

Catalysts for Improving Diverse Student High School Graduation Rates in Positive Outlier Schools

Background/Rationale

- ❖ Why do some schools undergo repeated reforms but improve little, while others manage to reverse a poor or downward performance trajectory?
- ❖ How do some schools do this in the face of challenging policies and dramatic changes in their respective student bodies, workforces, and surrounding communities?

Theory of improvement

- ❖ What can be done to help educators break free from sub-optimal routines and performance trajectories?

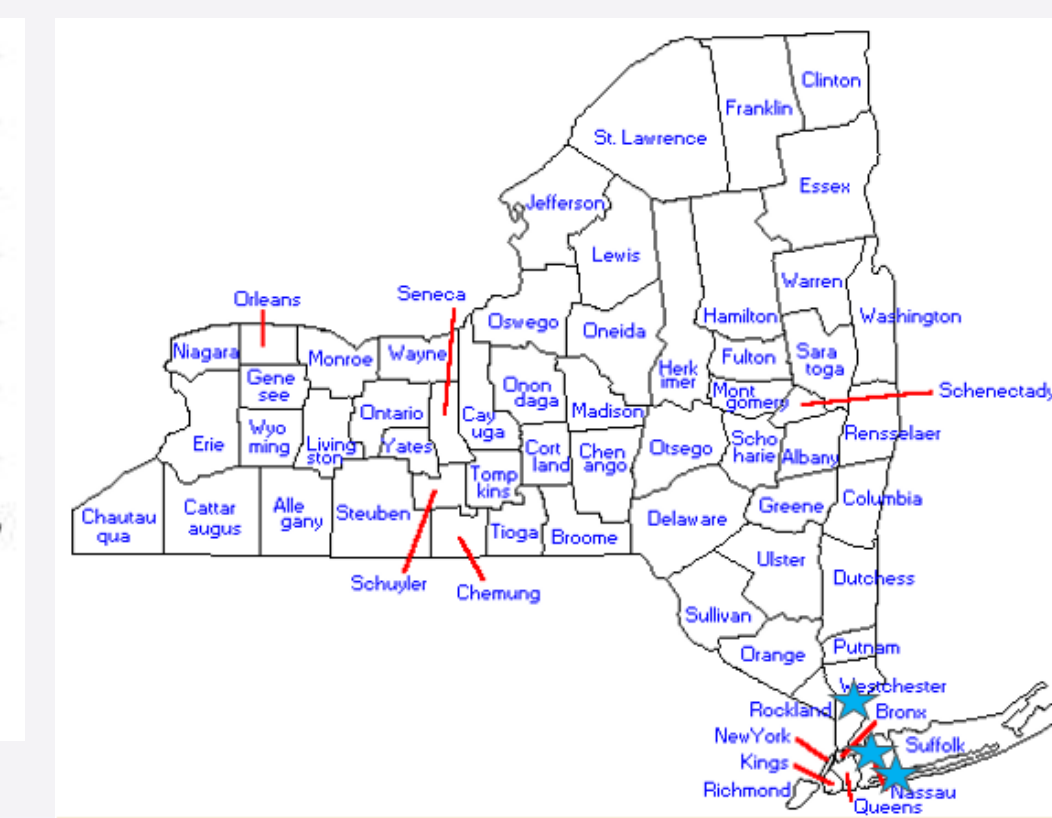
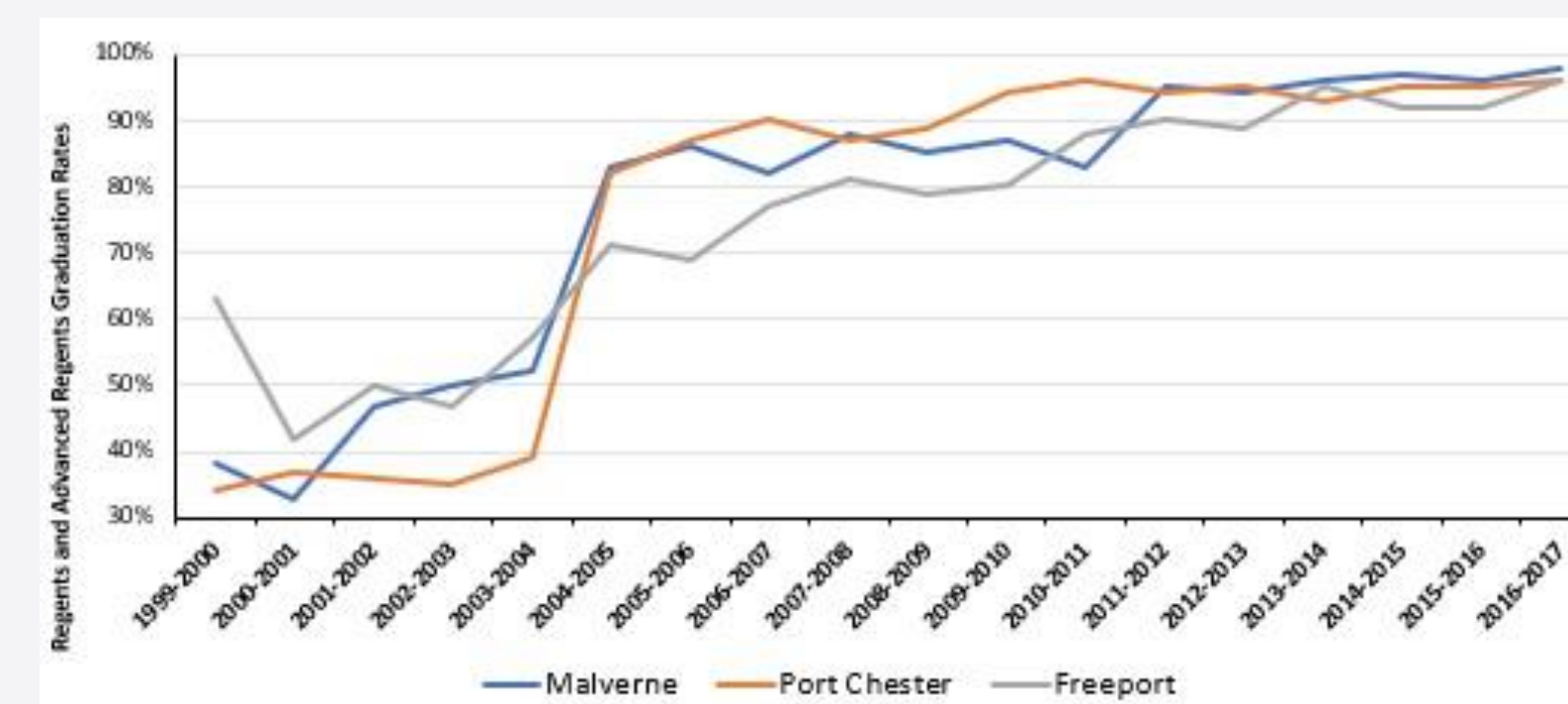
Elmore's Recommendations

STEP 1: Stop talking about reform; instead substitute improvement.

STEP 2: Focus on what is malleable: Framing problems and priorities; choice of discourses; decisions about practices & policies as aligned with priorities.

Aim/Goal

- ❖ This research introduces 3 positive outlier schools (those with better than predicted student outcomes) to highlight catalysts for improvement in their graduation rates.

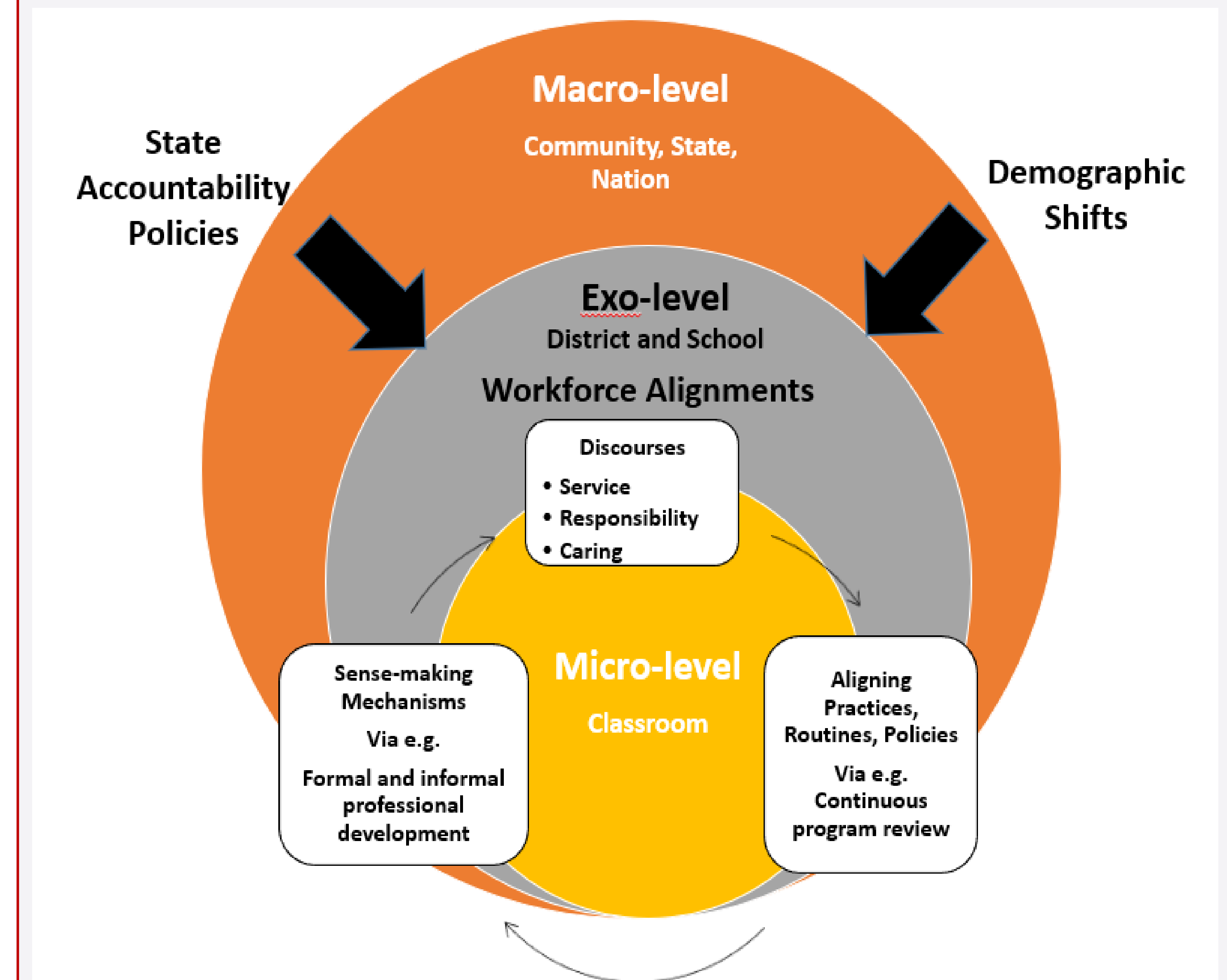


- ❖ Catalysts include: different discourses, alignment and coherence mechanisms, routine changes, and new opportunities for collective sense-making.

Data and Measures

	Malverne	Port Chester	Freeport	Total
Interviews	3	2	7	12
Focus Groups	9	13	6	28
Documents	10	6	6	22
School Tour	1	1	1	3
Interpretive Memos	1	1	1	3

Learnings/Findings



Concrete Example

“I think my leadership style is really... servant leadership, you know, to me I'm here to serve the kids. They are the most important people...I do anything and everything that I can do to make them successful, happy people overall, and then become productive global citizens...As much I want to inspire, I want to be collaborative, work with my team...I want to believe in that we have done everything possible on our end”.
—Freeport Superintendent