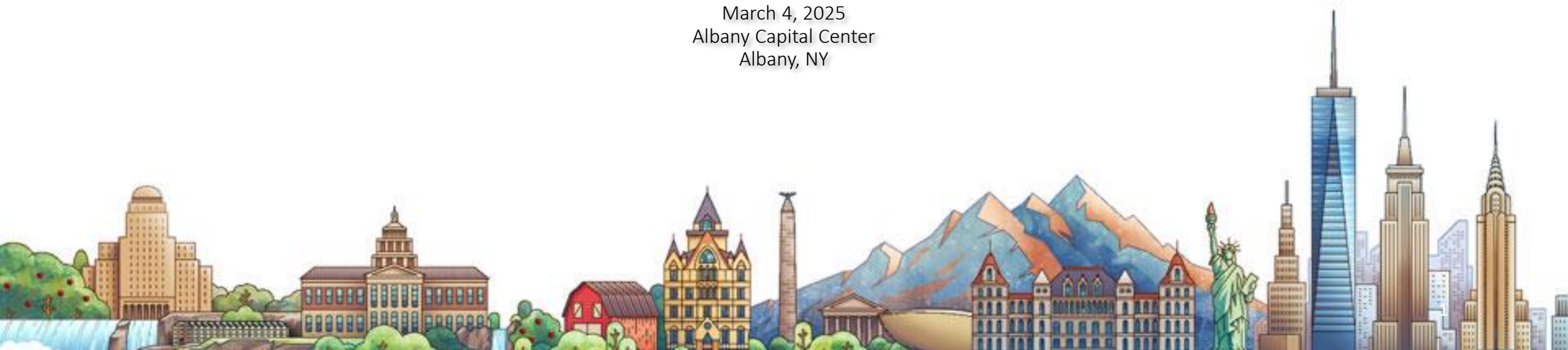


# Purposeful, Patient, and Proactive Leadership: NYKids Highlights Malverne Senior High Promising Practices

NYSCOSS 2025 Winter Institute & Lobby Day  
Expanding the Horizon:  
The Promise of Public Education

March 4, 2025  
Albany Capital Center  
Albany, NY



# Presenters



Dr. Lorna Lewis, Superintendent Malverne UFSD



Kesha Bascombe, Principal Malverne High



Kristen Campbell Wilcox, Professor, University at Albany and NYKids Director

# Objectives

- Explore current research on adaptive and innovative leadership.
- Learn about NYKids research on persistent positive outlier schools.
- Discuss purposeful, patient, and proactive leadership practices. Lessons from Malverne.



# Adaptive and Innovative Leadership Research

What are the latest research findings?

# Lessons on Adaptable Organizations and Leadership for them

## **Special Systems Design for High Reliability Organizations (HROs):**

- HROs are anticipatory with leaders who use proactive strategies.
- They have rapid response systems and associated communication strategies for unanticipated events.

## **Less Hierarchical Structure:**

- HROs are less hierarchical than typical institutions.
- Leadership is distributed, with the workforce overall responsible for safety and security.
- Heifetz et al.'s (2009) description of adaptive leadership is relevant here.

## **Cultural Norms for Collective Action:**

- HROs promote individual and collective action through cultural norms.
- Leaders play a crucial role in sustaining these norms through daily interactions with various stakeholders.

## **High-Quality, Stable Workforce:**

- HROs have a stable workforce, which can be seen as an outcome.
- They have strong "holding power" for employees, with leaders enhancing factors that encourage retention.





# How Leaders Make and Give Sense

- Leaders' mechanisms for sense-making and sense-giving are linked to resilience and adaptability (Durand et al., 2022; Maitlis, 2005).
- HRO leaders anticipate unexpected situations and plan for actions and reasons (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015).
- Leaders seek feedback from key stakeholders throughout the process (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015).
- Leaders adjust decision-making dynamics, authority structures, and functional patterns to enable flexible responses to changing circumstances (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015, pp. 123-124)



# NYKIDS RESEARCH

What are persistent positive outliers and how do they achieve the outcomes they do?



Emergent and  
Persistent Positive  
Outlier Schools }

for  
Our  
Time



NYKIDS RESEARCH  
UPDATE





**NYKids' 20th Anniversary  
Study of Emergent and  
Persistent Positive  
Outlier Schools:  
What Accounts for  
Better Student  
Outcomes Over Time?**

With increased interest in what supports adaptation and innovation in the context of external shocks and community demographic changes, **this study sought to discover new insights into what sustains schools' significantly better student outcomes over time.**

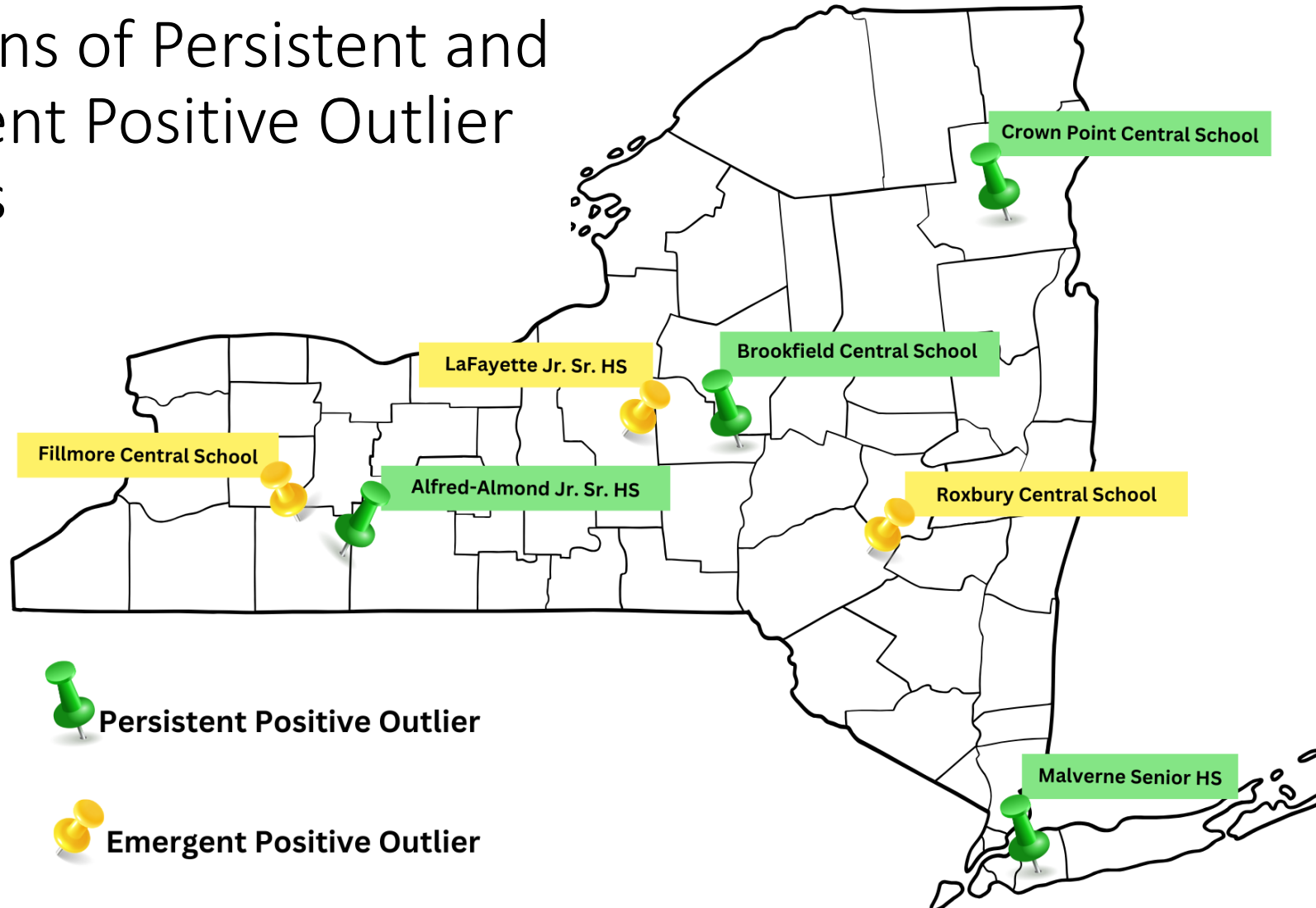
**Overarching Research Question:**

*What accounts for New York state's persistent and emergent positive outlier schools' comparatively better outcomes for culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse youth over time?*

# How did we define persistent and emergent positive outliers?

- Persistent Positive Outlier Schools (POs): schools previously identified as positive outliers in NYKids studies and that have continued to exhibit above-predicted graduation rates
- Emergent Positive Outlier Schools (EOs): schools which were previously identified as typically-performing that have risen to positive outlier status.

# Locations of Persistent and Emergent Positive Outlier Schools



 Persistent Positive Outlier

 Emergent Positive Outlier

# Sample Demographics

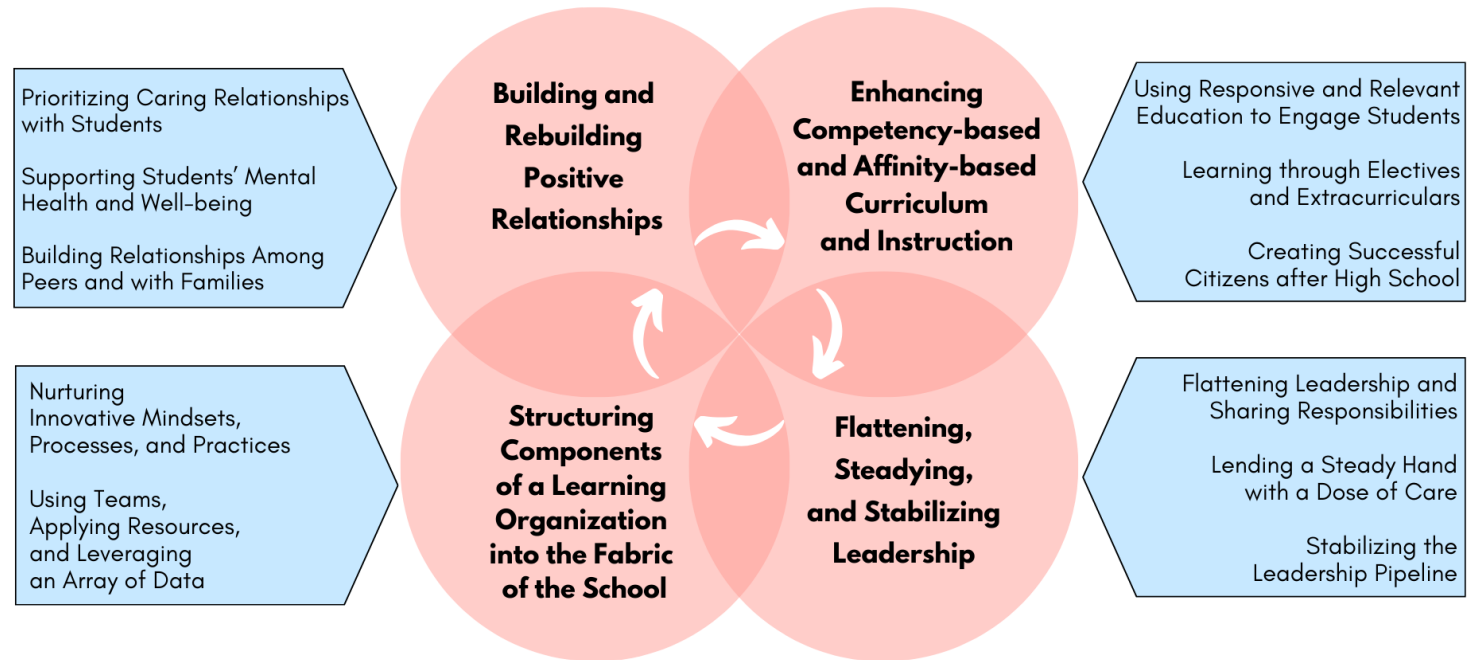
School	Total Enrollment	Grade Span	Economically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	ELL	American Indian/ Alaska Native	African American	Hispanic-Latino	Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	White	Multiracial	National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Urbanicity Category
Alfred-Almond Jr. Sr. High School	272	7-12	45%	15%	0	0	0	5%	4%	88%	3%	Rural Fringe
Brookfield Central School	195	K-12	78%	24%	0	0	1%	0	0	99%	1%	Rural Distant
Crown Point Central School District	301	K-12	57%	20%	0	0	0	0	0	100%	0	Rural Distant
Malverne Senior High School	628	9-12	46%	14%	1%	0	48%	28%	7%	15%	1%	Suburb Large
Fillmore Central School	589	6-8	61%	15%	0	0	1%	1%	1%	96%	0	Rural Remote
LaFayette Jr/Sr High School	323	7-12	43%	12%	0	28%	1%	2%	1%	66%	2%	Rural Fringe
Roxbury Central School	212	K-12	42%	18%	0	0	1%	2%	0	92%	4%	Rural Remote
<b>NYS Average</b>	<b>2,422,494</b>	<b>K-12</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>3%</b>	



# Total Data Collected

	Crown Point	<u>Malverne</u>	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

# Findings



# Building and Rebuilding Positive Relationships

*We care about them [students] as human beings ... before we ... educate them.* – teacher (Brookfield)

- Prioritizing caring relationships with students.
- Supporting students' mental health and well-being
- Building relationships among peers and with families



Fillmore hallway sign, “Everyone is Welcome Here, Everyone Belongs”

# Enhancing Competency-based and Affinity-based Curriculum and Instruction

*I think that's what quality instruction is – it's kind of letting your learners guide you instead of the curriculum guiding what you do. – teacher (Fillmore)*

- Using Responsive and Relevant Education to Engage Students
- Learning through Electives and Extracurriculars
- Creating Successful Citizens after High School



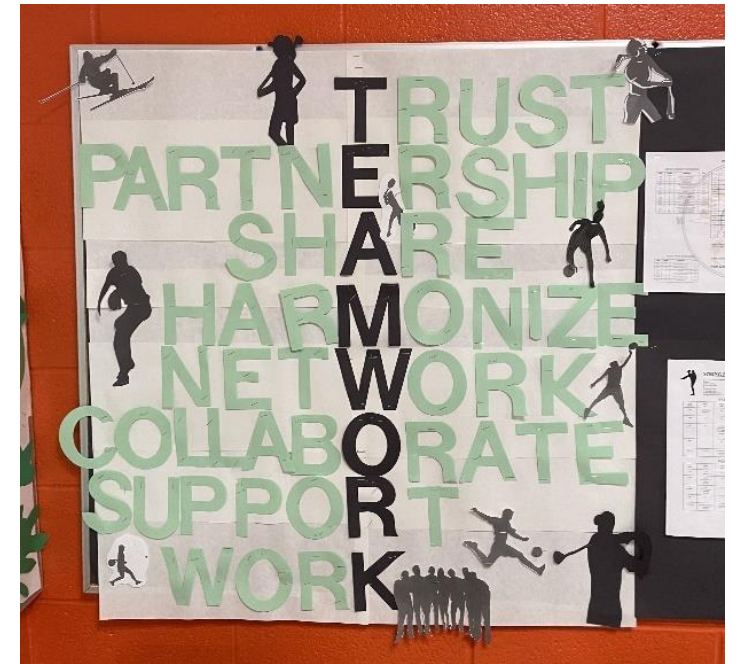
Native literature displayed in the library of LaFayette



# Flattening, Steadying, and Stabilizing Leadership

***I think the most valuable and best part about this district is the autonomy you're given.*** – teacher (Alfred Almond)

- Flattening leadership and sharing responsibilities
- Lending a steady hand with a dose of care
- Stabilizing the leadership pipeline



Poster highlighting the meaning of “teamwork” at Roxbury

# Structuring Components of a Learning Organization into the Fabric of the School

***I think we always look at the data, I mean, data, data, the data sings.*** – school leader (Malverne)

- Nurturing innovative mindsets, processes, and practices
- Using teams, applying resources, and leveraging array of data

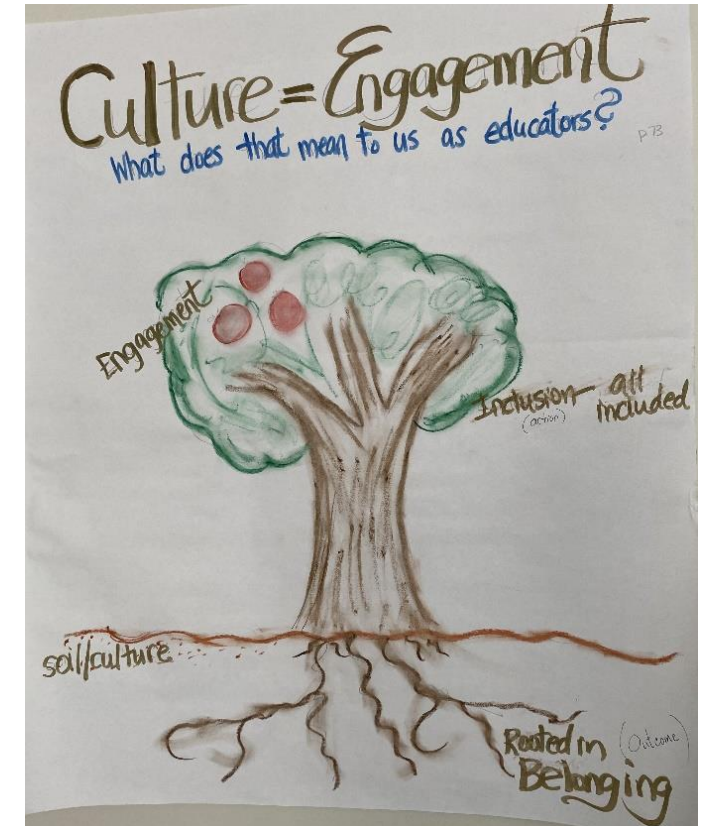
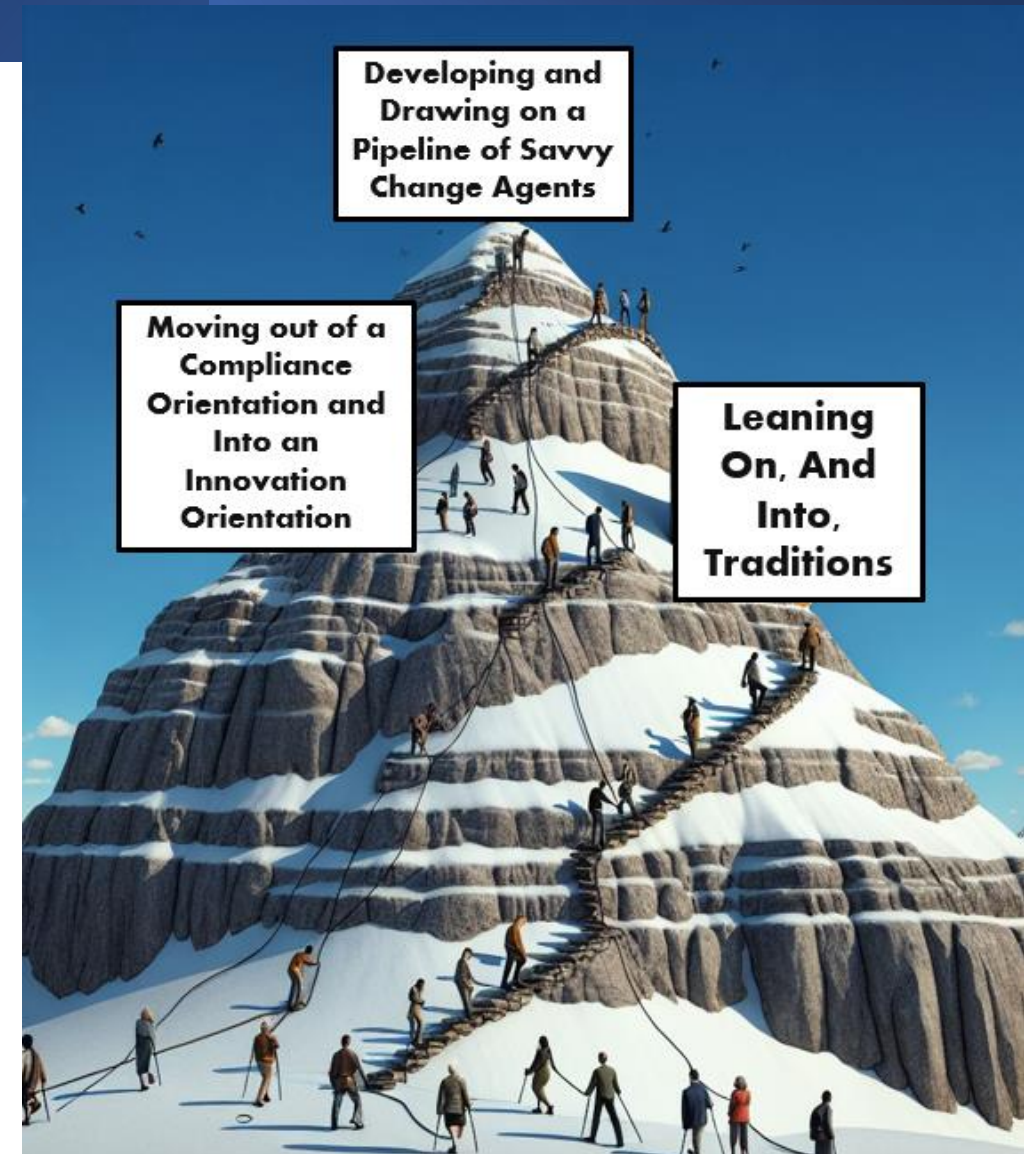


Image depicting Fillmore as a learning organization: What engagement means to educators

# Climbing toward Outlier Status: Three Anchors

- *We don't feel like we're there — like our work is ever done. We're looking at areas where we need to improve. And I think the second we sit back and say we're good, we're going to have a lot of problems.* – persistent positive outlier district leader (Malverne)
- *And we need to be moving away from sit and get because the kids are not getting what they need....So that's what the goal is for next year. What's a math classroom going to look like at the high school level? That's going to be out of their [some teachers'] comfort zone.* – emergent positive outlier school leader (LaFayette)





# Spotlight on Malverne

How do Malverne leaders achieve better student outcomes over time?



# Introduction to MHS

- ❑ South Shore of Long Island, New York
- ❑ Suburban Community; 30 minutes from NYC
- ❑ 46% Economically Disadvantaged
- ❑ 1% ENL population

Black	48%
Hispanic	28%
White	15%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	7%
Multi-Racial	1%





# GREATNESS *Unleashed*



MHS Ranked for the sixth straight year as one of "America's Best High Schools!" Top 11% in the Nation

97% Graduation Rate with 97% Regents Diploma

Advanced Regents Diploma: 71%

85% of the Class of 2024 took a College Course or AP Course

Recipient of the AP Silver Honor Roll and AP Access Award

22 students earned the NYS Seal of Biliteracy

13 NYS Scholar Athlete Teams

Over \$13 Million in Scholarships

82% of senior class earned the Seal of Civic Readiness



# Culture of Connection and Inclusivity

- Importance on Community: It is essential for us to foster a "Family-like" atmosphere where staff refer to students as "Our kids" rather than just "students."
- Committed to Diversity and Equity: Malverne has a long history of integration and civil rights advocacy.
- Student Engagement in Civic Issues: We continue to celebrate Juneteenth and MLK Day of Service as a district to promote social justice



# Future- Oriented & Innovative Mindset

- Leaders and educators operate with a "never done" mentality, always looking for areas to improve.
- Highly adaptive academic and extracurricular programs: We create new courses, clubs, and scheduling innovations to meet student needs. For example: VE, Math success labs, Big Brothers/ Sisters Club
- The "Boutique" approach: Despite our size, we provide students and families with vast opportunities and experiences.





# Leadership that is Purposeful, Patient, & Proactive

- Flattened leadership structure: Encourages collaboration and shared decision-making.
- Open communication: Open-door policy with teachers, students, and union representatives.
- Strategic hiring: Ensure all stakeholders are represented and prioritizing hiring diverse and skilled educators.
- Growing leadership from within: Many administrators had other roles in the district before becoming an administrator.
- Teacher recruitment and retention strategies tied to the District's mission

# Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) & Student well-Being

- Restorative justice over punitive discipline: Malverne High School embraces restorative practices to address student behavior.
- Mental health and behavioral support: Continued partnership with local healthcare providers for crisis intervention, supports, & mentorship. ( LIJ Girls in Medicine)
- Programs like Reconnecting Youth, Youth & Police Initiative, and LIJ Girls in Medicine foster trust and student well-being.
- Extra-curricular activities: 25 clubs



# Data-Driven Decision Making

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Through this system, we ensure all students, not just struggling ones, get intervention and support. (In-class intervention resources, RAP, AP Review, "just in-time instruction")
- Infinite Campus Software, Data Warehouse, and other technology used to track academic progress and trends.
- Regular staff collaboration on data analysis to inform curriculum and support strategies.

# Structural Innovations for Student Success

Freshman Academy :  
Supports incoming 9th  
graders in their transition to  
high school.

Freshman and New Student  
Summer Orientation

HS Ambassadors Program

Parent Academies: College  
Readiness, Financial Aid,  
Advanced Placement and  
Dual Enrollment Night

Master Scheduling for  
Excellence: Allows students  
to balance multiple activities  
while maintaining academic  
rigor—creativity is essential  
here!!!

Long Building Hours:  
Teachers, coaches, and  
mentors provide on-demand  
support beyond school hours.

Homework Center



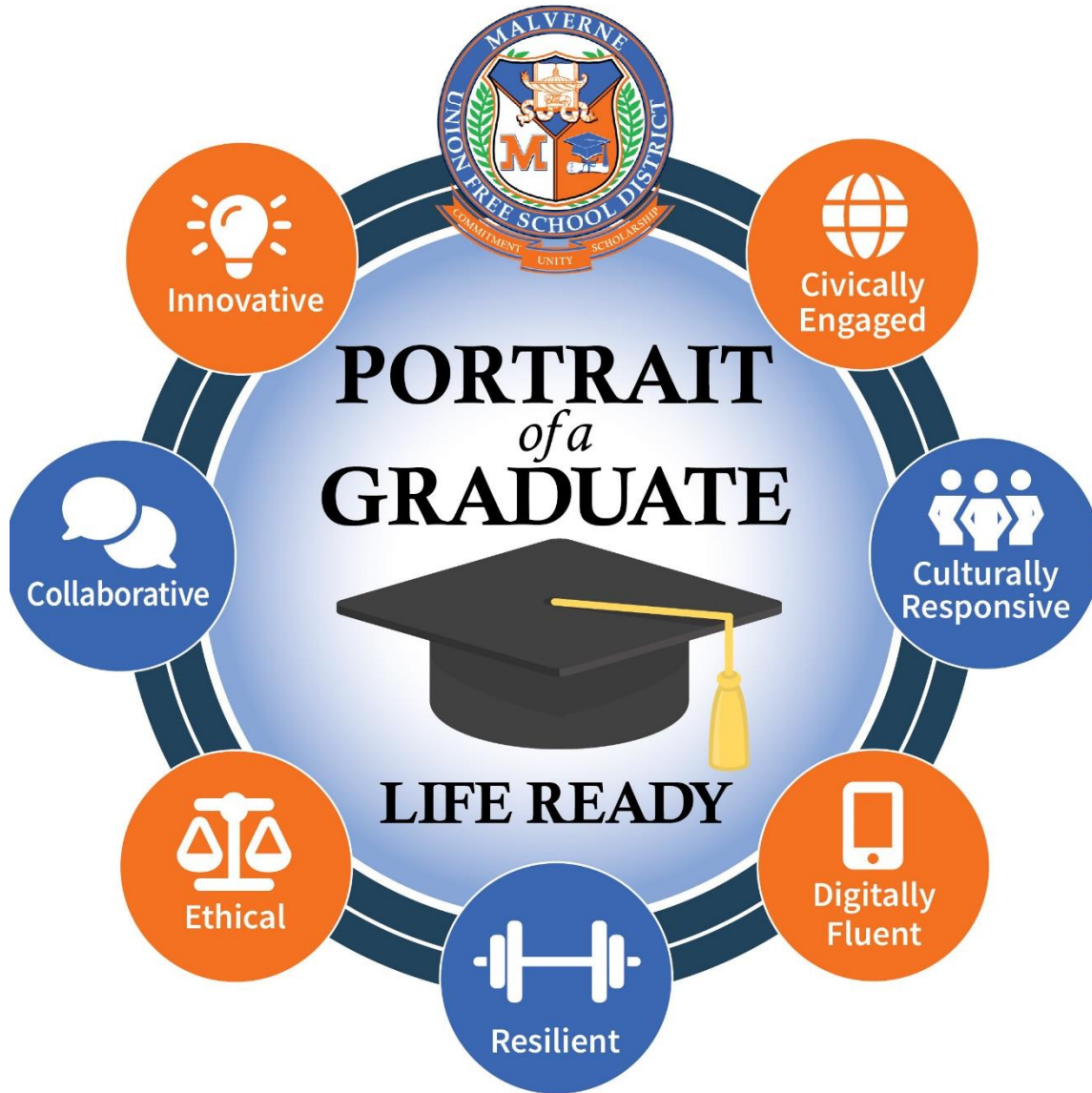
# Strong Parent & Community Engagement

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee: Engages parents in decision-making.
- Digital Tools: Thought Exchange, Remind app, Hybrid PTA meetings
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Collaboration with Central Council PTA to enhance parent involvement across the district.
- Malverne's Promise

**MALVERNE A TRADITION OF  
EXCELLENCE**







# Our Promise

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“Malverne promises an education crafted with purpose where every student is seen, supported, and inspired.”

Thank you!

Please sign up for NYKids' newsletter  
and check our site for this study's  
report on our research results page.

