

NYKids' 20th Anniversary Study of Emergent and Persistent Positive Outlier Schools

Methods and Procedures Report



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Abstract

This multiple case study investigated the question: **What accounts for New York state’s persistent and emergent positive outlier schools’ comparatively better outcomes for culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse youth over time?** The sample was purposeful in that it included schools that had persisted as or emerged as positive outliers since NYKids’ earliest study in 2004-05. Several lines of inquiry informed the study, including district and school leadership; educator recruitment and retention, student; parent, caregiver and community engagement; culturally-responsive and technology-enhanced curriculum and instruction; and data generation and utilization systems. The study was designed to discover what supports adaptations and innovations in these schools, including where changes were made, who made changes, and how changes were made to address current and future challenges. Set within the context of New York’s demographic shifts, changes in educational policies, and the challenges posed by significantly disruptive events and even crises (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) this study revealed several patterns among persistent positive outlier schools as well as commonalities and contrasts with emergent positive outlier schools.

New York State Context

Since NYKids’ first study conducted in the 2004-2005 school year, New York state has experienced notable demographic shifts. Over this period, New York’s population grew at a slower average rate than other states increasing from 19.13 million in 2005 to 19.84 million by the end of 2022 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Like many states across the country, New York state experienced a population loss during the COVID-19 pandemic, although many suburban and rural counties’ populations grew during this time because of outmigration from urban centers like New York City (Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics, 2022).

New York states’ population has historically been one of the most socioeconomically diverse in the country. Yet, poverty rates in New York have seen increases in recent years. For example, at the time of NYKids’ first study, the poverty rate was 13.8%, but by 2022 it was estimated to be 14.3% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

Meanwhile, New York State continues to be one of the most ethnically and racially diverse states in the country as 23.1% of New Yorkers identify themselves as Black or of African American decent, 14.5% as Asian, and 29% as Hispanic or Latino. Smaller populations of American Indian and Alaska Native (0.6%) and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.1%) are also part of New York’s diverse cultural fabric (United States Census Bureau, 2023). In addition, 22.3% of New York’s population is comprised of immigrants (Migration Policy Institute, 2022) and the foreign-born population in New York State has almost doubled since 1990, growing from 15.9% in 1990 (Migration Policy Institute, 2022).

New York State’s Student Population

New York’s schools reflect the diverse demographic profile of the state. Of the nearly 2.5 million students enrolled in New York’s K-12 schools, in 2023, 16% identified as Black or African American, 29 % Hispanic or Latino, and 10% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific

Islander. Notably, the numbers of Hispanic or Latino students increased from 19.7% in 2004-2005, while the proportion of students who identified as Black decreased over three percentage points. During this period, the numbers of Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students grew from 7.2%. Although it is likely this population grew even more as this category in 2004-2005 included Indigenous peoples (New York State Education Department [NYSED], 2023a).

In part, as a result of the growing immigrant population in New York state, schools have seen an increase in numbers of students who identify as English Language Learners (ELLs). In 2004-2005 at the time of NYKids' first study, ELLs (then called "Limited English Proficient") comprised 7.2 % of the student population, yet by 2023 one of every ten students identified as an ELL (NYSED, 2023a). More of New York's students are also growing up in poverty. When NYKids began its research, the rate of economic disadvantage (then measured by free/reduced lunch) was 44.1%, while at the time of this study 56% of all students identified as economically disadvantaged.

Regarding education outcomes, New York boasts a relatively high proportion of college-educated individuals with approximately 40% of the population over the age of 25 possessing a bachelor's degree. In contrast, New York ranks in the bottom third of states in high school completion at approximately 88% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Both rates have seen improvement: high school completion rates hovered just below 80% in 2000, and only 27.4% of individuals over 25 had a bachelor's degree during the same year (U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2023).

New York State's Educational Policy Context

New York State, like other states across the nation, implemented several policy reforms and innovations since the early 2000's. For instance, following on the heels of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, (No Child Left Behind, 2001), the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) and Race-to-the-Top (RttT, 2011) required changes in what was to be taught and assessed (via, for example, the implementation of the Common Core State Standards [CCSS]), how teachers would be evaluated (via the Annual Professional Performance Review [APPR]), and how student learning would be monitored (via data-driven instruction [DDI]) (Wilcox et al., 2017) .

In recent years, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has disseminated resources such as the culturally responsive-sustaining education framework (NYSED, n.d.) and continuous improvement guides to inform school and district improvement planning around closing student performance gaps (NYSED, n.d.). In addition, in 2023 the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures proposed "four priority areas" related to 1) multiple pathways leading to one high school diploma, 2) assessment flexibility, 3) understanding of meaningful life-ready credentials, and 4) culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment (NYSED, 2023b). These priorities are associated with broad aims for increasing equity and opportunity for NYS youth to gain the knowledge and skills to be successful in work and life and set a policy backdrop for the current study.

Considering New York's demographic shifts and changes in educational policies, and within the context of significantly disruptive events and even crises (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic), this study was informed by several lines of research literature including: school

culture and climate, school and district leadership, youth social-emotional learning and mental health, instructional innovation including technology-enhanced instruction, educator recruitment and retention, youth, parent, and community member engagement, and data generalization and utilization.

Study Overview

The study was designed to discover what supports adaptations and innovations in persistent and emergent positive outlier schools, including where changes were made, who made changes, and how changes were made to address current and future challenges. As described in more detail in the sample section we define these schools in the following way:

- Persistent positive outlier schools: Those schools that were identified in prior NYKids studies for having achieved statistically significant better student outcomes and continue to do so using the same outcome and demographic variables.
- Emergent positive outlier schools: Those schools that were identified in prior NYKids studies for having achieved “average” or “typical” student outcomes, but that have emerged as positive outliers in the most recent analysis using the same outcome and demographic variables.

The rationale for this study design is, in part, due to NYKids’ twenty-year anniversary. Over its two decade period of research (2004-2024), the team conducted 11 positive outlier studies in all, prompting opportunity to inquire: ***Have some positive outlier schools maintained their positive outlier status over time? Have any typically-performing schools emerged as positive outliers? What accounts for these outcomes?***

With increased interest in what supports adaptation and innovation in the context of demographic changes, external shocks and a concern for what mitigates negative impacts of educator turnover in the post-pandemic era, this study sought to discover new insights on what builds and sustains better performing school systems (Barton & Kahn, 2019; Wilcox & Lawson, 2018).

Informed by social-ecological and performance adaptation theories this study used a multiple case study design to yield rich descriptions of adaptations and innovations in case study schools and identify patterns across these schools with regard to what adaptations and innovations were made, who made them, and how they were made.

Theoretical Foundation

Like prior NYKids studies (e.g., Wilcox et al., 2017; Wilcox & Lawson, 2022), this study is structured to consider the ways processes, practices, and policies in different levels of the educational system (e.g., classrooms, schools, districts) inter-relate and within the contexts of local, regional, state, and national conditions. In social-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2009) levels of systems are delineated with micro-systems as the most proximal contexts where individuals interact (e.g., homes, classrooms), expanding to exo-systems that account for “those societal structures that function largely independently of the individual but nevertheless affect the immediate context within which he or she develops” (e.g., school, community), to macro-systems that include a “level of environmental influence that is most distal to the

developing individual and that affects all other systems” (e.g., nation, society). All of these levels of systems exist within a chrono-system, which accounts for “changes and continuities occurring over time that influence an individual’s development” (APA, n.d). From a social ecological perspective, proximal (most direct) processes, practices, and policies and distal ones are seen as related and affect individual and group outcomes and experiences. From this perspective, the affordances of the context and the ways individuals and groups of individuals interact within their environments over time are of import as we seek to understand outcomes and what contributes to them.

A complementary theoretical lens offered by performance adaptation theory offers insight into how organizations adapt. Performance adaptation theory highlights phenomena that occur during workplace changes including the level of change (individual, team, or unit); the adaptive process mechanisms triggered during change (cognitive, affective/motivational, behavioral), and the qualities of task complexity changes (component, coordinative, or dynamic) (see Figure 1) (Baard et al., 2014). Baard et al. (2014) define performance adaptation as: “the cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavioral modifications made in response to the demands of a new or changing environment or situational demands” (p. 50).

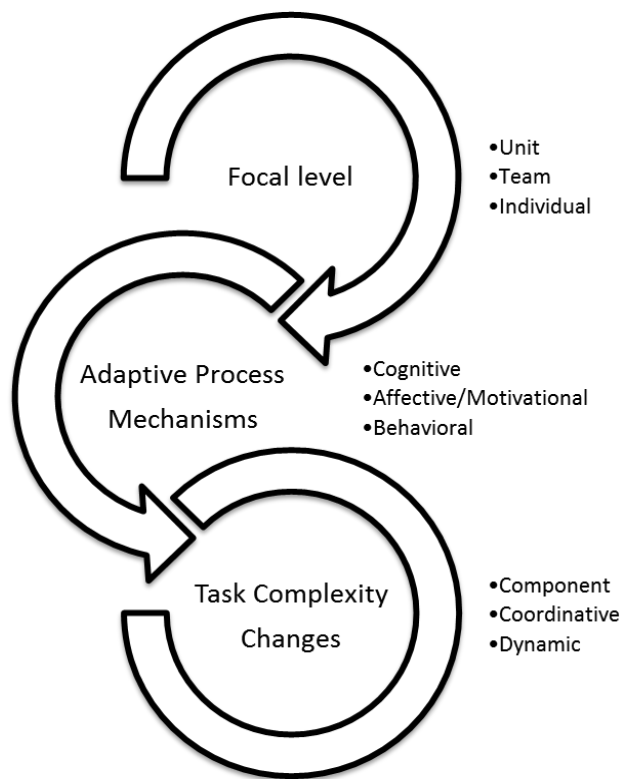


Figure 1. Performance adaptation mechanisms

Drawing on social-ecological and performance adaptation frameworks, this study was designed to investigate several broad questions aimed at better understanding what accounts for persistent and emergent positive outlier schools’ performance over time:

- Where were the changes made?
 - State/regional/local level (changes in partnerships; community resource allocations)
 - District and school level (changes in leadership, vision, goals, and structures for alignment and coherence across schools)
 - Instructional core (changes in teaching and learning and resources used to support curriculum and instruction changes)
 - In and out of school services (including support services and extracurriculars)
 - Other?
- Who made changes?
 - State/regional/community agents
 - District and school leaders
 - Frontline or other staff
 - Other?
- How were changes made?
 - State/regional/local level policy
 - Staffing/hiring district and school leaders
 - Staffing/hiring frontline/other staff
 - Communications and collaborations
 - Policies, routines and procedures
 - Other?

Research Questions

Rooted in the above-described theories and related research literature, this study was structured to address the following overarching research question: **What accounts for New York state’s persistent and emergent positive outlier schools’ comparatively better outcomes for culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse youth?**

Sub-questions included:

- (1) How has the school, district, and community **changed over time**?
 - i. What demographic shifts, if any, are salient to adaptations and innovations in the school and district?
- (2) What is the nature of the **school culture (i.e., norms, values, and beliefs) and climate (i.e., atmosphere)** in these schools?
 - i. What if any adaptations and innovations in school culture and climate have been made?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating school culture and climate?
 - iii. How has school culture and climate been adapted or innovated?
- (3) What is the nature of **curriculum and instruction especially with regard to technology integration and cultural responsiveness**?

- i. What, if any adaptations and innovations have been made to curriculum, instruction, and in-and out-of school services in terms of technology integration and cultural responsiveness?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adaptations and innovations to curriculum, instruction, and in-and out-of school services in terms of technology integration and cultural responsiveness?
 - iii. How have curriculum, instruction, and in-and out-of school services in terms of technology integration and cultural responsiveness been adapted and innovated?
- (4) What is the nature of **district and school leadership and leader practices (e.g., strategic planning, goal setting, leadership for improvement)** in these schools?
- i. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to district and school leadership and leadership practices?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating leadership and leadership practices?
 - iii. How have leadership and leadership practices been adapted or innovated?
- (5) What is the nature of **social-emotional learning** in these schools?
- i. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to social-emotional learning?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating social-emotional learning?
 - iii. How has social-emotional learning been adapted or innovated?
- (6) What is the nature of **parent/caregiver and community partner engagement** in these schools?
- i. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to parent/caregiver and community partner engagement?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating parent/caregiver and community partner engagement?
 - iii. How has parent/caregiver and community partner engagement been adapted or innovated?
- (7) What is the nature of **staffing/hiring and organizational capacity building** in these schools?
- i. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to staffing/hiring and organizational capacity building strategies in these schools?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating staffing/hiring and organizational capacity building strategies?
 - iii. How has staffing/hiring and organizational capacity building strategies been adapted or innovated?
- (8) What is the nature of **interventions/recognitions and special arrangements** (particularly to support ELLs and students with disabilities (SWDs) in these schools?
- i. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to interventions/recognitions in these schools?
 - ii. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating interventions/recognitions?
 - iii. How has interventions/recognitions been adapted or innovated?

- (9) What is the nature of **data generation and utilization systems** in these schools?
- iv. What if any adaptations and innovations have been made to data generation and utilization systems in these schools?
 - v. Who has been responsible for adapting or innovating data generation and utilization systems?
 - vi. How has data generation and utilization systems been adapted or innovated?

Methods

Sample Selection Overview

As introduced above, the sample includes schools that NYKids studied in the past and that maintained or emerged as positive outliers, extending to NYKids' earliest study in the 2004-05 school year.

A series of regression analyses were performed to identify schools that outperform on state assessments or in their graduation rate than what would be expected based on a school's demographics. This "outperforming" is determined by computing the residual from a regression analysis for a subgroup of students. A positive residual indicates that the school performed better than predicted given these variables and a negative residual indicates the school performs worse than would be predicted given these variables. The magnitude of the residual would indicate the degree to which a school over- or under-performed. For each school the residuals are summarized, typically averaged, to obtain a relative comparison of performance that can be compared across all schools. See Appendix A for a complete list of schools identified as part of this study.

The selection processes of several prior studies were used to identify elementary and high schools for the current study. First, two elementary schools were identified based on three years (2019, 2021, and 2022) of ELA and math assessments, as had been done in *What works for diverse and special needs students: Best practices from higher-performing elementary schools* (Wilcox & Angelis, 2011). Specifically, the outcome being measured was students at performance levels 3 and 4 on ELA and math assessments in grades 3-6. Next, we focused on ELLs and identified one positive outlier school that was also studied in *Supporting the achievement of English language learners: Promising practices from odds-beating elementary schools* (Wilcox & Gregory, 2016). Finally, using graduation rates as the measure of performance, high schools were identified based on two years of graduation data, similar to what had been done in two prior studies: *The ABCs of graduating at-risk students on-time: Promising practices from higher-performing high schools* (Wilcox et al., 2013) and *College and Career Readiness: Promising practices from odds-beating secondary schools* (Wilcox et al., 2018). A total of eight schools that were previously studied were identified as performing statistically better than would be expected; five of these were positive outliers in the 2013 or 2018 study and three of these were formerly "typical" schools.

All data used for sample selection are publicly available from New York State Education Department (<https://data.nysed.gov/>) using School Report Card Data, High School Graduation Rate Data, and School Enrollment Data. School enrollment data included information such as percentages and counts of Black or African American students, Hispanic or Latino students,

English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. This information was merged with school-level assessment data from the School Report Cards. One difference with prior analyses was that instead of using percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch as a proxy for economic disadvantage, New York State now provides the percentage of economically disadvantaged students, which expands the definition to add other programs, such as Social Security Insurance, Food Stamps, Foster Care, and Home Energy Assistance Program (<https://data.nysed.gov/files/essa/22-23/glossary.pdf>).

The current analysis used data from 2019, 2021, and 2022. (Note: New York State did not administer assessments in spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.) To preserve confidentiality, the State followed a set of suppression rules (see: <https://data.nysed.gov/files/essa/22-23/glossary.pdf>) when determining what subgroup assessment data to make public. For our purposes, the main result was that for a given school where the number of students in a particular subgroup was less than 5, the performance results for that subgroup and the next smallest subgroup were not reported. For graduation rate data, subgroups with fewer than 10 students were removed from the analysis.

Sample Selection Based on 2010-2011 Elementary School Study

A regression analysis was conducted for each combination of four grade levels (3, 4, 5, and 6), two subjects (Math and ELA), five subgroups (*limited English proficiency, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities*), across three years (2019, 2021, and 2022) for a total of 120 regression analyses. The regression analysis predicted a *performance* index from a set of demographic variables. The performance index was the sum of the percentage of students in performance level 3 and twice the percentage of students in performance level 4 for a particular grade-level assessment. For example, one of the 120 regression analyses would be to regress schools' performance index for 2019 grade 3 math results for limited English proficient students against the schools' demographic data for 2019, which includes: number of students tested, percentages of English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, Hispanic or Latino students, and Black or African American students. The standardized residual for each school in the analysis is saved. In theory, each school in the analysis could have up to 120 individual saved residuals, if they had enough students tested in each subgroup for each test across all three years for there to be reportable data.

Once the individual regressions and their resulting standardized residuals had been computed, these residuals were then averaged across subjects, for a combined residual index. The average residuals across math and then across ELA were computed; these two values were then averaged for a final residual index for each school. These final residual indices were standardized, creating z-scores. For this study, we looked for higher-performing schools, those with z-scores from the current analysis, who were also studied as positive outlier schools from the 2010-2011 study (Wilcox & Angelis, 2011). From this analysis, we considered schools with z-scores greater than 1.0. Of the 3,127 schools for which we were able to compute a z-score, 445 (14.2%) had a z-score greater than 1.0 and 739 (23.6%) had a z-score greater than 0.5. Only two schools that were studied as positive outliers in the 2010-2011 study were considered higher-performing (i.e. positive outliers) in the current analysis with z-scores of 1.78 and 1.25.

Sample Selection Based on 2015-2016 ELLs in Elementary Schools Study

Using the same analyses of standardized residuals based on a series of regressions, the 2015 study examined positive outliers when predicting the performance of ELL students based on the following school demographics: number of students tested, percentages of English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, Hispanic or Latino students, and Black or African American students. To mimic the analyses from 2015, only two years (2021 and 2022) of grade 3-6 math and ELA assessment data were used and only the performance of ELL students was considered resulting in a total of 16 regression analyses.

Of the 1,533 schools with a computable z-score, 235 (15.3%) had a z-score greater than 1.0 and 446 (29.1%) greater than 0.5. Next, we examined the positive outlier schools from the prior study, and one school had a z-score of 0.83, while the other schools had z-scores around 0.

Sample Selection Based on 2012-13 and 2017-18 High-Performing High Schools

Using graduation rate data from 2021 and 2022, which included cohorts who started 9th grade in 2017, 2018, and 2019, we conducted regression analyses regressing schools' graduation rate on percentages of economically disadvantaged students, ELLs, and minority students. (To account for the use of a percentage as the dependent variable, the logit of graduation rate was used.) The analyses were conducted across five groups: all students in the school, ELLs, Black or African American students, Hispanic or Latino students, and economically disadvantaged students, resulting in a total of 30 regression analyses.

Of the 1,187 high schools with a computable z-score, there were 138 (11.6%) with a z-score greater than 1.0 and 306 (25.8%) with a z-score greater than 0.5. There were two positive outliers from 2013 and three from 2018 with z-scores greater than or equal to 0.5 using the current data (with z-scores from 0.78 to 2.06). In addition, two typical schools studied in 2013 and one from 2018 were also identified as positive outliers with the current data (z-scores = 0.41, 0.54 and 0.55, respectively).

Sample Included in This Study

This multiple case study includes seven schools from the 2012-13 and 2017-18 studies. While all previously studied schools that qualified based on our criteria (n=11) as explained above were recruited, only the seven high schools from 2012-13 or 2017-18 agreed to participate in the current study.

For these schools, Z-scores were computed based on graduation rate data controlling for economic disadvantage and demographic variables. The schools included were

- 1) Alfred-Almond Junior-Senior High School (z-score = 0.86),
- 2) Brookfield Central School (z-score = 2.06),
- 3) Crown Point Central School (z-score = 0.85),
- 4) Malverne Senior High School (z-score = 0.55),
- 5) Fillmore Central School (z-score = 0.54),
- 6) LaFayette Junior-Senior High School (z-score = 0.41), and
- 7) Roxbury Central School (z-score = 0.78).

Recruitment and Data Collection

Once persistent and emergent positive outlier schools were identified, a research team member used an IRB-approved recruitment protocol to recruit participants via email and phone. During this initial phase of recruitment researchers engaged both the principal of the school and the district superintendent.

After superintendents and principals provided consent, the principal was asked to distribute by email or in mailboxes a flyer to recruit teachers and other staff to participate in interviews or focus groups. Those teachers, administrators, and support staff who volunteered and fit criteria outlined in the exclusion criteria were invited to participate in an interview or focus group. Parents/caregivers were recruited via a flyer distributed by the school liaison via school mail or email.

During site visits a team of two to three researchers visited the schools to conduct interviews with the principal, teachers, support staff, parents, and district leaders to explore classroom, school and district processes, practices, and policies. Interviews and focus groups lasted from 30 minutes to one hour in length. These interviews and focus groups were typically conducted in private settings (conference room, classroom) on the school or district administration campus and audio recorded with participant consent. In some cases, interviews and focus groups were conducted using videoconferencing technologies as requested by participants. Responses were kept on a password protected laptop computers and the university server. Complete interview and focus group protocols are available in Appendix B.

Data Sources

- 1) interviews and/or focus groups with school and district leaders, parents/caregivers, teachers/teacher leaders (e.g., Chairs), and support staff
- 2) school tours/observations
- 3) documents

Total Data Collected

| | Crown Point | Malverne | Fillmore | Lafayette | Roxbury | Brookfield | Alfred Almond | Total |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------|------------|---------------|-------|
| Interviews | 17 | 3 | 6 | 18 | 17 | 2 | 7 | 70 |
| Focus Groups | 2 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 11 | 43 |
| Documents/photos | 48 | 33 | 47 | 89 | 37 | 10 | 97 | 361 |
| School Tour | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Interpretive Memos | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Participants | 21 | 32 | 29 | 21 | 20 | 18 | 41 | 182 |

Instruments

- 0) Interpretive memo
- 1) School Principal and/or Assistant Principal Interview
- 2) School Department Chairs (ELA, math, sci, ss, fine arts) Focus Group
- 3) School Support Staff Focus Group (School Psychologist, Counselor, Social Worker, Nurse, Parent Liaison)
- 4) School Special Education Teacher Interview or Focus Group
- 5) School Bilingual and English New Language (ENL) Teacher Interview or Focus Group
- 6) School Mainstream Core Content Teacher (ELA, math, sci, ss) Focus Group
- 7) School Building Leadership Team Focus Group
- 8) School Extracurriculars.specials (physical education, fine arts, music)
- 9) District Superintendent Interview
- 10) District Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Interview
- 11) District Director or Coordinator of Special Education or Director of Student/Pupil Services Interview
- 12) District Director or Coordinator of Bilingual/ENL Education
- 13) District Directors (Student Services Interview; Assessment or Data/Assistant Superintendent for Assessment Interview (if not Asst. Super); Human Resources; Operations [i.e., transportation, cafeteria])
- 14) Parent/caregiver Focus Group

Data Analysis

Data, including interpretive memos crafted by the site team, were coded in phases beginning with a priori coding. This coding was done utilizing NVivo 12 Plus qualitative software (Lumivero, 2018; Miles et al., 2020) and major code categories were aligned to the lines of inquiry that informed the study including district and school leadership; educator recruitment and retention, student; parent, caregiver and community engagement; culturally-responsive and technology-enhanced curriculum and instruction; and data generation and utilization systems

To build from theory and generate new theoretical insights, NYKids researchers also coded inductively using a constant-comparison method. From these analyses, researchers crafted individual school case studies which included a description of the school selection criteria, demographics, and context (Yin, 2014). Next, the research team utilized matrices and qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) procedures to address the degree of salience of dimensions of findings across all schools studied (Rihoux & Ragin, 2008).

Multiple methods to attend to credibility threats (Maxwell, 2013) were used including a) peer review/debrief of the data and process (through interpretive memoing and research team periodic and final debriefs), b) data, investigator, theory, methodological (i.e., source) triangulation, c) identifying negative cases (or disconfirming evidence) through the use of such tools as data matrices, d) clarifying bias (i.e., reflexivity) through investigator memoing and debriefing, and e) member checking the accuracy of case study reports with superintendents

and principals. If an inaccuracy was identified in the case report during member checking, the research team made the identified change.

Confidentiality

With the permission of the superintendent and principal, positive outlier schools were identified by name. The principal and district officials were referenced by title. Confidentiality of all other interviewees were carefully maintained through the use of pseudonyms, and no data was collected and shared without written permission. Consent forms were used to obtain each participant's approval.

Honoraria/Substitute Teachers

To help coordinate focus groups and interviews, organize interview space, and make other local arrangements, researchers asked for one individual at each site to serve as a study liaison; the schools received an honorarium of \$400 for this assistance.

Sharing of Findings

Information about "promising practices" in various types of settings is shared in case study reports. Results are featured on the [NYKids website](#) and made available to diverse stakeholder audiences through reports, blogs, conference presentations and papers, and articles.

Project Sponsors

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Appendix A. Positive Outlier Schools

Elementary Schools

Elementary schools were identified by repeating analyses from the 2010-11 elementary school study, using data from 2019, 2021, and 2022. Two positive outlier schools from the 2010-11 study were still identified as positive outliers using the new data:

- *Forest Road Elementary School, Valley Stream 30 Union Free School District* (2011 positive outlier)
- *Lincoln School, Mount Vernon School District* (2011 positive outlier)

Based on ELA 3-6 and Math 3-6 scores from 2019, 2021, and 2022 (following the analyses used in the 2010 Critical Needs study), one former positive outlier has a z-score over 1.5 and another has 1.2.

| Final zscore | School | District | County | Needs Index | Study 2010 |
|--------------|--------------------|---|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.838 | FOREST ROAD SCHOOL | VALLEY STREAM 30 UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT | NASSAU | 5 | High-performer |
| 1.211 | LINCOLN SCHOOL | MOUNT VERNON SCHOOL DISTRICT | WESTCHESTER | 3 | High-performer |

One elementary school from the 2015 ELL elementary school study was considered a positive outlier using the 2023 analyses (not ELL specific):

- *Catskill Elementary School, Catskill Central School District* (2015 positive outlier)

Results for the positive outliers from the 2015 study used 2021 and 2022 data. Catskill Elementary is still considered a positive outlier. However, there are small sample concerns, as were noted in the 2015 study.

| Final zscore | School | District | County | Needs Index | Study 2015 |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|----------------|
| 0.825 | CATSKILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | CATSKILL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | GREENE | 5 | High-performer |

Middle Schools

None of the middle schools identified as positive outliers or typical schools in the 2007-2008 middle school study were identified as positive outliers based on data from 2019, 2021, and 2022.

High Schools

Using graduation rate data from 2021 and 2022, which included cohorts who started 9th grade in 2017, 2018, and 2019, there were several persistent positive outliers (with Z-scores greater than or equal to .5) and emergent positive outliers from either the 2008 or 2013 high school studies outliers (with Z-scores greater than or equal to .4).

The following schools participated in the research study:

- *Brookfield Central School, Brookfield Central School District* (2013 positive outlier)
- *Otselic Valley Central School, Georgetown-South Otselic Central School District* (2013 positive outlier)
- *Alfred-Almond Junior-Senior High School, Alfred-Almond Central School District* (2018 positive outlier)
- *Crown Point Central School, Crown Point Central School District* (2018 positive outlier)
- *Roxbury Central School, Roxbury Central School District* (2013 typical school)
- *Malverne Senior High School, Malverne Union Free School District* (2018 positive outlier)
- *Fillmore Central School, Fillmore Central School District* (2018 typical school)
- *LaFayette Central School, LaFayette Central School District* (2018 typical school)

| Final Z-Score | School | District | County | Study | Need/Resource Capacity |
|---------------|---|--|----------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2.06 | BROOKFIELD CENTRAL SCHOOL | BROOKFIELD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | MADISON | Positive outlier 2013 | High N/RC: Rural District |
| 0.95 | OTSELIC VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL | GEORGETOWN-SOUTH OTSELIC CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | CHENANGO | Positive outlier 2013 | High N/RC: Rural District |
| 0.86 | ALFRED-ALMOND JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | ALFRED-ALMOND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | ALLEGANY | Positive outlier 2018 | Average N/RC District |
| 0.85 | CROWN POINT CENTRAL SCHOOL | CROWN POINT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | ESSEX | Positive outlier 2018 | High N/RC: Rural District |
| 0.78 | ROXBURY CENTRAL SCHOOL | ROXBURY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | DELAWARE | Typical performer 2013 | Average N/RC District |
| 0.55 | MALVERNE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | MALVERNE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT | NASSAU | Positive outlier 2018 | Average N/RC District |
| 0.54 | FILLMORE CENTRAL SCHOOL | FILLMORE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | ALLEGANY | Typical performer 2018 | High N/RC: Rural Districts |
| 0.41 | LA FAYETTE JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | LAFAYETTE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT | ONONDAGA | Typical performer 2013 | Average N/RC District |

Demographics of Participating Schools

| | Crown Point Central School | Brookfield Central School | Alfred-Almond Jr-Sr High School | Fillmore Central School | Malverne Senior High School | Roxbury Central School | Lafayette Jr-Sr. HS | New York State |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Grades Served | K-12 | K-12 | 7-12 | K-12 | 9-12 | K-12 | 7-12 | K-12 |
| Total Enrollment | 301 | 195 | 272 | 589 | 628 | 212 | 323 | 2,422,494 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 57% | 78% | 45% | 61% | 46% | 42% | 43% | 58% |
| Students with Disabilities | 20% | 24% | 15% | 15% | 14% | 18% | 12% | 19% |
| English Language Learners | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 10% |
| Student Ethnic/Racial Distribution | | | | | | | | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 28% | 1% |
| African-American | 0% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 49% | 1% | 1% | 16% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 0% | 0% | 5% | 1% | 28% | 2% | 2% | 29% |
| Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander | 0% | 0% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 0% | 1% | 10% |
| White | 100% | 99% | 88% | 96% | 15% | 92% | 66% | 40% |
| Multiracial | 0% | 1% | 3% | 0% | 1% | 4% | 2% | 3% |
| Other | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | % |

Appendix B. Interview and Focus Group Protocols

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND/OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL * INTERVIEW

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

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?*
 - c. *How have your roles and responsibilities changed in your time here if at all?*
2. ***If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly any changes over time, what would you say?**

In terms of

 - a. *what is valued*
 - b. *the students*
 - c. *their parents/caregivers*
 - d. *the community*
 - e. *staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors*
 - f. *climate in the school*

<LEADERSHIP >

3. ***How do you define success** and how has this definition changed over time, if at all?
 - a. ***What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?***
 - b. ***Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?***

4. How would you describe your leadership style?
 - a. *When you are charged with implementing something new, how do you proceed? (e.g. what kinds of things do you take into consideration?)*
 - b. *How do you get people in this school on board with making changes?*

5. **What are the goals for this school?**
 - a. ***Please describe who establishes these goals and how that is done?(probe: strategic planning)***
 - b. *Are school goals related to district goals? If so, how?*
 - c. *How have the school's goals changed over time?*
 - d. ***How has goal setting, strategic planning, and school improvement processes changed over time if at all?***

6. ***Describe any reform or change in the past few years that has had a positive impact on your students.**
 - a. *Who was involved with this reform or change?*
 - b. *How long has this reform or change been in place?*
 - c. *How do you determine its effectiveness?*
 - d. ***What have been the major challenges to effective implementation?***
 - a. ***How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?***
<if not already mentioned>
 - e. ***Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to students culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.***

<STAFFING/HIRING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

7. ***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 over time?***
 - b. ***How would you characterize your candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?***
 - c. *What efforts do you make to retain good teachers and support staff?*
 - d. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?*
If mentoring is mentioned – please describe

8. ***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 have you received PD (coaches, external support)***
 - c. *To what extent are your own needs for PD being met?*
If mentoring is mentioned - please describe

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

9. **How has the curriculum changed over time if at all?**
- What are the priorities for curriculum?*
 - Who determines these priorities and have they changed over time?*
 - Who is involved in the development and revision process?*
 - How is that done and has it changed over time?*
 - Please describe any ways the curriculum has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students**
 - Please provide any examples of a change in the curriculum in recent years, what prompted it, how was it managed, how is its effectiveness evaluated?**
10. **How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has it changed, if at all, over time?**
<probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- 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?**
 - What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used.*
 - Please describe any ways instruction has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students**
11. **Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged? If so, what are they?**
- Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices? How were these decided upon?*
 - How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?) and has it changed over time?**
 - 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? If so, what are they?**
- Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies? How were these decided upon?*
 - How has the use of these technologies changed over time?**
 - How have you approached AI here?*
 - To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?*
 - How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools, coaching, external supports?)**
 - Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in using instructional technologies in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?**

<INTERVENTIONS. RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

13. **What procedures and strategies are used to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional well-being?**
<If a system for assessment is in place – please describe it>

- j. *How have these procedures and strategies changed over time?*
 - k. *Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?*
 - l. *How are procedures and strategies developed or chosen in this school?*
 - m. *How are these procedures and strategies evaluated?*
 - n. *How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?*
 - o. *Please provide an example of how data have been used to address students' needs and progress.***
- 14. What efforts do you or others make to keep students, particularly culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse 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?*
 - d. *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?***
- 15. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g., AIS).**
- a. *How, if at all, has your approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed over time?***
 - b. *What supplemental academic support services plans are in place for struggling students? Please describe.*
 - c. *What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.*
 - d. *How do you determine when supplemental academic support services are necessary, and how if at all has this changed over time?*
 - e. *How are decisions about academic support services made? At the district or school level?*
 - f. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic support services?*
- 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?*
 - b. *Please describe any programs or services that help culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students prepare for the next level (elementary for secondary; secondary for post-secondary)?***
 - i. *In what ways do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students?*
- 17. *Please describe any school-wide positive behavior programs.**
<check for availability in documents skip to prompts as needed>
- p. *How long has this program been in place?*
 - q. *How do you determine its effectiveness?*
 - r. *What challenges do you face in implementing this program if any?***
 - s. *How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?***

18. ***Describe any efforts you make to engage 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?*
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.**
- t. *How did it come about?*
 - u. *Who is involved in sustaining this partnership?*
 - v. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - w. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*
 - x. *What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Example?*
20. **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

2. SCHOOL DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

Interviewee(s) Name/Title (Note: content area specialty e.g. T1:ELA, T2:math, T3:science, T4:social studies, T5:other):

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

21. Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.

- What attracted you to this school?***
- What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?***
- How have your roles and responsibilities changed in your time here, if at all?***

22. * If someone from another school asked you to describe this school and particularly any changes over time, what would you say?

In terms of

- what is valued (and how this plays out in norms, routines)*
- the students*
- their parents/caregivers*
- the community and any changes over time*
- staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors and changes to staffing over time*
- climate in the school (how does it feel)*

<LEADERSHIP AND GOAL SETTING>

- 23. How do you define success, and how has this definition changed over time, if at all?**
- c. What things do you need to do to achieve success?*
 - d. What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?*
 - e. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
24. Please describe the focus of any academic goal-setting done in this school in your time here.
- a. How are academic goals been developed in this school?*
 - b. Who is involved in the development process?*
 - c. How do these goals relate to district goals?*
 - d. Describe any process your district/school has to monitor how well it is meeting its goals.*
 - e. What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

- 25. How is curriculum developed and revised in this school and how has this process changed over time?**
- 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?*
 - d. Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for students challenged by poverty or students of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds?*
 - e. What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?*
 - f. What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?*

- 26. How would you describe high-quality teaching, and how has this definition changed over time?**
 <Probe - In mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- a. What skills and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed if at all over time?*
 - b. What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used.*
 - c. Please describe any ways instructional practices that are adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
 - d. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school?*
 - i. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year?*

- 27. What, if any, kinds of instructional strategies are mandated or strongly encouraged here? How have these changed over time?**
- a. Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices?*
 - b. How were these decided upon?*
 - c. How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools?)*
 - i. Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year?*

28. *Please describe any instructional technologies that are mandated or strongly encouraged? If so, what are they?

- a. *Who was involved in deciding on using these instructional technologies?*
- b. *How were these decided upon?*
- c. *How is guidance to use these technologies provided to teachers in this school?*
 - i. *Please provide an example of guidance you or others have provided in the past year and what was the impetus behind this focus?*

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

29. 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)?*
- 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 want from these collaborations?*
- g. *Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

30. Describe any ways you have been provided support from school or district leaders in fulfilling your roles and responsibilities as department chairs.

- a. *Who provides this support?*
- b. *How adequate is this support?*

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

- d. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*
- e. *Are your own needs for professional development being met?*
 - i. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

<INTERVENTIONS AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

32. What procedures and strategies are used to assess students' academic progress and social-emotional well-being?

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

- a. ***How have these procedures and strategies changed over time?***
- 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.*

33. What alternative methods of assessment have you integrated in recent years, if any? (e.g. performance-based)

- a. *If performance-based assessments are being used – in what grades and content areas? Please provide examples of assessments used (e.g. project-based, presentations, portfolios,*
- b. *What has facilitated use of performance-based assessments?*
- c. *What do you see as the pros and cons to performance-based assessments?*
- d. *What alternative assessment methods are on the horizon here and what is the plan for implementation?*

34. What efforts do you or others make to keep students, particularly culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students in school and engaged?

- a. ***How has your approach to student engagement changed, if at all, over time?***
- b. *Please describe any special arrangements (e.g. class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?*
- c. *Please describe in what ways the efforts targeted to culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students differ, if at all, from those for all students?*

35. Describe how student performance and engagement is monitored in this school and how these processes may have changed over time.

- a. *What kinds of data are collected?*
- b. *Who is responsible for collecting and analyzing data?*
- c. *How do you use data?*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

36. Describe any processes or procedures you use to engage parents/caregivers.

- a. ***What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?***
- b. *How would you describe the relationships between school staff and parents/caregivers, and how has this changed over time?*

37. 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. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
- 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?*

38. 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

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

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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 minutes to an hour 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 you 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:

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

39. Please restate your name and position and how long have you been working in this school.

- b. What attracted you to this school?***
- c. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?***
- d. How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?***

40. Please describe the population of youth and parents you work with in this school, as well as the nature of the community.

- a. Youth & Parents: Considering language, educational background, culture (e.g. norms, traditions, beliefs, etc.), stability or family configuration.***
- b. Neighborhoods & Community: Considering diversity (e.g. racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, etc.), stability, opportunities, and resources)***

41. 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?**
 - i. In what ways do priorities for these students differ from all other student, if at all?**

<INTERVENTIONS AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

- 42. Please describe your experiences in trying to meet students' academic, mental or physical health-related needs?**
- a. How have students' needs changed over time, if at all?**
 - b. What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in meeting students' needs? Please provide an example.**
 - c. What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in meeting these students' needs? Please provide an example.**
- 43. Please describe any technological tools you use to meet students needs?**
- a. How have the technologies you use to meet students' needs changed over time?**
 - b. What kinds of barriers, if any, do you encounter when using this technology?**
 - c. Who has helped you with using these technologies?**
- 44. Please describe how students' academic or mental or physical health-related needs are identified, addressed, and monitored?**
- c. What kinds of data do you collect and use?**
 - d. How are data shared and made sense of?**
- 45. Please describe any supplemental academic support services programs available to students (e.g. AIS).**
- g. How, if at all, has your school's approach to providing supplemental academic support services changed over time?**
 - h. What supplemental academic support services are in place for gifted students? Please describe.**
 - i. Who has assisted you in facilitating delivery of these services to students?**
- 46. What efforts do you or others make to keep your culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students, in school and engaged?**
- e. Please describe any special arrangements (e.g. class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?**
 - i. Please describe in what ways the efforts targeted to students challenged by poverty or students of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds might differ from those for all students, if at all?**

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

- 47. 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?**

[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*

<PARENT/CAREGIVER/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

48. Describe any efforts you make to engage parents/caregivers.

- a. Who is involved in this work?*
- b. What do you communicate with them about?*
- c. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?*
- d. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between school staff and parents/caregivers at this school?*

49. 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?*

50. 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?***
 - i. Please describe, if any, goals around social-emotional learning, student engagement, physical health, and/or mental health?*
- b. How has this communication changed over time?*
- c. Describe any processes you use to share data with partners in community-based organizations or agencies.***

51. 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

4. SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids' *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

**Secondary only*

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

52. Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.

- e. What attracted you to this school?*
- f. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
- g. How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?*

53. Please describe the population of youth, parents, and wider community in this school, as well as how it has changed over the time you've been here.

- a. Youth & Parents: Considering language, educational background, culture (e.g., norms, traditions, beliefs, etc.), stability or family configuration.*
- b. Neighborhoods & Community: Considering diversity (e.g., racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, etc.), stability, opportunities, and resources.*
- c. What kinds of things do you do to meet the needs of the population of youth you work with at this school, and how have these needs changed over time?*

54. What are the key priorities in this school?

- a. How have priorities changed over time?*
- b. What are your priorities specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*

In what ways do priorities for these students differ from all other students, if at all?

<LEADERSHIP AND GOAL SETTING>

55. How do you define success, and how has this definition changed over time?

- f. What challenges have you faced in achieving success in this school?*
- g. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*

<INTERVENTIONS AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

56. *Please describe your experiences in trying to meet your students' guidance needs and how these needs have changed over time?

- a. What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in meeting these students' needs? Please provide an example.*
- b. What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in meeting these students' needs? Please provide an example.*

57. Please describe how students who show evidence of being at-risk (academically, socially, emotionally, physically, etc.) are identified, supported, and monitored?

- e. What kinds of data do you use? How are data disseminated?*
- f. Please describe any programs or services that help support culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
 - i. In what ways, if any, do programs or services to aid transitions for these students differ from all other students?*

58. When you first meet a student, how do establish goals for them?

- a. How are goals evaluated, and who is involved?*
- b. What obstacles do students encounter in meeting these goals, and how do you help them?*

59. What efforts do you or others make to keep your students in school and engaged?

- f. Please describe any special arrangements (e.g., class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?*
- g. Please describe in what ways the efforts targeted to culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*

60. Please tell me about any services that go beyond the school day that are offered to students.

- a. How did these services develop, and have they changed over time?*
- b. Describe services, if there are any, that are specifically designed for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*

61. *Please describe any transition programs or services for students to help them prepare for college or careers.

- a. Who is responsible for them?*
- b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these programs/services?*
- c. What are the main challenges facing your school with regard to preparing students for college and career?**
 - i. How have these changed over time?*
 - ii. Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school is addressing those challenges.*

- d. What kinds of things do you do to prepare students for careers that do not require a college degree?
62. *What procedures and measures (e.g., ACTs; PSATs, Naviance) are used to assess students' college or career readiness?
- If none mentioned – what about academic progress in general?*
 - a. *Who is in charge of monitoring student progress?*
 - b. *How are procedures and measures developed or chosen in this school?*
 - c. *How are these procedures and measures evaluated?*
 - d. *How, including how frequently, are data evaluated and used?*
 - e. *Please provide an example of how data has been used to address students' readiness for college or career?*
63. * In your view, how well do you feel the district's career and technical education programs are successful with students who are not interested in college?

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

- 64. 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?*
 - a. *Have these needs changed over time?*
 - c. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- 65. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between school staff and parents/caregivers at this school, and how have these relationships have changed over time?**
- a. *How do you communicate with your students' parents/caregivers?*
 - i. *What do you communicate with them about?*
- 66. 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. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - 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?*
- 67. 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 adapting and innovating new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?**

Thank you.

END

5. SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER INTERVIEW / FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

School/District Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

*secondary only

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

68. Please restate your name and position and how long have you been working in this school.

- What attracted you to this school?*
- What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
- How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?*

69. Please describe the special education population you work with in this school and how this population has changed over time.

- Consider: numbers/percentages of students in IEP or 504; nature of disabilities – physical, emotional, etc.*
- In what ways are you responsive to the population of youth you work with at this school?*

70. How do you define success and how has this definition changed over time?

- What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*
- What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

71. Please describe your special education program and any changes which have been made to the program over the last several years.

- 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.***
 - d. **Please describe any special programs/services for SPED students entering high school.*
 - e. **Please describe any special programs/service for SPED students transitioning to college or career.*
- 72. 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?*
- 73. How would you describe high-quality teaching for your special needs students?**
- 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?*
 - j. *What types of support are you offered in providing such high-quality teaching?*
 - i. *Who provides that support?*
 - k. *What kinds of things do you do to specifically engage culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*
 - l. *What do you do to identify and re-engage disengaged students?*
- 74. What, if any, instructional strategies that 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?*
- 75. What kinds of technologies, materials do you find particularly useful in supporting your students, and have these changed over time?**
- i. ***How have you approached integrating AI here?***
 - 1. ***To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?***
 - ii. *Do you find these technologies and resources adequate to meet your students' needs?*
 - iii. *Who is involved with attaining these resources?*

<INTERVENTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

- 76. How do you monitor your students' progress, and have these methods changed over time?**
- a. *What kinds of information do you receive about your students' prior educational or life experiences before you begin working with them?*
 - b. *Who shares this information with you? When?*
 - c. *What rubrics or guides do you use to assess student performance? Please describe how these are used.*

77. What alternative methods of assessment have you integrated in recent years, if any? (e.g. performance-based)

- a. *If performance-based assessments are being used – in what grades and content areas? Please provide examples of assessments used (e.g. project-based, presentations, portfolios,*
- b. *What has facilitated use of performance-based assessments?*
- c. *What do you see as the pros and cons to performance-based assessments?*
- d. *What alternative assessment methods are on the horizon here and what is the plan for implementation?*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

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

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

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

79. 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>

80. Describe any processes or procedures you have used to engage parents/caregivers.

- a. *What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?*
- b. *How do you communicate with parents/caregivers from culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds?.*

81. Please describe the nature of relationships you have had with community-based health and social service providers and other community agencies or institutions (churches, mosques, museums, libraries, etc.) in your time here.

- a. *Who is involved in this work?*
- b. *How did it come about?*
- c. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
- d. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*

82. **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

6. ENGLISH NEW LANGUAGE (ENL) TEACHER FOCUS GROUP or INTERVIEW

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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 you 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:

School Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

- 1. Please state your position(s) and how long you have worked in this school.**
 - a. What attracted you to this school?*
 - b. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
 - c. How have your roles and responsibilities changed in your time here?*
- 2. 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. In what ways are you responsive to the population of youth you work with at this school?*
 - c. To your knowledge, how, if at all, has the ENL student population changed over time in this school?*
- 3. 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 ENL students?*
 - i. In what ways do priorities for these students differ from all other students, if at all?*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

4. **Please describe your ENL program and how it has changed in your time here.**
 - 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?*

5. **Describe any efforts you have been involved with to develop and revise the curriculum.**
 - g. *What has prompted this work?*
 - h. *Who is involved in the revision of the curriculum?*
 - i. *How are vertical teams involved, if at all?*
 - ii. *Are there any ways your district attempts to coordinate ENL instruction across schools?*
 - j. ***Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for ENL students?***
 - k. *What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?*
 - l. *What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?*

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

7. **Are there any instructional strategies that are mandated or strongly encouraged for ENL students here?**
If so, what are they?
 - 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?*
 - i. *Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?*
 - e. *What outcomes do you achieve by using these strategies?*

8. **Please describe the adequacy of technologies, materials, etc. provided to meet your ENL students' needs.**
 - a. ***What kinds of technologies, materials do you find particularly useful in preparing your students for college or career?***
 - b. *Who is involved with attaining these resources?*
 - c. *Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in how you use technologies or materials to support your ENL students' learning*

9. **When you first meet a student, how do you establish goals for him/her?**
 - a. *How are goals evaluated, and who is involved?*
 - b. *Sometimes your students might encounter obstacles to achieving goals. What obstacles do your students encounter, and how do you help them deal with those obstacles?*

10. **How do you monitor your ENL students' progress, and how have these strategies changed over time**
 - a. ***What kinds of information do you receive about your students' prior educational or life experiences before you begin working with them?***
 - b. *Who shares this information with you? When?*
 - c. *How do you use this information to support your ENL students?*

- d. *What rubrics or guides do you use to assess student performance? Please describe how these are used.*
- 11. What alternative methods of assessment have you integrated in recent years, if any? (e.g. performance-based)**
- a. *If performance-based assessments are being used – in what grades and content areas? Please provide examples of assessments used (e.g. project-based, presentations, portfolios,*
 - b. *What has facilitated use of performance-based assessments?*
 - c. *What do you see as the pros and cons to performance-based assessments?*
 - d. *What alternative assessment methods are on the horizon here and what is the plan for implementation?*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

- 12. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
- i. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*
 - j. *How well are your professional development needs being met? Please elaborate-*
 - k. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

<SUPPORTS AND COLLABORATION>

- 13. How do you collaborate with other teachers or support staff?**
- a. *Do these collaborations extend to other schools in the district? Please describe.*
 - b. *How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?*
 - c. *What is the focus of this collaboration?*
 - d. *How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?*
 - e. *What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?*
 - f. *Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.*
 - g. *Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in how you collaborate to support your ENL students' learning.*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- 14. Describe any processes or procedures you use to engage parents/caregivers.**
- a. *What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?*
 - b. *How do you communicate with parents/caregivers if they speak little English?*
 - c. *Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in how you engage your ENL students' parents/caregivers.*
- 15. Please describe the nature of relationships you have with community-based health and social service providers, other community agencies or institutions (churches, mosques, museums, libraries, etc.).**
- a. *Who is involved in this work?*
 - b. *How did it come about?*
 - c. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - d. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*

- e. Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in terms of partnerships with community agencies or institutions particularly with regard to supporting ENL students and their families.*

16. 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 adapting and innovating new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END

7. MAINSTREAM CONTENT TEACHER FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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 you 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:

School Interviewee(s) Names/Title (Note: content area specialty e.g., T1: ELA, T2: math, T3: science, T4: social studies, T5: other):

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

83. *Please restate your name and position and how long have you been working in this school.

- d. What attracted you to this school?*
- e. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
- f. How have your roles and responsibilities changed during your time here?*

84. If someone from another school asked you to describe this school, what would you say?

In terms of

- f. what is valued*
- g. the students*
- h. their families/caregivers*
- i. the community*
- j. staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors*
- k. climate in the school.*

85. How do you define success?

- m. How has your definition of success changed over time?*

- n. *What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*
- o. *What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

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

- m. *What has prompted this work?*
- n. *Who is involved in the development and revision of the curriculum?*
- o. *How are vertical teams involved, if at all?*
 - i. *Are there any ways your district attempts to coordinate instruction across schools?*
- p. ***Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?***
- q. *What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?*
- r. *What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?*

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

<probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>

- f. ***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?***
- g. ***Please describe any ways instructional practices that are adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.***
- h. ***How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school?***
- i. *Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year.*
- j. *What types of support are you offered in providing such high-quality teaching?*
 - i. *Who provides that support?*

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

If so, what are they?

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

89. Please describe any changes to instructional policies or practices that have impacted your students in your time here.

90. What efforts do you or others make to keep your culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students engaged in the classroom?

- a. *Please describe any special arrangements (e.g., class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?*

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

- a. **How has the use of these technologies changed over time?**
 - i. **How have you approached AI here?**
 - ii. **To what tasks have you applied AI if at all?**
- b. *What kinds of technologies or materials do you find particularly useful?*
- c. *How have you adapted technologies and materials to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*

92. 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?*

<INTERVENTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

93. How do you monitor your students' progress?

- a. **How has student monitoring changed over time?**
- b. *What technologies have been helpful in monitoring your students' progress?*

94. What alternative methods of assessment have you integrated in recent years, if any? (e.g. performance-based)

- a. *If performance-based assessments are being used – in what grades and content areas? Please provide examples of assessments used (e.g. project-based, presentations, portfolios,*
- b. *What has facilitated use of performance-based assessments?*
- c. *What do you see as the pros and cons to performance-based assessments?*
- d. *What alternative assessment methods are on the horizon here and what is the plan for implementation?*

95. What efforts do you or others make to support the social and emotional needs of your students?

- a. **How have these efforts changed over time in response to students' needs?**
- b. *What supports do you receive to promote students' social and emotional health in the classroom?*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

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

- l. **Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.**
- m. *How well are your professional development needs being met? Please elaborate-*
- n. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

97. How have the professional development programs and opportunities changed during your time here?

- a. **Please describe any new innovations or technologies implemented to support your professional learning.**

98. Please describe any school-based roles or positions you have outside of your classroom responsibilities?

- a. *What is your goal in these extra roles or positions?*
- b. *How often do you participate?*
- c. *What supports do you receive for this work?*

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

- a. *How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?*
- o. *Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district? If so, who is involved?*
- p. *What is the focus of this collaboration?*
- q. *How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?*
- r. *What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?*
- s. *Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

100. Describe any processes or procedures you use to engage parents/caregivers and how these have changed over time?

- a. *What are your roles and responsibilities in this work?*
- b. *How do you communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse parents?*

17. Please describe the nature of relationships you have with community-based health and social service providers, other community agencies or institutions (churches, mosques, museums, libraries, etc.).

- a. *Who is involved in this work?*
- b. *How have these relationships changed over time?*
- c. *How do you describe your role in these partnerships?*
- d. *How did it come about?*
- e. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
- f. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*

18. 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

8. BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM FOCUS GROUP

Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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 you 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

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

101. Please restate your name and position and how long you have been working in this school.

- g. What attracted you to this school?*
- h. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities on this team?*
- i. How have your roles and responsibilities changed during your time here?*

<LEADERSHIP AND GOAL SETTING>

102. What are the goals for this school?

- a. Please describe who establishes these goals and how that is done?*
- b. Are school goals related to district goals? If so, how?*
- c. How have these goals changed over time?*
- d. How do you measure your success in meeting these goals?*

103. 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 over time?*
- c. What are your priorities for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*

104. When you are charged with implementing something new, how do you proceed? (e.g., what kinds of things do you take into consideration?)

- c. *How do you get people in this school on board with making changes? Provide an example.*

105. How have the members and the role of the BLT changed over time?

- a. *Who makes decisions about who participates on the leadership team?*
- b. *Have you received any professional development on leading your school?*
- c. *How do you evaluate effectiveness/outcomes of your work?*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

106. What kinds of professional development have you received during your time here??

- t. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
- u. *Are your own needs for professional development being met?*
- v. *If mentoring is mentioned - please describe*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

107. Describe any ways the BLT has addressed students' academic engagement?

- a. *What role did the BLT play in this work?*
- b. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?*
- c. *What role, if any, does technology play in engaging students?*

108. Describe any ways the BLT has addressed students' social and emotional development.

- a. *What role did the BLT play in this work?*
- b. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?*
- c. *What role, if any, does technology play in engaging students?*

<INTERVENTIONS AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

109. Describe any ways the BLT has addressed student transitions from different schools (elementary to middle / middle to high school).

- a. *What role did the BLT play in this work?*
- b. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

110. Please describe any ways the BLT has addressed family/caregiver involvement.

- a. *How have these strategies changed, if at all, over time?*
- b. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts?*
- c. *Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in how you engage your students' parents/caregivers.*

111. Describe any ways the BLT has partnered with community agencies.

- a. *What role did the BLT play in this work?*
- b. *How have these partnerships changed over time?*
- c. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*

d. Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in terms of partnerships with community agencies or institutions with regard to supporting students and their families.

112. 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 adapting and innovating new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END

9. SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULARS / SPECIALS FOCUS GROUP

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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 you 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:

School Interviewee(s) Names/Title (Note: content area specialty e.g.T1: ELA, T2:math, T3:science, T4:social studies, T5:other):

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

113.Please restate your name and position and how long have you been working in this school.

- j. What attracted you to this school?*
- k. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
- l. How have your roles and responsibilities changed during your time here?*

114.If someone from another school asked you to describe this school, what would you say?

In terms of

- l. what is valued*
- m. the students*
- n. their families/caregivers*
- o. the community*
- p. staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors*
- q. climate in the school.*

115.How do you define success, and how has your definition of success changed over time?

- p. What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*
- q. What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in achieving success? Please provide an example.*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

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

- s. What has prompted this work?*
- t. Who is involved in the development and revision of the curriculum?*
- u. How are vertical teams involved, if at all?
 - i. Are there any ways your district attempts to coordinate instruction across schools?**
- v. Are there any ways the curriculum is adapted specifically for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*
- w. What are your roles or responsibilities in doing this work?*
- x. What has helped or hindered your curriculum development and revision work? Examples?*

117. How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has this description changed over time?

- k. 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?*
- l. What types of support are you offered in providing such high-quality teaching?
 - i. Who provides that support?**

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

If so, what are they?

- f. How have these strategies changed over time?*
- g. What types of tools or rubrics are offered to guide you in the use of these strategies?*
- h. Who was involved in deciding which strategies would be used?*
- i. How were these decided upon?*
- j. Are you able to vary how you use these strategies? Who decides if you can or cannot vary your use of these strategies?*

119. Please describe any changes to instructional priorities that have been made to your specialty area during your time here.

- a. What prompted these changes?*
- b. How have these changes impacted your students?*

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

- d. How has the use of these technologies changed over time?*
- e. What kinds of technologies, materials do you find particularly useful?*
- f. How have you adapted technologies and materials to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*

121. How has the changing use of technology (in society and the world) impacted your role in your specialty area?

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

<INTERVENTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS>

122. How do you monitor your students' progress?

- c. *How has this process changed over time?*
- d. *What technologies or innovations have been helpful in monitoring your students' progress?*

123. What alternative methods of assessment have you integrated in recent years, if any? (e.g. performance-based)

- a. *If performance-based assessments are being used – in what grades and content areas? Please provide examples of assessments used (e.g. project-based, presentations, portfolios,*
- b. *What has facilitated use of performance-based assessments?*
- c. *What do you see as the pros and cons to performance-based assessments?*
- d. *What alternative assessment methods are on the horizon here and what is the plan for implementation?*

124. Please describe your experiences in trying to meet students' academic, mental or physical health-related needs?

- d. *How have students' needs changed over time, if at all?*

125. What efforts do you or others make to keep students engaged?

- b. *Please describe any special arrangements (e.g., class scheduling) that are made for students who have disengaged?*
- c. *Please describe any efforts targeted culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

126. What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom during your time here?

- w. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
- x. *How well are your professional development needs being met? Please elaborate-*
- y. *Please describe any new innovations or technologies implemented to support your professional learning.*
- z. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

127. Please describe any school-based roles or responsibilities you have outside of your classroom and specialty area?

- a. *What is your goal in taking on these extra roles or responsibilities?*
- b. *How often do you participate?*

c. What supports or incentives do you receive for this work?

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

- b. How do you assess the value of those collaborations in your work?*
- aa. Does any of this collaboration extend to other schools in the district? If so, who is involved?*
- bb. What is the focus of this collaboration?*
- cc. How is collaboration supported and sustained? By whom?*
- dd. What outcomes do you achieve from these collaborations?*
- ee. Do you evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborations? Describe.*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- i. Describe any processes or procedures you use to engage parents/caregivers.**
 - c. How have these strategies changed over time?*
 - d. How do you communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse parents?*

- ii. Please describe the nature of relationships you have with community-based health and social service providers, other community agencies or institutions (churches, mosques, museums, libraries, etc.).**
 - g. Who is involved in this work?*
 - h. How have these relationships changed over time?*
 - i. How do you describe your role in these partnerships?*
 - j. How did it come about?*
 - k. What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - l. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*

- iii. 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

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Adaptation and Innovation in New York State Schools Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. 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: _____

BOLD – required question

District Interviewee(s) Name/Title: _____

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?*
 - c. *How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?*
2. If someone from another district asked you to describe this district, what would you say?

In terms of

 - m. *what is valued*
 - n. *the students*
 - o. *their parents/caregivers*
 - p. *the community*
 - q. **the Board**
 - r. *staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors*
 - s. *climate in the schools*

<LEADERSHIP AND GOALS>

1. How do you define success?
 - r. *What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?*
 - s. *Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?*
2. How would you describe your leadership style?
 - d. *When you are implementing something new, how do you proceed? (e.g. what kinds of things do you take into consideration?)*

e. **How do you get people in this district on board with making changes?**

3. What are the goals for this district?

e. **Please describe who is involved with establishing these goals and how that is done. (probe: strategic planning)**

f. **Please describe any relationships between district and school goals.**

i. *<if aligned, how?>*

g. **How have the district's goals changed over time?**

h. How has goal setting, strategic planning, and school improvement processes changed over time if at all?

i. **How do you evaluate how well you and others are meeting district goals?**

j. *<if not already mentioned>* **What have been your top priorities over the past few years?**

a. **How did you determine these priorities?**

b. **How have they changed over time?**

4. Describe any reform or change in the past few years that has had a positive impact on your students.

a. **Who was involved with this reform or change?**

b. **How long has this reform or change been in place?**

c. **How do you determine its effectiveness?**

d. **What have been the major challenges to effective implementation?**

i. **How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?**

<if not already mentioned>

e. **Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to students culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.**

5. Please describe any intervention processes or procedures the district has for a school not meeting goals.

Please describe.

a. **How is a school identified for these interventions?**

b. **How is the success of the interventions evaluated?**

i. **Please provide an example of when such an intervention was put into place.**

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

6. If you are involved in efforts to select and retain principals, what qualities do you look for in them at <school>?

e. **How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in principals changed over time?**

f. **How would you characterize your principal candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?**

g. **What efforts do you make to recruit and retain good principals?**

h. **What efforts do you make to ensure that novice principals are supported?**

If mentoring is mentioned – please describe

7. What qualities do you look for in teachers and support staff at <school>?

i. **How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in teachers and support staff changed over time?**

j. **How would you characterize your candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?**

- k. *What efforts do you make to recruit and retain good teachers and support staff?*
 - l. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?*
If mentoring is mentioned – please describe
8. ***What kinds of professional development have you received and from whom over the past few years?**
- ff. *How have you received PD (coaches, external support)*
 - gg. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*
 - hh. *To what extent are your own needs for PD being met?*
If mentoring is mentioned - please describe
9. **What kinds of professional development have school leaders, teachers, and other staff received over the past few years?**
- a. *How have you received PD (coaches, external support)*
 - c. *How was the focus of this PD decided upon?*
 - i. *Who was involved?*
 - ii. *How effective do you feel the PD has been?*
 - d. *Please describe any PD offered in this district that focused on supporting students of different ethnic, cultural, language, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds*
 - e. *Please describe the process and key contributors in planning and delivering professional development in this district*
 - f. *How well do you think leaders, teachers and staff needs for PD are met?*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

10. **How has the curriculum changed over time if at all?**
- a. *What are the priorities for curriculum?*
 - i. *Who determines these priorities and have they changed over time?*
 - b. *Who is involved in the development and revision process?*
 - i. *How is that done and has it changed over time?*
 - c. *Please describe any ways the curriculum has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*
11. **How would you describe high-quality teaching and how has it changed, if at all, over time?**
<probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>
- m. *What skills (e.g. writing), mindsets (e.g. persistence) and knowledge do you prioritize and how have these priorities changed, if at all, over time?*
 - n. *What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used.*
 - o. *Please describe any ways instruction has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*
12. **Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged? If so, what are they?**

- d. *Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices?*
- e. *How were these decided upon?*
- f. ***How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools?) and has it changed over time?***
 - 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?(probe into instructional technologies)***

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

- 13. Describe any efforts the district has developed to engage parents/caregivers.**
- e. *Who is involved in this work?*
 - f. *How did it come about?*
 - g. *What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?*
 - h. *How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers?*
- 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.**
- g. *How did it come about?*
 - h. *Who is involved in sustaining this partnership?*
 - i. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - j. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*
 - k. ***What kinds of barriers and supports do you encounter if any in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Example?***
- 15. 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

DISTRICT ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OR DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Adaptation and Innovation in New York State Schools Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. 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:

BOLD – required question

16. Please restate your name and position and how long have you been working in this district.
- a. ***What attracted you to this district?***
 - b. ***What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?***
 - c. ***How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?***
17. If someone from another district asked you to describe this district and particularly any changes over time, what would you say?
- In terms of*
- t. *what is valued*
 - u. *the students*
 - v. *their parents/caregivers*
 - w. *the community*
 - x. *staff – their competencies, beliefs, behaviors*
 - y. *climate in the schools*

< LEADERSHIP AND GOALS >

18. How do you define success?
- t. ***What challenges do you face in achieving success in this school?***
 - u. ***Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how your school has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students?***
19. How would you describe your leadership style?

- f. *When you are implementing something new, how do you proceed? (e.g. what kinds of things do you take into consideration?)*
- g. *How do you get people in this district on board with making changes?*

20. What are the goals for this district?

- k. ***Please describe who is involved with establishing these goals and how that is done. (probe: strategic planning)***
- l. ***Please describe any relationships between district and school goals.***
 - i. *<if aligned, how?>*
- m. ***How have the district's goals changed over time?***
- n. ***How has goal setting, strategic planning, and school improvement processes changed over time if at all?***
- o. *How do you evaluate how well you and others are meeting district goals?*
- p. *<if not already mentioned> What have been your top priorities over the past few years?*
 - a. *How did you determine these priorities?*
 - b. *How have they changed over time?*

21. Describe any reform or change in the past few years that has had a positive impact on culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.

- a. *Who was involved with this reform or change?*
- b. *How long has this reform or change been in place?*
- c. *How do you determine its effectiveness?*
- d. *What have been the major challenges to effective implementation?*
 - i. *How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?*
 - <if not already mentioned>*
 - ii. *Please describe any examples of reforms or changes related specifically to students culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*

< CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION >

22. How has curriculum changed over time if at all?

- l. ***What are the priorities for curriculum?***
 - i. ***Who determines these priorities and have they changed over time?***
- m. *Who is involved in the development and revision process?*
 - i. *How is that done and has it changed over time?*
- n. ***Please describe any ways the curriculum has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students***

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

- <probe -mathematics, social studies, science, ELA, other specials>***
- p. ***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?***
- q. *What rubrics or guides do you use to assess whether instruction is high quality? Please describe how these are used.*

- r. *Please describe any ways instruction has been adapted for culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students*

24. Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged? If so, what are they?

- o. *Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices?***
- p. *How were these decided upon?***
- q. *How is instructional guidance provided to teachers in this school? (rubrics, tools?) and has it changed over time?***
 - 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?***

< INTERVENTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS >

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

- g. *What kinds of data do you use?***
 - i. *How are data disseminated?***
- h. *Please describe any programs or services that help culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students prepare for the next level of their education?***

< STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY >

26. If you are involved in efforts to select and retain principals, what qualities do you look for in them at <school>?

- m. *How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in principals changed over time?***
- n. *How would you characterize your principal candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?***
- o. *What efforts do you make to recruit and retain good principals?***
- p. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice principals are supported?***
 - If mentoring is mentioned – please describe***

27. If you are involved in efforts to select and retain teachers and support staff, what qualities do you look for at <school>?

- q. *How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in teachers and support staff changed over time?***
- r. *How would you characterize your candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?***
- s. *What efforts do you make to recruit and retain good teachers and support staff?***
- t. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?***
 - If mentoring is mentioned – please describe***

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

- ii. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students***
- jj. *To what extent are your own needs for PD being met?***
 - If mentoring is mentioned - please describe***

29. What kinds of professional development have school leaders, teachers, and other staff received over the past few years?
- g. How was the focus of this PD decided upon?*
 - i. Who was involved?*
 - ii. How effective do you feel the PD has been?*
 - h. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting students of different ethnic, cultural, language, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds*
 - i. Please describe the process and key contributors in planning and delivering professional development within this district*
 - j. How well do you think leaders, teachers and staff needs for PD are met?*

< PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT >

30. Describe any efforts the district has developed to engage parents/caregivers.
- i. Who is involved in this work?*
 - j. How did it come about?*
 - k. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?*
 - l. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers?*
31. Describe any community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) or organizations (churches, mosques, libraries, museums, colleges or universities) with whom you partner.
- r. How did it come about?*
 - s. Who is involved in sustaining this partnership?*
 - t. What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - u. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*
 - v. What kinds of barriers do you encounter if any in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Example?*
- 32. What is on your horizon here? or**
Are there any other special features of your district or <name of> school that you would like to share related to related to how you approach new challenges, reforms, or changes in demographics?

Thank you.

END

DISTRICT DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Adaptation and Innovation in New York State Schools Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

1. Please state your position(s) and the number of years you have worked in this school.
 - d. *What attracted you to this school?*
 - e. *What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
2. Please describe the special education population in <name of school> and how it has changed over time.
 - a. *Consider: numbers/percentages of students in IEP or 504; nature of disabilities – physical, behavioral, etc.*

<LEADERSHIP AND GOALS>

3. How do you define success, and how has this definition changed over time?
 - v. *What kinds of things have helped or hindered you and others from achieving success in this district in your time here?*
 - w. *How have you and/or others surmounted any challenges in achieving success?*
 - x. *Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how this district has achieved success particularly with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically special education students.*

4. **What are the goals for special education students in this district, and how have these changed over time?**
- How are goals created?*
 - Who is involved in the creation of goals?*
 - Are <school. goals related to district goals? Explain***
5. **Describe any reforms or changes in your time here that have had a positive impact on culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse special education students.**
- Who was involved with this change?*
 - How long has this change been in place?*
 - How do you determine its effectiveness?*
 - What has helped or hindered effective implementation?*
 - How have you and/or others surmounted any challenges in making these changes?*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

6. **Please describe your special education program and the ways it has changed in your time here.**
- Please describe your experiences in trying to meet students' academic, mental or physical health-related needs?**
 - How have students' needs changed over time, if at all?***
 - How is the effectiveness of your Special Education program assessed?***
 - <SECONDARY ONLY> Please describe any special programs/services for SPED students entering high school.*
 - <SECONDARY ONLY> Please describe any special programs/service for SPED students transitioning to college or career.*
7. **How would you describe high-quality teaching for special education students?**
- 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?***
 - What types of support are special education teachers given in providing such high-quality teaching? Who provides that support?*
 - What kinds of things do you do specifically to help teachers working with your culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse special education students?*
8. **Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged, and the ways these may have changed in your time here.**
- Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices?*
 - How were these decided upon?*
 - How is instructional guidance provided to teachers to enact these practices in this district?*
 - Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past few years.*

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

9. **What qualities do you look for in special education teachers at this school, and have these changed over time?**

- u. *What efforts do you make to retain good teachers?*
- v. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?*
 - i. *If mentoring is mentioned – please describe.*

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

- kk. *Are your own needs for professional development being met?***
- ll. *Please describe any PD you have received that focused on supporting SPED students and students of different ethnic, cultural, language, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.***

11. What kinds of professional development have special education teachers received over the past few years?

- a. *Please describe any PD that focused on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse special education students.***
- b. *Please describe the process and key contributors in planning and delivering professional development within this district***
- c. *How well do you think teachers' needs for PD have been met in your time here? How do you know?***

< INTERVENTIONS AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS >

12. What procedures and measures are used to assess special education students' academic progress and social and emotional wellbeing in this district, and how have these changed over time?

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

13. What type of intervention plan, if any, does the district have for a school not meeting goals for the academic progress of special education students?

- a. *Please describe the intervention.***
- b. *How is a school identified for these plans?***
- c. *How is the outcome of the interventions evaluated?***
- d. *Can you provide an example of when such a plan was put into place?***

14. <SECONDARY ONLY> 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?***

< PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT >

15. Describe any efforts to engage special education students' parents/caregivers and how these efforts have changed over time.
- m. Who is involved in this work?*
 - n. How did it come about?*
 - o. What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?*
 - p. How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers?*
16. Describe any processes or procedures in place to partner with community agencies (community-based health and social service providers) and how these have changed over time.
- a. Who is involved in this work?*
 - b. How did it come about?*
 - c. What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
 - d. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*
 - e. What kinds of barriers you have encountered in your time here, if any, and how do you deal with them? Example?*
17. 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

DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF ENL/BILINGUAL PROGRAMS
Introductory Script

Hello, I'm _____ with the *NYKids Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. 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:

Interviewee(s) Name/Title:

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

18. Please state your position(s) and the number of years you have worked in this school.

- f. What attracted you to this school?*
- g. What do you see as your most important roles and responsibilities?*
- h. How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the past few years if at all?*

19. Please describe the population of ENL students in this district.

- 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 ENL student population changed over time in this school?*

20. Please describe your experiences in trying to meet your ENL students' needs?

- a. What kinds of things have helped you and others you work with in meeting these students' needs? Please provide an example.*
- b. What kinds of things have hindered you and others you work with in meeting these students' needs? Please provide an example.*

<LEADERSHIP AND GOALS>

21. How do you define success?

- y. *What things do you need to do to achieve success?*
- z. *What kinds of things have helped or hindered you and others from achieving success in this district?*
- aa. *How have you and/or others surmounted any challenges in achieving success?*
- bb. *Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how this district has achieved success over the past few years particularly with ENL/bilingual students.***

22. What are the goals for ENL students in this district?

- a. *How are goals created?*
- b. *Who is involved in the creation of goals?*
- c. *How are goals evaluated and who is involved in evaluating them?*
- d. *Are school goals related to district goals?*
- e. *How has goal setting, strategic planning, and school improvement processes changed over time if at all?***

23. Describe any reform or change in the past few years that has had a positive impact on ENL students.

- k. *Who was involved with this change?*
- l. *How long has this change been in place?*
- m. *How do you determine its effectiveness?*
- n. *What has helped or hindered effective implementation?*
- o. *How have you and/or others surmounted any challenges in making these changes?*

<CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION>

24. Please describe your ENL/bilingual program.

- a. *Who is involved in developing the ENL program?*
- b. *How is the effectiveness of your ENL program assessed?*
- c. *What challenges have you encountered in meeting the needs of your ENL students?*
- d. *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?*

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

- 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?***
- a. ***What types of support are given to your ENL teachers in providing such high-quality teaching?***
- b. ***Who provides that support?***

26. Please describe any instructional practices that are mandated or strongly encouraged.

- a. *Who is involved in deciding on these instructional practices?*
- b. *How were these decided upon?*
- c. ***How is instructional guidance provided to teachers to enact these practices in this district?***
 - i. ***Please provide an example of instructional guidance you or others have provided in the past year?***

<STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

27. What qualities do you look for in ENL/bilingual teachers at <name of school>?

- w. **How, if at all, have the qualities you look for in ENL /bilingual teachers changed over time?**
- x. **How would you characterize your ENL teacher candidate pool and how has it changed over time, if at all?**
- y. *What efforts do you make to retain good ENL teachers?*
- z. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?*
 - i. *If mentoring is mentioned – please describe*

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

- mm. **Are your own needs for professional development being met?**
- nn. *[If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

29. What kinds of professional development have ENL teachers received over the past few years?

- a. **Please describe the process and key contributors in planning and delivering professional development within this district that focus on supporting culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.**
- b. **How well do you think teachers' needs for PD are met? How do you know?**

<INTERVENTIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS>

30. How do you assess how well ENL students' academic, mental or physical health-related needs are being met?

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

31. What type of intervention plan, if any, does the district have for a school not meeting goals for the academic success of ENL students?

- a. **Could you describe the intervention?**
- b. *How is a school identified for these plans?*
- c. *How is the success of the interventions evaluated?*
- d. *Can you provide an example of when such a plan was put into place?*

< PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

32. Describe any efforts to engage ENL 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 district employees and parents/caregivers?*
- e. **Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in how you engage your ENL students' parents/caregivers**

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

k. How did it come about?

l. Who is involved in sustaining this partnership?

m. What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?

n. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?

o. What kinds of barriers do you encounter if any in partnering with outside organizations and how do you deal with them? Example?

p. Please provide an example of any adaptations or innovations in terms of partnerships with community agencies or institutions particularly with regard to supporting ENL students and their families

q. Are there any other examples of any adaptations or innovations in how you are addressing ENL students' needs you would like to share?

34. 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

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

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's 2023-24 NYKids *Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers*. I'd like to first thank you for taking 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:

BOLD – required question

TARGETED QUESTIONS:

- *DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES;
- ** DIRECTOR OF ASSESSMENT
- ***DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
- ****DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

<CHANGE OVER TIME; CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

129. 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?***
- c. How have your roles and responsibilities changed over the time you've been here, if at all?***

130. Please describe the population of youth, parents, and surrounding community and how it has changed over time if at all.

- a. Youth & Parents: Considering language, educational background, culture (e.g., norms, traditions, beliefs, etc.), stability or family configuration.***
- b. Neighborhoods & Community: Considering diversity (e.g., racially, linguistically, socioeconomically, etc.), stability, opportunities, and resources)***
- c. In what ways are you responsive to the population of youth you work with at this school and the community at large?***

131. Please describe your experiences in trying to meet students' and families' needs and how these needs have changed over time.

- a. Provide an example of a change you have made to meet students' and families' needs?
 - i. What helped or hindered you and others you work with in making those changes?

<LEADERSHIP AND GOALS>

132. How do you define success, and how has this definition changed over time if at all?

- cc. *What kinds of things have helped or hindered you and others with whom you work achieve success in this district?*
- dd. *Please describe any specific examples that you feel demonstrate how this district has achieved success particularly with students challenged by poverty or students of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.*

133. Describe any reform or change in the past few years that has had a positive impact on your students.

- p. *Who was involved with this reform or change?*
- q. *How long has this reform or change been in place?*
- r. *How do you determine its effectiveness?*
- s. *What have been the major challenges to effective implementation?*
 - a. *How have you and/or others surmounted those challenges?*
<if not already mentioned>
 - b. *Please describe any examples of changes related specifically to students challenged by poverty?*
 - c. *Please describe any examples of changes related specifically to students of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds?*

134. Describe the goals for this district that pertain to the focus of your work

- a. *How has goal setting, strategic planning, and improvement processes changed over time if at all?*
- b. *Please describe who is involved with establishing goals and how that is done.*
- c. *How have the goals changed over time?*
- d. *How do you evaluate how well you and others are meeting goals?*
- e. <if not already mentioned> *What have been your top priorities over the past few years?*
 - i. *How did you determine these priorities?*
 - ii. *How have they changed over time?*

< STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY>

135. **What are the top priorities for your district in terms of staff recruitment and retention? <**

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES >

- a. *Please describe who establishes these priorities and how that is done?*
- b. *How have priorities changed over time?*

136. **What qualities do you look for in principals in your school district? < DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES ONLY>**

- a. *How would you characterize your candidate pool?<PROBE DIVERSITY>*
 - aa. *What efforts do you make to retain good principals?*
 - bb. *What efforts do you make to ensure that novice principals are supported?*

i. If mentoring is mentioned – please describe

137.****What qualities do you look for in teachers at this school? < DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES >

- a. How would you characterize your candidate pool?*
- b. What efforts do you make to retain good teachers?*
- c. What efforts do you make to ensure that novice teachers are supported?*
 - ii. If mentoring is mentioned – please describe*

138.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.*

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

- oo. Please describe any PD that focused on supporting with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students.*
- pp. Have your own needs for professional development being met in your time here?*
- qq. [If mentoring is mentioned] - Please describe it.*

<DATA COLLECTION AND USE>

140.*, **What procedures and measurement systems are used to assess students' **academic, mental or physical health-related needs**? <*DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES;
**DIRECTOR OF ASSESSMENT ONLY>

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

- a. Who is in charge of monitoring student needs and progress?*
- b. How are procedures and measures developed or chosen in <school>?*
- c. How, including how frequently, are data collected and used to inform changes?*
- d. Please describe how your measurement systems has been used to address students' needs and progress in your time working here. How, if at all, has it changed?*

141.**** Please describe your teacher evaluation system? < DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES >

- 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 >

142.* Please describe any transition programs/services for students entering <high/middle/elementary> school <*DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES>

- a. Examples? Who is responsible for them?*
- b. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these programs/services?*

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

<*DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES; DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS>

- 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?*

<PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT>

144. *Describe any efforts to engage parents/caregivers that you've made throughout the time you've been here. <*DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS>>

- q. *Who is involved in this work?*
- r. *How did it come about?*
- s. *What outcomes do you seek from these efforts?*
- t. *How would you describe the overall quality of the relationships between district employees and parents/caregivers during your time here?*

145. *, ****Describe any processes or procedures in place to partner with community agencies, outside vendors, etc (e.g. community-based health and social service providers). <*DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR OF STUDENT/PUPIL SERVICES; DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS>

- a. *Who is involved in this work?*
- b. *How did it come about?*
- c. *What outcomes do you seek from these partnerships?*
- d. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships?*
- e. *What kinds of barriers you encounter if any and how do you deal with them? Example?*

146. What is on your horizon here? or

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

Thank you.

END

PARENT FOCUS GROUP

Hello, I'm _____ with the University at Albany's NYKids Study of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outliers. 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.)

BOLD – required question

<CHANGE OVER TIME, SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE>

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?

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- 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?
- 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