Getting Students in Poverty to Graduation and Beyond

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NYKids
(Know Your Schools~for NY Kids)

School of Education
University at Albany
State University of New York
Overall Findings

Schools with higher than expected graduation rates are looking beyond graduation to students’ post-secondary needs – and meeting those needs with clear goals, strong relationships, individual attention, and flexibility.
About NYKids (Know Your Schools~for NY Kids)*

• Research to identify best practices
• Useful, usable results
• Accessible resources
• Processes to support improvement by leadership teams

Inform – Inspire – Improve

*formerly Just for the Kids-New York
NYKids

2005-2014 – 6 studies

- Elementary schools (2005)
- Middle schools (2007)
- High schools (2008)
- Middle school science (2009)
- Critical needs students at the elementary level (2011)
- High school graduation (2013)
- English Language Learners (2016)
The Basics

• Performance over time (3 years)
• NYS Report Card Data
• Consistently higher or average performing
• Find the differences in practice
High School Grad Study Sample

- High school 4-year graduation rate
- Cohorts of 2004 - 2006
- At least 2/5 at-risk groups
- Regressed against school size, student stability, ethnicity, SES
- 8 higher performing, 5 average performing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Z Score, Higher Performers (HPs)</th>
<th>1.23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Z Score, Average Performers (APs)</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High School Sample cont.

• “Favor” poverty (F/RL)
  – HPs high needs; APs average needs
• Open admissions
• ~NYS avg per pupil expenditures
• Primarily rural, exurban HPs (APs similar)

Higher performers

Approximate location, average performers
HP High Schools

Amityville Memorial HS, Amityville UFSD [M-s]
Brookfield HS, Brookfield CSD [S-r]
Downsville HS, Downsville CSD [S-r]
Eastridge HS, East Irodequito CSD [M-s]
Elmont Memorial HS, Sewanhaka HSD [L-u]
Otselic Valley J/SH, Georgetown-S Otselic CSD [S-r]
Prattsburgh HS, Prattsburgh CSD [S-r]
Whitesville HS, Whitesville CSD [S-r]

S=small, M=mid-sized, L=large
R=rural, s=suburban, u=urban
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th># Stu 9-12</th>
<th>% F/RL</th>
<th>% EL</th>
<th>% AA</th>
<th>% H/Lat</th>
<th>% Wht</th>
<th>% Oth.</th>
<th>4-Year Grad Rate</th>
<th>N/R Ratio</th>
<th>PPE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Amityville</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>H</td>
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<td>Brookfield</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downsville</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
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<td>989</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>$19,406</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elmont</td>
<td>1307</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>$18,176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Otselic V.</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>$22,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prattsburgh</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>$20,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitesville</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>$23,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP average</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>$23,812</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP average</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>$24,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYS</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>$20,410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data are from 2010-11 State Report Cards.
Methods

- 2-day site visits (2-person teams)
- Interviewed teachers, administrators, and specialists (special ed, guidance, social workers); 144 total
- Collected documents
- Analyzed, wrote a case study for each site*
- Analyzed, wrote cross-site analysis*
- Analyzed, created best practice framework*

* Available at: www.albany/nykids
Results available at www.albany.edu/nykids

- Case reports, all Higher-Performing schools (55)
- Cross-case reports, each study (6)
- Best practice frameworks (most current 5)
- Documentary evidence (in BP framework)
- Self-assessments
- “COMPASS” Institutes to support school teams to use these resources to use data to plan, monitor, improve (fee basis; all other resources freely available)
The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools
Overall Findings

Schools with higher than expected graduation rates are looking *beyond* graduation to students’ post-secondary needs – and meeting those needs with clear goals, strong relationships, individual attention, and flexibility.
What Makes a Difference

Alignment of goals and curriculum,

Bridging divides within the school and between school and community,

Crafting engaging instruction, and

Driving a whole-child intervention loop.
Alignment of goals and curriculum

- Working toward mastery and post-secondary education
- Using evidence to inform goal setting and curriculum development
- Teacher leadership
- Beyond-the-school networking

*July 1: Where are you? What are you doing?*

- Amityville guidance counselor
Alignment of goals and curriculum

Philosophically administrators and teachers are aligned, with their primary focus on supporting students to be successful learners and to graduate. This vision and conviction ultimately seems to be the bond that ties this school community together.

Whitesville case study, Tangorre, 2013
Bridging divides within the school and between school and community

• Collaborating with colleagues
• Connecting home and school
• Developing school and community relations
• Linking social and academic support for students

Our strength is having to pull together as a community.

- Otselic Valley teacher
Bridging divides within the school and between school and community

If we notice a student starting to slip in one subject, we have a team conference with the parents and all the students’ teachers.

Prattsburgh teacher
Crafting engaging instruction

• Instruction to promote higher-order thinking
• Strategies for active and broad participation
• Experiential opportunities
• Evidence-informed and technology-enhanced

A good teacher is someone whose students are engaged, involved in the learning activities, thinking, responding, . . . challenging themselves. It’s the engagement of students in the learning activities that marks the good teacher.

— Brookfield principal
Crafting engaging instruction

We don’t want students to tell us a right answer so much as we want them to voice their thought processes.

We’re now teaching how to think not what to think.

I also want them to think for themselves.

Prattsburgh teachers
Driving a whole-child intervention loop

• Organized and collaborative data monitoring and analysis
• Timely and targeted interventions

The spreadsheet we use is a living document on every student junior to senior year: how many credits they need, the exams they still need, PSAT and SAT scores. That’s definitely the lifeline. We have weekly meetings every Wednesday with ed services and the assistant principal who’s the head of the alternative program. We talk about students we’re worried about. We compare notes, test scores, [and updates]. – Eastridge school administrator
Driving a whole-child intervention loop

The children all have at least one person (on staff) whom they connect to.

When we know someone is in trouble, we intervene early and quickly and we get involved. . . . All of a sudden, this kid who is struggling . . . [has] all this support.

Whitesville principal, social services personnel
The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools
1. For each A ROW, read the 2 statements and choose the one that fits your school better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: My school is more like this</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>My school is more like this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After, before, and during-school instruction is offered, but less than twice a week, with no special education support or alignment to classroom learning objectives.</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>After, before, and during-school instruction is offered with special education support and close linking to classroom learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Go to the B row in the COLUMN you chose, and circle the number (1 or 2 OR 3 or 4) of the better description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #1 or #2</th>
<th>very similar</th>
<th>somewhat similar</th>
<th>B: If my school is more like this, about how much? Circle #3 or #4</th>
<th>somewhat similar</th>
<th>very similar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Do this for each set of statements (4)
Questions to discuss

• About which statement do you and the others in your group most agree?
• Disagree?
• Can you give examples to support your ranking?
If we had time and you were reflecting on A, B, C, and D, you would then

4. Add the circled numbers and divide by 4 to find the average for each. You could then compare your rankings to find the area of potentially greatest difference from the higher performers’ practices.
The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best practices from higher-performing high schools
New and related research

NY Kids

Announcements:
NY Kids researchers’ upcoming CASDA PD session: "Defining Characteristics and Practices of Odds-Beating Schools," November 2, 8:30-11:30am. For more information, see:
http://www.casdany.org/#/oddsbeatingschools/c1y2l

Inform – inspire - improve

www.albany.edu/nykids
Consider how well you think your school or district is addressing each of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not at all well</th>
<th>somewhat well</th>
<th>well</th>
<th>very well</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Faculty members continuously seek networking opportunities with not only local colleagues from multiple subject areas and grade levels but also with educators in other districts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Expectations of students reaching the mastery level and able to achieve a college degree are promoted through ambitious, student-centered goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shared leadership is consciously cultivated around aligned goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers and other school personnel are constantly engaged in systematic, evidence-informed goal setting data analysis, and curriculum evaluation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 3. Bridging Divides, What is your school like? *
NY Kids

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NY Kids researchers' upcoming CASDA PD session: "Defining Characteristics and Practices of Odds-Beating Schools," November 2, 8:30-11:30am. For more information, see: http://www.casdany.org/#/oddsbeatingschools/c1y2l
Opportunity Gap bar charts
Regents US History

Inform – inspire - improve
The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

Best Practices Case Study: Supporting High School Completion

Kathy Nickson, March 2013

Eastridge High School
East Irondequoit Central School District

School Context

The East Irondequoit Central School District, in Monroe County (NY), serves 3600 students in two primary schools, two intermediate schools, and one high school. At first glance, the district appears to encompass a suburb of family homes bordering two bodies of water and the north side of Rochester. However, a more critical look reveals many families struggling economically, with approximately 27% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The district has little in the way of industry, and not much land on which new industry might locate. It is very dependent, an administrator explained, when it comes to finances, “We try to be very creative and careful about how grant money is used.”

At Eastridge High School, with nearly 1,000 students in grades 9-12, the student body embrace the school’s socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity, as one staff person said, “Diversity creates a very tolerant socio-economic, racial, and cultural mix. While we have students from all walks of life, there’s a lot to be grateful for.”
http://www.albany.edu/nykids/frameworks_high_school_completion.php

Organized by 5 themes

- Curriculum & academic goals
- Staff selection, leadership, and capacity building
- Instructional programs, practices, and arrangements
- Monitoring: Compilation, analysis, and use of data
- Recognition, intervention & adjustments

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Eastridge High, East Irondequoit Central

With 250 students per grade, Eastridge uses a spreadsheet to track progress of individual seniors toward graduation, including when they took the SAT, whose cost is covered by the (East Irondequoit) district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Exams Needed</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>On Track</th>
<th>Downtrack?</th>
<th>At Risk? Y/N</th>
<th>5 or 6th SAT</th>
<th>10,11th SAT</th>
<th>12th SAT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>RAD</td>
<td>Yes Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>470/440/440</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, attendance</td>
<td>580/480/480</td>
<td>540/480/480</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>480/430/380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.75</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>1/2012 graduate</td>
<td>390/430/320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>Reg</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>480/430/380</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yes, needs exams and 3rd math</td>
<td>600/420/530</td>
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<td>Reg</td>
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<td>460/570/580</td>
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<td>STAY</td>
<td>600/420/530</td>
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<td>360/370/400</td>
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Questions? More info?

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swiles@albany.edu
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A Toolkit for Leadership Teams to Build Capacity for Data-Guided Decision Making

The ABCs of Graduating At-Risk Students on Time

From the NYKids Project in the University at Albany’s School of Education
Poverty, performance, and frog ponds
WHAT BEST-PRACTICE RESEARCH TELLS US ABOUT THEIR CONNECTIONS

Higher-performing schools create conditions that address some of the challenges of teaching students living in poverty.

By Janet I. Angelis & Kristen C. W

Journal of Research in Rural Education, 2014, 29(9)

The Value of People, Place and Possibilities: A Multiple Case Study of Rural High School Completion

Kristen Campbell Wilcox
Janet I. Angelis
Linda Baker
Hal A. Lawson
University at Albany


What are the qualities of classroom, school, and district processes and practices in rural high schools with higher-than-average graduation rates? How do these processes and practices compare with rural schools with histories of average graduation rates? In this study, six schools were sampled for a multiple case study of rural high school completion. Four had higher-than-average graduation rates, while two had average rates. All six schools were visited by site teams who conducted 63 interviews and collected documentary evidence of processes and practices related to high school graduation. Using cross-case analytic procedures, we found several important contrasts between the two sets of sample schools. Differences in graduation outcomes in these rural schools were associated with (1) the qualities of academic goals, expectations, and learning opportunities; (2) the nature of individual and collective educator efficacy; (3) the strategies educators used to develop and maintain family relationships and engage community members; and (4) mechanisms for adapting instruction and employing interventions for students at risk of dropping out.