. **How would you describe high-quality teaching for your special needs students, and has this changed over time?**
 - a. What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, over time?
 - b. What types of support are you offered in providing such high-quality teaching?
 - i. Who provides that support?
 - c. What kinds of things do you do to specifically engage culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?
 - d. What do you do to identify and re-engage disengaged students?
12. **What, if any, instructional strategies are mandated or strongly encouraged here, and have those strategies changed over time?**
 - a. What types of tools or rubrics are offered to guide you in the use of these strategies?
 - b. Who was involved in deciding which strategies would be used?
 - c. How were these decided upon?
 - d. Are you able to vary how you use these strategies? Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?
13. **What kinds of technologies, materials do you find particularly useful in supporting your students, and have these changed over time?**
 - a. **How have you approached integrating AI here?**
 - i. **To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?**
 - b. Do you find these technologies and resources adequate to meet your students' needs?
 - i. Who is involved with attaining these resources?

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

14. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing? <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>

- a. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- b. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- c. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- d. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- e. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- f. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**

15. Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.

- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?

16. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?

- a. **In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**

17. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g., AIS, MTSS).

- a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**
 - i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.
 - ii. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.
- b. How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how, if at all, has this changed in recent years?
- c. How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?
- d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?

18. *Please describe any school-wide interventions or positive behavior programs.

- a. **<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>**
- b. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
- c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
- d. **What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?**
- e. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

19. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?

- a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting students from different cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic backgrounds.
- b. How have you received PD (coaches, external support)
- c. How well have your professional development needs been met during your time here? Please elaborate
 - i. [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

20. How do you collaborate with other teachers or support staff?

- a. Do these collaborations extend to other schools (e.g., the elementary and middle school)? Please describe.
- b. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?
- c. Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district? If so, who is involved?
- d. What is the focus of this collaboration?
- e. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?
- f. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?
- g. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

21. How would you characterize the relationship between families and staff in this school?

- a. **Please describe any processes or procedures you have used to engage parents/caregivers.**
- b. What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?

22. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.

- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
- b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
- c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
- d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
- f. **What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<CONCLUSION>

23. What is on your horizon here? Or Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to how you approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END

ENGLISH NEW LANGUAGE (ENL) TEACHER FOCUS GROUP or INTERVIEW

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

BOLD – required question

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
2. **What attracted you to this school?**
3. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

4. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.**
5. **<If not already mentioned> - please describe the ENL students and parents with whom you work with in this school.**
 - a. **Consider: language and educational background, culture (e.g., norms, traditions, beliefs, etc.), stability or family configuration.**

- b. To your knowledge, how, if at all, has the ENL student population and their needs changed in recent years?
- 6. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years if at all?**
 - a. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?
 - b. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
 - c. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success with your ENL students.

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 7. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom for ENL students. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)**
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - c. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
- 8. **Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting ENL students and their families.**

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

- 9. **How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years?** (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. **Have they changed in any way if so, how?** (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 10. **How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching?**
 - a. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's social-emotional learning?**
 - b. What resources have you had available to support children's social-emotional learning? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 11. **Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.**
 - a. **Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how?** (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - b. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's mental health?**
 - c. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been? What challenges have you encountered in providing these resources?)

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

12. Please describe your ENL program and how if at all it has changed in recent years.

- a. Who is involved in developing the ENL program?
- b. How is the effectiveness of your ENL program assessed?
- c. Please describe any special programs/services for ENL students transferring from another school either from their host countries or in New York State or another state?

13. Describe any efforts you have been a part of to develop and revise the curriculum during your time here.

- a. **Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for ENL students?**
- b. Any specific programming for students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE/SIFE)?
- c. What are your roles or responsibilities in developing or revising the curriculum?
- d. What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?

14. How would you describe high-quality teaching for ENL students?

- a. <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- b. **What types of support are you offered in providing high-quality ENL teaching?**
- c. **Who provides that support?**
- d. **What do you do to re-engage disengaged ENL students?**

15. Are there any instructional strategies that are mandated or strongly encouraged here?

- a. **If so, what are they?** <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- b. **How have these strategies changed over time?**
- c. What types of tools or rubrics are offered to guide you in the use of these strategies?
- d. Who was involved in deciding which strategies would be used?
- e. How were these decided upon?
- f. Are you able to vary how you use these strategies? Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?

16. Please describe any technologies, materials, etc. you use to meet your ENL students' needs.

- a. **How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years in your school?**
- b. **How have you and your colleagues approached AI use here?**
- c. **To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?**
- d. **What guidance have you been offered about AI use and from whom?**

- e. What kinds of technologies or materials do you find particularly useful for ENL students?
- f. How have you adapted technologies and materials to meet the needs of ENL students? Please provide examples.

<INTERVENTIONS>

17. What efforts do you or others make to keep your ENL students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable students in school and engaged?

- a. How would you assess the state of ENL student attendance in this school?
- b. What is being done to address absenteeism for these students?
- c. Is this different from what was done in previous years?
- d. How would you assess the state of ENL student engagement in this school?
- e. How has your approach to student engagement changed, if at all, over time?
- f. Please describe any special arrangements (e.g., class scheduling; materials available online) that are made for students who are chronically absent?

18. Please describe any efforts to engage ENL students specifically.

19. How would you describe your students' readiness to engage in academic learning in your classroom?

20. How has student readiness for academic learning changed if at all in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>

21. What efforts are made to support student readiness for academic learning here?

22. Please describe any supports you have been provided to support students' academic learning.

<PROGRESS MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT>

23. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?

- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
- b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- g. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to monitor students' academic and social-emotional progress.**

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

24. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?

- a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting ENL students
- b. How have you received PD (coaches, external support)
- c. How well have your professional development needs been met during your time here? Please elaborate
- d. [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

25. How do you collaborate with other teachers or support staff?

- a. Do these collaborations extend to other schools (e.g., the elementary and middle school)? Please describe.
- b. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?
- c. Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district?
- d. What is the focus of this collaboration?
- e. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?
- f. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?
- g. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

26. How would you characterize the relationship between families and staff in this school?

- a. Please describe any processes or procedures you have used to engage parents/caregivers.
- b. What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?

27. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.

- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
- b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
- c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
- d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
- f. What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.

<CONCLUSION>

28. What is on your horizon here? or Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to how you approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you
END

CLASSROOM TEACHER FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

BOLD – required question

* Priority

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. What attracted you to this school?
 - b. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.
3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years if at all?**
 - a. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?
 - b. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
 - c. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.

<POLICY CONTEXT >

4. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)**
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. **What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?**
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
5. **Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**
 - a. **How have you tackled how technology is used in and out of the classroom in this building? (probe: cell phone policies, etc.)**

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

6. **How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)**
 - a. **Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)**
 - i. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
7. **How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching?**
 - i. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's social-emotional learning?**
 - ii. What resources have you had available to support children's social-emotional learning? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
8. **Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.**
 - a. **Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)**
 - i. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's mental health?**
 - ii. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

9. **Describe any efforts you have been a part of to develop and revise the curriculum during your time here.**
 - a. What has prompted this work?

- b. Who is involved in the development and revision of the curriculum?
- c. How are vertical teams involved, if at all?
 - i. Are there any ways your district attempts to coordinate instruction across schools?

10. What, if any, PreK programs does your district sponsor?

- a. How if at all do the PreK programs' curriculum align to the school's curriculum?

11. How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has it changed, if at all, over time? <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA (reading AND writing), other specials>

12. What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, over time?

13. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school?

- a. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you have been provided in the past year.

14. Are there any instructional strategies that are mandated or strongly encouraged here?

- a. If so, what are they? <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>

15. How have these strategies changed over time?

- a. What types of tools or rubrics are offered to guide you in the use of these strategies?
- b. Who was involved in deciding which strategies would be used?
- c. How were these decided upon?
- d. Are you able to vary how you use these strategies? Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?

16. Please describe any technologies, materials, etc. you use to meet your students' learning needs.

- a. How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years in your school?
- b. How have you and your colleagues approached AI use here?
 - i. To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?
 - ii. What guidance have you been offered about AI use and from whom?
- c. What kinds of technologies or materials do you find particularly useful?
- d. How have you adapted technologies and materials to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?

17. How has the changing use of technology (in society and the world) impacted your teaching?

- a. What challenges or barriers have you faced in adapting to these changes (i.e., AI, technological literacy)
- b. How have the changing use of technologies influenced your students' engagement or other skills (i.e., literacy)?

- c. Who or what has supported you in adapting to these changes?

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

18. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?

19. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>

- a. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- b. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- c. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- d. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- e. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- f. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**

20. Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.

- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?

21. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?

- a. **In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**

22. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g., AIS, MTSS).

- a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**
 - i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.
 - ii. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.
- b. How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how, if at all, has this changed in recent years?
- c. How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?
- d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?

23. *Please describe any school-wide interventions or positive behavior programs.

- a. **<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>**
- b. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
- c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
- d. **What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?**
- e. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

24. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?

- a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting students from different cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic backgrounds.
- b. How have you received PD (coaches, external support)
- c. How well have your professional development needs been met during your time here? Please elaborate
 - i. [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

25. How do you collaborate with other teachers or support staff?

- a. Do these collaborations extend to other schools (e.g., the elementary and middle school)? Please describe.
- b. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?
- c. Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district? If so, who is involved?
- d. What is the focus of this collaboration?
- e. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?
- f. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?
- g. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

26. How would you characterize the relationship between families and staff in this school?

- a. Please describe any processes or procedures you have used to engage parents/caregivers.
- b. What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?

27. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.

- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
- b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
- c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
- d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?

- f. **What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<CONCLUSION>

28. What is on your horizon here? or

- a. Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to how you approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END

SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULARS / SPECIALS FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

* Priority

BOLD – required question

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this school?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your students what would you say?**
 - a. **Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.**
3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years if at all?**
4. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?**
 - a. **What are some of the ways you address these challenges?**

5. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.

<POLICY CONTEXT >

6. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)**
- a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. **What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?**
 - i. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**
7. **Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**
- a. **How have you tackled how technology is used in and out of the classroom in this building? (probe: cell phone policies, etc.)**

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING>

8. **How would you describe student behaviors you have witnessed in your school in the past few years?** (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
- a. **Have they changed in any way if so, how?** (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - i. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
9. **How have you incorporated social-emotional learning in your teaching?**
- a. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's social-emotional learning?**
 - b. What resources have you had available to support children's social-emotional learning? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
10. **Please describe the condition of your students' mental health.**
- a. **Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way - if so, how?** (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - i. **Please describe any specific practices, materials, or activities you use to support children's mental health?**
 - ii. What resources have you had available to address children's mental health challenges? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

11. **Describe any efforts you have been a part of to develop and revise the curriculum during your time here.**

- a. What has prompted this work?
- b. Who is involved in the development and revision of the curriculum?
- c. How are vertical teams involved, if at all?
 - i. Are there any ways your district attempts to coordinate instruction across schools?

12. Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?

- a. What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?
- b. What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?

13. How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has it changed, if at all, over time?

- a. What skills, mindsets, and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, over time?
- b. Please describe any instructional practices that are adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.

14. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school?

- a. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year.
- b. What types of support are you offered in providing such high-quality teaching?
 - i. Who provides that support?

15. Are there any instructional strategies that are mandated or strongly encouraged here?

- a. If so, what are they? <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- b. How have these strategies changed over time?
- c. What types of tools or rubrics are offered to guide you in the use of these strategies?
- d. Who was involved in deciding which strategies would be used?
- e. How were these decided upon?
- f. Are you able to vary how you use these strategies? Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?

16. Please describe any technologies, materials, etc. you use to meet your students' needs.

- a. How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years in your school?
- b. How have you and your colleagues approached AI use here?
 - i. To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?
 - ii. What guidance have you been offered about AI use and from whom?
- c. What kinds of technologies or materials do you find particularly useful?

- d. How have you adapted technologies and materials to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?

17. How has the changing use of technology (in society and the world) impacted your teaching?

- a. What challenges or barriers have you faced in adapting to these changes (i.e., AI, technological literacy)
- b. How have the changing use of technologies influenced your students' engagement or other skills (i.e., literacy)?
- c. Who or what has supported you in adapting to these changes?

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

18. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?

- a. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting students from different cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic backgrounds.
- b. How have you received PD (coaches, external support)
- c. How well have your professional development needs been met during your time here? Please elaborate
 - i. [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

19. How do you collaborate with other teachers or support staff?

- a. Do these collaborations extend to other schools (e.g., the elementary and middle school)? Please describe.
- b. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?
- c. Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district? If so, who is involved?
- d. What is the focus of this collaboration?
- e. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?
- f. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?
- g. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

20. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' learning?

- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
- b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?

- g. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**
- 21. **Please describe how students who show evidence of encountering difficulties in your classes are identified, supported, and monitored.**
 - a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?
- 22. **Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level in your subject area?**
 - a. **In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- 23. **How would you characterize the relationship between families and staff in this school?**
 - a. **Please describe any processes or procedures you have used to engage parents/caregivers.**
 - b. What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?
- 24. ***Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.**
 - a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
 - c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
 - d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
 - e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
 - f. **What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<CONCLUSION>

- 25. **What is on your horizon here? or**
 - a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to how you approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?**

Thank you.

END

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

District Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

Notes: * Priority; **BOLD – required question**

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this district.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this district?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<DISTRICT CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another district asked you to describe this district and particularly what is prioritized here for elementary level students what would you say?**
 - a. Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How would you describe your leadership style?**
4. ***How do you define success for elementary level students?**
 - a. **How has your definition of success changed if at all in recent years?**
 - b. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this district?**

- i. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
 - c. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your district has achieved success.
- 5. What are the goals for elementary level students in this district?
 - a. Please describe who is involved with establishing these goals and how that is done. (probe: strategic planning)
 - i. How have district goal setting processes changed in recent years if at all?
 - ii. How have the district's goals changed in recent years if at all?
 - iii. How do you evaluate how well you and others are meeting district goals?
 - 1. (Probe – please provide examples of goals and what has been done to achieve them in recent years, lessons learned?)
 - b. Please describe any connections you draw or try to draw between district and <school name> goals.
 - i. How did you determine what to prioritize for <school name>?

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 6. *Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or coming from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom for elementary level students in this district. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
- 7. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

- 8. How would you describe elementary level student behaviors in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 9. *What social-emotional learning needs are you noticing among your elementary level students?
 - a. How have students' social-emotional learning needs changed if at all in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>

- b. What efforts are made to develop students' social-emotional skills at the elementary level in this district?
 - c. Please describe any supports you have provided to support students' social-emotional learning.
- 10. *Please describe the condition of your elementary level students' mental health.**
- a. **Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way in recent years if so, how?** (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - b. What resources have you made available to address children's mental health challenges?
 - i. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
 - ii. **<if not already mentioned> Please describe any district-wide initiatives focused on mental health and social-emotional wellbeing for marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

- 11. *What qualities do you look for when hiring district and elementary level school leaders?**
- a. **How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in district leaders and elementary level school principals changed in recent years if at all?**
 - b. How do you recruit elementary level leaders in this district?
 - c. **How would you characterize your district leader and elementary level principal candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?**
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in those going into leadership roles in <school>? (Probe: How well are candidates prepared?)
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice elementary level principals are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
- 12. *What qualities do you look for in teachers and staff at this <school name>?**
- a. **How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in elementary level teachers and staff changed in recent years if at all?**
 - b. How do you recruit elementary level teachers and staff in this district?
 - c. **How would you characterize your elementary level teacher and staff candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?**
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in teachers and staff in <school>?)
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice elementary level teachers and staff are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
- 13. Who provides mental health and basic needs supports (clothing, food, transportation) for elementary level students and families here?**

- a. **What challenges if any, do you have of providing sufficient mental health or other basic needs supports to your students and families? How do you tackle those challenges?**
- 14. ***What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you offered to your elementary level staff over the past few years?**
 - a. **Please explain how the focus of professional learning was determined.**
 - b. Please describe any professional learning opportunities that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
- 15. **What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
 - a. Please describe any professional learning that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
 - b. **How have you received professional learning (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)**
 - c. To what extent are your own needs for professional learning being met?
 - 1. If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

- 16. ***Describe any district-wide efforts to engage elementary level parents/caregivers.**
 - a. **How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers?**
 - b. Who is involved in engaging parents and caregivers?
 - c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your parents/caregivers in recent years.
- 17. ***Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner to support elementary level students and parents/caregivers.**
 - a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
 - c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
 - d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
 - e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
 - f. **What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

- 18. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess elementary level students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?**
- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
 - b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
 - d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
 - e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
 - f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
 - g. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**
- 19. *Please describe how you communicate district and school outcomes to your community and Board.**
- a. **Who is involved in these communications?**
 - b. **What if anything has changed in recent years regarding how you communicate outcomes?**

<CONCLUSION>

- 20. *What is on your horizon here? or**
- a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> district that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet elementary student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

DISTRICT ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OR DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

District Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

Note:* priority; **BOLD – required question**

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this district.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this district?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<DISTRICT CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another district asked you to describe this district and particularly what is prioritized here to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your elementary students what would you say?**
 - a. Please share some of the ways we might see these priorities in practice here.

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How do you define success for elementary level students?**
 - a. **How has your definition of success changed if at all in recent years?**
 - b. **What challenges do you face in achieving success in this district?**

- i. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
- 4. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your district has achieved success.
- 5. What are the goals for elementary students in this district?
 - a. Please describe who is involved with establishing these goals and how that is done. (probe: strategic planning)
 - i. How have district goal setting processes changed in recent years if at all?
 - ii. How have the district's goals changed in recent years if at all?
 - iii. How do you evaluate how well you and others are meeting district goals?
 - 1. (Probe – please provide examples of goals and what has been done to achieve them in recent years, lessons learned?)
 - b. Please describe any connections you draw or try to make between district and <school name> goals.
 - i. How did you determine what to prioritize for <school name>?

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 6. *Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in and out of the classroom for elementary level students in this district. (probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies; Science of Reading)
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
- 7. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

- 8. How would you describe elementary level student behaviors in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 9. What social-emotional learning needs are you noticing among your elementary level students?
 - a. How have students' social-emotional learning needs changed if at all in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>
 - b. What efforts are made to develop students' social-emotional skills at the elementary level in this district?

- c. Please describe any supports you have provided to support students' social-emotional learning.
- 10. Please describe the condition of your elementary level students' mental health.
 - a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way in recent years if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
 - b. What resources have you made available to address children's mental health challenges?
 - i. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
 - ii. <if not already mentioned> Please describe any district-wide initiatives focused on mental health and social-emotional wellbeing for marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<ACADEMIC READINESS AND PERFORMANCE>

- 11. *How would you describe high-quality teaching for elementary level students and how has it changed, if at all, in recent years?
 - a. (probe -ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, other specials)
 - b. What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, in recent years?
 - c. What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used and how feedback is offered to teachers. .
 - d. Please describe any ways instruction has been adapted for struggling students
- 12. *What, if any, PreK programs do your district sponsor?
 - a. How, if at all, do the PreK programs' curriculum align to the school's curriculum?
 - b. How would you assess the quality of PreK programs in your district?
- 13. *Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level students.
 - a. Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices? How were these decided upon?
 - b. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?) and what has it looked like in recent years?
 - i. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?
- 14. Please describe any instructional technologies that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level students.
 - a. Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies? How were these decided upon?
 - b. How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years?
 - i. How have you approached generative AI here?

- ii. To what have you applied generative AI if at all?
- c. How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?)
 - i. Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in using technologies in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

- 15. *What qualities do you look for when hiring district and elementary level school leaders?**
- a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in district leaders and elementary level school principals changed in recent years if at all?
 - b. How do you recruit elementary level leaders in this district?
 - c. How would you characterize your district leader and elementary level principal candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in those going into leadership roles in <school>? (Probe: How well are candidates prepared?)
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice elementary level principals are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
- 16. *What qualities do you look for in teachers and staff at this <school name>?**
- a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in elementary level teachers and staff changed in recent years if at all?
 - b. How do you recruit elementary level teachers and staff in this district?
 - c. How would you characterize your elementary level teacher and staff candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in teachers and staff in <school>?)
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice elementary level teachers and staff are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
- 17. Who provides mental health and basic needs supports (clothing, food, transportation) for elementary level students and families here?**
- a. What challenges if any, do you have of providing sufficient mental health or other basic needs supports to your students and families? How do you tackle those challenges?
- 18. What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you offered to your elementary level staff over the past few years?**
- a. Please explain how the focus of professional learning was determined.
 - b. Please describe any professional learning opportunities that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families

19. What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?

- a. Please describe any professional learning that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
- b. How have you received professional learning (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)**
- c. To what extent are your own needs for professional learning being met?
 - i. If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

20. *Describe any district-wide efforts to engage elementary level parents/caregivers.

- a. **How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers?**
- b. Who is involved in engaging parents and caregivers?
- c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your parents/caregivers in recent years.

21. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner to support elementary level students and parents/caregivers.

- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
- b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
- c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
- d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
- f. What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

22. *What procedures and strategies do you use to assess elementary level students' academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing?

- a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
- b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
- c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- g. Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**

23. Please describe how elementary level students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.

- a. What kinds of data do you use?
 - i. How are data disseminated?

24. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable elementary level students prepare for the next level?

- a. In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?

25. *Please describe any school-wide interventions or positive behavior programs used at the elementary level.

- a. <check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>
- b. How long has this program been in place? How has it changed in recent years if at all?
- c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
- d. What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?
- e. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?

<CONCLUSION>

26. *What is on your horizon here? or

- a. Are there any other special features of your <name of> district that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet elementary student and family needs?

Thank you.

END

DISTRICT DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

District Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

Note: *Priority, **BOLD – required question**

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this district.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this district?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<DISTRICT CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. **Please describe the special education population in <name of school> and how it has changed in recent years, if at all.**
 - a. **<Probe: numbers/percentages of students with IEPs or 504 plans; nature of disabilities – physical, behavioral, and mental health or SEL learning challenges etc.>**

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How do you define success for elementary level special education students?**
 - a. **How has your definition of success changed if at all in recent years?**

- b. What challenges do you face in achieving success for elementary level special education students in this district?
 - i. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
 - c. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your district has achieved success.
- 4. What are the goals for elementary level special education students in this district, and how have these changed in recent years if at all?
 - a. How are goals created?
 - b. Who is involved in the creation of goals?
 - c. Are <name of school> goals related to district goals? Explain
- 5. Please describe your elementary level special education program and the ways it has changed, if at all in recent years.
 - a. Please describe any special programs/services for transitioning special education students entering secondary school.

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 6. Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on elementary level special education programming, processes, or practices. probe Portrait of a Graduate; Cell phone policies)
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
 - c. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

- 7. How would you describe elementary level special education student behaviors in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 8. What social-emotional learning needs are you noticing among your special education elementary level students?
 - a. How have students' social-emotional learning needs changed, if at all, in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>
 - b. What efforts are made to develop students' social-emotional skills at the elementary level in this district?
 - c. Please describe any supports you have provided to support students' social-emotional learning.

- 9. Please describe the condition of your elementary level special education students' mental health.**
- a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way in recent years if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)**
 - b. What resources have you made available to address children's mental health challenges?**
 - i. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)**
 - ii. <if not already mentioned> Please describe any district-wide initiatives focused on mental health and social-emotional wellbeing for marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.**

<ACADEMIC READINESS AND PERFORMANCE>

- 10. How would you describe high-quality teaching for elementary level special education students and how has it changed, if at all, in recent years?**
- a. (probe -ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, other specials)**
 - b. What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, in recent years?**
 - c. What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used and how feedback is offered to teachers.**
- 11. Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level special education students.**
- a. Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices? How were these decided upon?**
 - b. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?) and what has it looked like in recent years?**
 - i. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?**
- 12. Please describe any instructional technologies that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level special education students.**
- a. Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies? How were these decided upon?**
 - b. How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years?**
 - i. How have you approached generative AI here?**
 - ii. To what have you applied generative AI if at all?**
 - c. How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?)**
 - i. Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in using technologies in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?**

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

- 13. What qualities do you look for when hiring elementary level special education teachers?**
 - a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in special education teachers and staff changed in recent years if at all?
 - b. How do you recruit special education teachers and staff in this district?
 - c. How would you characterize your special education teacher and staff candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in special education teachers and staff in <school>?)
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice special education teachers and staff are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
- 14. Who provides mental health and basic needs supports for elementary level special education students and families here?**
 - a. What challenges, if any, do you have of providing sufficient mental health or other basic needs supports to your special education students and families? How do you tackle those challenges?
- 15. *What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you offered to your elementary level special education staff over the past few years?**
 - a. Please explain how the focus of professional learning was determined.
 - b. Please describe any professional learning opportunities that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
- 16. What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
 - a. Please describe any professional learning that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
 - b. How have you received professional learning (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)
 - c. To what extent are your own needs for professional learning being met?
 - i. If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

- 17. *Describe any district-wide efforts to engage elementary level special education student parents/caregivers.**
 - a. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and special education student parents/caregivers?
 - b. Who is involved in engaging special education students' parents and caregivers?
 - c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your parents/caregivers in recent years.

- 18. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.**
- How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?**
 - Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?**
 - What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?**
 - What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?**
 - How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?**
 - What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.**

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

- 19. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess elementary level special education students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?**
- How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
 - Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
 - How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
 - How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
 - How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
 - Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**
- 20. How would you assess your rates of special education student chronic absenteeism in the district?**
- 21. What efforts do you or others make to keep special education students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable special education students coming to school?**
- 22. Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed**
- How did the initiative come about?
 - How is it working?
- 23. How would you assess the state of special education student engagement in this district?**
- What efforts do you or others make to keep special education students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable special education students engaged?**
 - Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed
 - How did the initiative come about?
 - How is it working?
- 24. For special education students for whom your district is responsible, but who are not educated in your high school, what alternative pathways or outside supports to achieving a high school diploma do students have (e.g., alternative school, prevention programs)?**

- a. For these same students, who monitors their performance?

<CONCLUSION>

25. What is on your horizon here? or

- a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> district that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet elementary student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF ENL/BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

District Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

Note: * priority; **BOLD – required question**

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this district.**
 - a. What attracted you to this district?
 - b. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?

<DISTRICT CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. Please describe the ENL population in <name of school> and how it has changed in recent years, if at all.
3. Please describe challenges the ENL population and their caregivers face in your district.

<LEADERSHIP >

4. ***How do you define success for elementary level ENL students?**
 - a. How has your definition of success changed if at all in recent years?
 - b. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this district?

- i. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
- c. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your district has achieved success.
- 5. What are the goals for elementary level ENL students in this district, and how have these changed in recent years if at all?
 - a. How are goals created?
 - b. Who is involved in the creation of goals?
 - c. Are <school> goals related to district goals? Explain
- 6. Please describe your elementary level ENL program and the ways it has changed in your time here if at all.
 - a. Please describe any special programs/services for ENL students entering secondary school.

<POLICY CONTEXT >

- 7. Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on ENL programming, processes, or practices. (Probe: Portrait of a Graduate; Cell Phone policies)
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
 - c. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<BEHAVIOR, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING>

- 8. How would you describe elementary level ENL student behaviors in the past few years? (Probes: ability to attend (engagement), outburst, etc.)
 - a. Have they changed in any way if so, how? (Probe: types of behaviors, frequency, and severity)
 - b. What resources have you had available to address children's behaviors? (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
- 9. What social-emotional learning needs are you noticing among your elementary level ENL students?
 - a. How have students' social-emotional learning needs changed if at all in recent years? <if affirmative: what do you attribute this change to?>
 - b. What efforts are made to develop students' social-emotional skills at the elementary level in this district?
 - c. Please describe any supports you have provided to support students' social-emotional learning.
- 10. Please describe the condition of your elementary level ENL students' mental health.

- a. Have students' mental health challenges changed in any way in recent years if so, how? (Probe: types of mental health challenges and severity)
- b. What resources have you made available to address children's mental health challenges?
 - i. (Probe: how adequate have these resources been?)
 - ii. <if not already mentioned> Please describe any district-wide initiatives focused on mental health and social-emotional wellbeing for marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<ACADEMIC READINESS AND PERFORMANCE>

11. How would you describe high-quality teaching for elementary level ENL students and how has it changed, if at all, in recent years?

- a. (probe -ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, other specials)
- b. **What skills (e.g., oral/writing), mindsets (e.g., persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, in recent years?**
- c. What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used and how feedback is offered to teachers.

12. Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level ENL students.

- a. Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices? How were these decided upon?
- b. **How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?) and what has it looked like in recent years?**
 - i. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?

13. Please describe any instructional technologies that are mandated or strongly encouraged for elementary level ENL students.

- a. Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies? How were these decided upon?
- b. **How has the use of these technologies changed in recent years?**
 - i. How have you approached generative AI here?
 - ii. To what have you applied generative AI if at all?
- c. **How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this district? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?)**
 - i. Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in using technologies in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

14. What qualities do you look for when hiring elementary level ENL teachers?
 - a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in ENL teachers and staff changed in recent years if at all?
 - b. How do you recruit ENL teachers and staff in this district?
 - c. How would you characterize your ENL teacher and staff candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?
 - d. Please describe any specific qualities you look for in ENL teachers and staff in <school>?
 - e. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice ENL teachers and staff are supported and retained?
 - i. (probe: If mentoring is mentioned – please describe)
15. Who provides mental health and basic needs supports for elementary level ENL students and families here?
 - a. What challenges if any, do you have of providing sufficient mental health or other basic needs supports to your ENL students and families? How do you tackle those challenges?
16. *What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you offered to your elementary level ENL staff over the past few years?
 - a. Please explain how the focus of professional learning was determined.
 - b. Please describe any professional learning opportunities that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
17. What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?
 - a. Please describe any professional learning that focused on supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth and families
 - b. How have you received professional learning (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)
 - c. To what extent are your own needs for professional learning being met?
 - i. If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

18. *Describe any district-wide efforts to engage elementary level ENL student parents/caregivers.
 - a. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and ENL student parents/caregivers?
 - b. Who is involved in engaging ENL student parents and caregivers?
 - c. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your parents/caregivers in recent years.
19. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.
 - a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?

- c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
- d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
- e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
- f. What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.

<PROGRESS MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTIONS>

20. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess elementary level ENL students' academic progress and social-emotional wellbeing?

- a. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all? (probe: In light of joining the WIDA Consortium and last year of NYSITELL exam – what has changed if anything in what and how you assess?)
- b. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
- c. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
- d. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
- e. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
- f. **Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.**

21. How would you assess your rates of ENL student chronic absenteeism in the district?

22. What efforts do you or others make to keep ENL students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable ENL students coming to school?

- a. Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed
 - i. How did the initiative come about?
 - ii. How is it working?

23. How would you assess the state of ENL student engagement in this district?

- a. **What efforts do you or others make to keep ENL students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable ENL students engaged?**
- b. Please describe any student attendance initiatives you have employed
 - i. How did the initiative come about?
 - ii. How is it working?

<CONCLUSION>

24. What is on your horizon here? or

- a. **Are there any other special features of your <name of> district that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet ENL elementary student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

DISTRICT DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES; ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RESOURCES, OPERATIONS

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

BOLD – required question

NO COLOR – for all

Pupil services*

Assessment**

Human resources***

Operations****

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

<INTRODUCTION>

1. ***Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.**
 - a. **What attracted you to this school?**
 - b. **What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities here?**

<SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly what is prioritized to support academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing among your elementary students what would you say??**
 - a. Please share some of the ways we might see these values or priorities in practice here.

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How do you define success and how has this definition changed in recent years if at all?**
 - a. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this district?
 - i. What are some of the ways you address these challenges?
 - b. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success.
4. **What are your current goals?**
 - a. Please describe how these goals were established?
 - i. Who was involved?
 - b. Please share some of the ways you have attempted to achieve these goals.
 - i. What are your remaining challenges in achieving your goals? How are you tackling those challenges?

<POLICY CONTEXT >

5. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years (either imposed by the State or emanating from your own district) that has had an impact on what is prioritized in this district. (Probe: Portrait of a Graduate; Cell Phone policies)**
 - a. Who was involved with your approach to this reform or change?
 - b. What have been the major challenges to effective implementation of this reform or change?
 - i. How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?
 - c. Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to supporting marginalized or vulnerable youth in your community.

<EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING>

6. What qualities do you look for in district employees, school leaders, teachers and support staff at this school?
 - a. How, if at all, have the qualities you look for changed in response to student and family needs?
7. How would you characterize your candidate pool and how has it changed in recent years, if at all?
8. What efforts do you make to retain good staff?
 - a. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice staff are supported?
 - i. If mentoring is mentioned – please describe.

9. What are the top priorities for your district in terms of staff recruitment and retention?
 - a. Please describe who establishes these priorities and how that is done?
10. What qualities do you look for in principals in your school district?
 - a. How would you characterize your candidate pool? <probe diversity>
 - b. What efforts do you make to retain good principals?
 - c. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice principals are supported?
 - i. If mentoring is mentioned – please describe

< ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

11. What kinds of collaborations do you have with other directors?
 - a. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?
 - b. What is the focus of this collaboration?
 - c. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?
 - d. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?
 - e. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.
12. *What kinds of professional learning opportunities have you received and from whom over the past few years?
 - a. How have you received PD (coaches - external, in-district trainer, others)
 - b. To what extent are your own needs for PD being met?
 1. If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<DATA COLLECTION AND USE>

13. What procedures and strategies do you use to assess students' academic learning and social-emotional wellbeing?
 - a. <If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>
 - b. How have these procedures and strategies changed in recent years if at all?
 - c. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?
 - d. How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?
 - e. How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?
 - f. How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?
 - g. Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.
14. **** Please describe your teacher evaluation system?
 - a. How was it designed?
 - b. What are the pros/cons of this system?
 - c. What has helped or hindered changes to your teacher evaluation system?

< INTERVENTIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS>

15. Please tell me about any services that go beyond the school day that you are involved in supporting.

- a. **Could you describe in what ways these services address the needs of culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students in particular?**
- b. **How have these services changed over time?**

16. What efforts do you or others make to keep students, particularly marginalized and vulnerable students in school and engaged?

- a. How would you assess the state of student engagement in this school?
- b. How has your approach to student engagement changed, if at all, over time?
- c. Please describe any special arrangements (e.g., class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?

17. Please describe in what ways the efforts targeted to engage culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students differ, if at all, from those for all students?

18. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to elementary level students (e.g., AIS, MTSS).

- a. **How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed in recent years?**
 - i. What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.
 - ii. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.
- b. How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how, if at all, has this changed in recent years?
- c. How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?
- d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?

19. Please describe how elementary level students who show evidence of encountering difficulties academically or social-emotionally are identified, supported, and monitored.

- a. What kinds of data do you use?
- b. How are data disseminated?

20. Please describe any programs or services that help marginalized and vulnerable students prepare for the next level?

- a. **In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students, if at all?**

<FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS>

21. *Describe efforts you make to engage elementary students' parents/caregivers.

- a. **Who is involved in this work?**

- b. How did it come about?
 - c. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?
 - d. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between school employees and parents/caregivers?
 - e. Please provide an example of ways you have adapted how you engage your students' parents/caregivers in recent years.
- 22. *Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.**
- a. How did your collaborations/partnerships come about?
 - b. Who is involved in sustaining this collaboration or partnership?
 - c. What kinds of services do you collaborate or partner on?
 - d. What outcomes do you seek from these collaborations or partnerships?
 - e. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations or partnerships?
 - f. What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Please provide an example.

<RESOURCE CONTEXT/OPERATIONS >

- 23. Describe how resource allocations for your operations are made in this district (probe: BOE; community engagement)**
- a. What major resource allocations for your operations have been made recently in this district and what challenges, if any, did you encounter?
 - i. How were those challenges tackled and by whom?

<CONCLUSION>

- 24. Are there any other special features of your <name of> district that you would like to share related to what you prioritize and do to meet elementary student and family needs?**

Thank you.

END

PARENT / CAREGIVER / FAMILY MEMBER

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm a researcher with NYKids. I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to help us with our study. I am going to ask you a series of questions and listen to your answers. This interview should take 30-60 minutes of your time.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few things about how the interview will be conducted.

- First, we would like to tape record our discussion to make sure that we have accurately captured the information you are providing, but if you prefer that we not tape record that's OK too. Is it OK with you to tape record?
- If at any time, you would like me to stop the recorder, please let me know. If you are ever reluctant to continue to participate in the interview, let me know that too. We will stop at any time you wish.
- Finally, in order to participate in this study, I need to make sure that you have signed a consent form. (The School liaison may have provided; if not, do this now.)

Interviewer:

Note:

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<INTRODUCTION>

1. First off, could you please tell me your name and the grade levels of your children?
2. If you were to describe this school to a new parent, what would you say?
 - a. What would you say the teachers and the principal expect of a student in this school – (if needed follow up prompt - for example in terms of academics, behavior, involvement in school activities?)
 - b. How are those expectations communicated? (if needed – in communications to parents, in events, etc.?)
 - c. How would you describe your relationship with school staff and school leaders?
 - d. Overall, how would you assess parent and caregiver engagement with this school?
 - i. What do you attribute that assessment to?

3. How have policies and procedures in this school changed over time if at all?
 <probe: attendance, participation in activities>
 - a. How have these changes impacted your child?
 - b. How have these changes impacted you?

<COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT>

4. Can you please tell me a little bit about things you are involved in at this school
 <probe: sports, clubs, band, events, activities, etc.>
 - a. What kinds of things motivated you to get involved?
 - b. What do you get out of your involvement in these activities?
5. What does this school offer for learning opportunities and resources that are important to you?
6. Who are the people you see as “in charge” of this school?
 - a. What kinds of things do they do?
 - b. What opportunities, if any, are parents offered for engaging in decision making processes?
 - c. Please describe a time when you “took charge” of something at this school or in some way did something that you thought was a contribution to the school.
7. Who helps you with immediate needs and problems, (could be your child’s academics or other things)?
 - a. Please describe your experiences with that person/or people

<INTERVENTIONS. RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

8. What efforts do school staff make to support students’ mental or physical health and meet their social- emotional learning needs?
 - a. How do school staff communicate these efforts to you?
 - b. What opportunities, if any, does your child’s school offer to share strategies for supporting your child’s mental or physical health and meeting their social-emotional learning needs at home?
9. Sometimes students have to deal with challenges that are school-related, while others involve friends, family members, and other adults. Can you provide an example of school-related challenges your child has experienced?
 - a. What was challenging about that experience?
 - b. Who helped your child deal with those challenges?
 - c. How has this experience impacted your child in school?
 - d. How has this experience impacted your child in other parts of her or his life?
10. Can you provide an example of challenges your child has experienced outside of school – that involved friends, family members, others?
 - a. What was challenging about that experience?
 - b. Who helped your child deal with those challenges?

- c. How has this experience impacted your child in school?
- d. How has this experience impacted your child in other parts of her or his life?

11. What classes have been particularly challenging for your child?

- a. What was challenging about them?
- b. Who helped your child deal with those challenges?

<CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND TECHNOLOGY>

12. What are some examples of when your child was offered options or choices either in what kinds of things he or she did in class (like hands-on projects versus quizzes), what classes he/she was offered, or how classes were delivered (experiential, distance learning, on a college campus)?

13. Can you provide an example of a new technology that has been introduced to your child in the classroom?

- a. How has this technology impacted your child's learning?
- b. What challenges have you or your child experienced in using this technology?
- c. Who has helped you adjust to new technologies and innovations in your child's instruction?

<CONCLUSION?>

14. What is on your horizon here? or

Are there any other special features of your <name of> school that you would like to share related to how school and district staff approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END