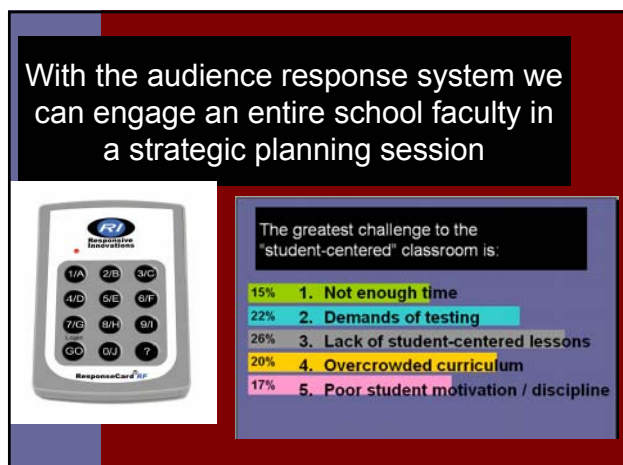
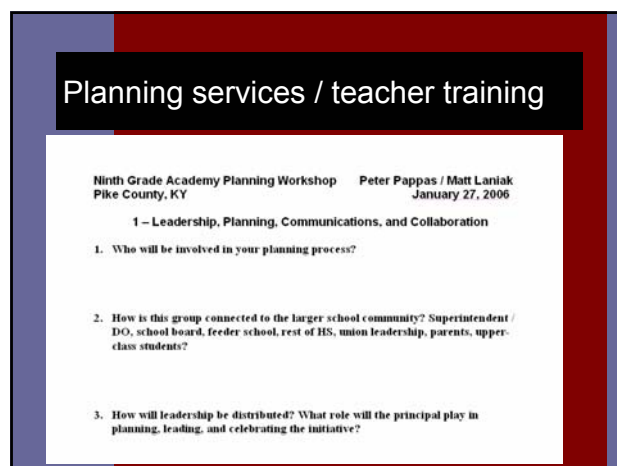
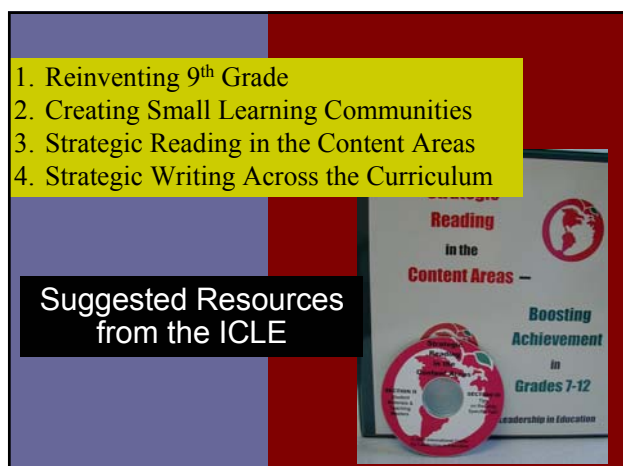
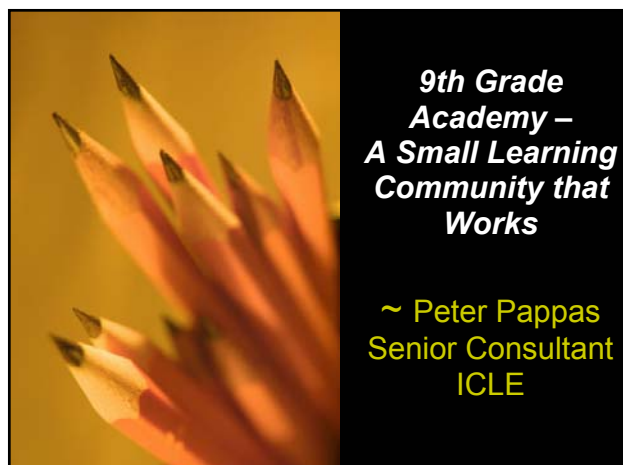
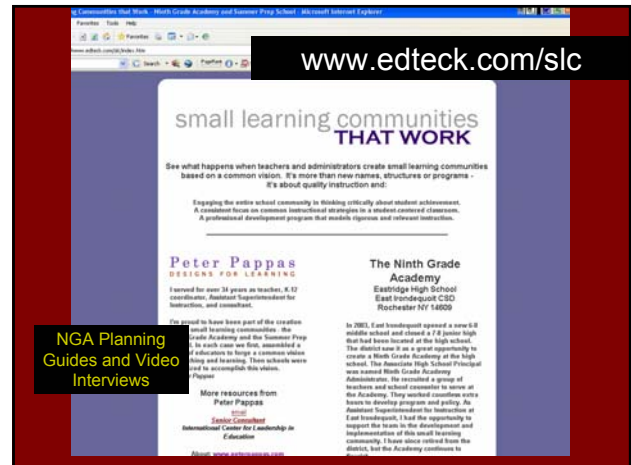
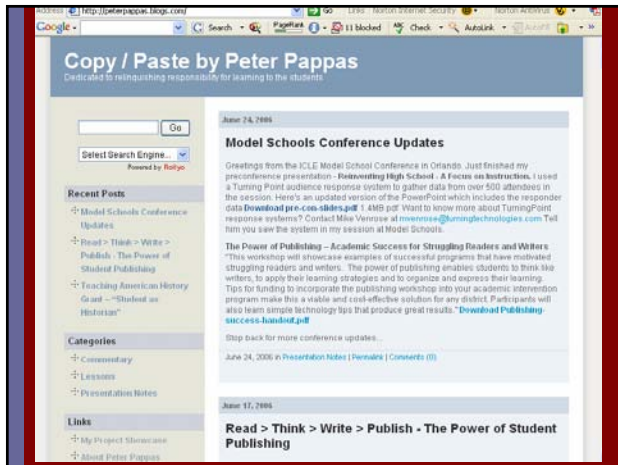


## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



### Agenda

1. Leadership and planning
2. Instruction
3. Program
4. Student
5. Parents
6. Teacher support

### Pittsford Central School District

## SUMMER PREP SCHOOL 2000

Classes:  
 Week 1  
 Week 2  
 Week 3  
 Week 4  
 Prep 1999

Program Guide  
 Faculty / Interns  
 Sketchpad Project  
 Student WebZine  
 Student Web Pages  
 Parents' Workshops  
 Reviews

Summer Transition Program for academically at-risk

Peter Pappas / Director  
 Archived Website: by Peter Pappas  
 email: [senior@peterpappas.com](mailto:senior@peterpappas.com)  
 Senior Consultant  
 International Center for Leadership in Education

About: [www.peterpappas.com](http://www.peterpappas.com)  
 Showcase: [www.edteck.com](http://www.edteck.com)  
 Blog: [peterpappas.blogspot.com/](http://peterpappas.blogspot.com/)

Skills and Motivation  
 Math / Reading /  
 Critical Thinking Skills

Imbedded staff  
 development in  
 learning lab

Parenting Workshops

46 % improve final course grades  
 in three or four core courses

### College and High School Interns

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

Motivation:  
Juggling  
Ropes  
Rock Climbing  
White Water Kayaking



"The Summer Prep School was the **best thing that could have happened to my daughter** this summer.

She struggled throughout the school year - and with the frustration of struggling, she lost confidence and enthusiasm for school in general.

However, **this excellent program spurred in her a renewed interest in learning.**"

~ Parent

www.edteck.com/slc

small learning communities **THAT WORK**

See what happens when teachers and administrators create small learning communities based on a common vision. It's more than new names, structures or programs - it's about quality instruction and...

Engaging the entire school community in thinking critically about student achievement. A consistent focus on common instructional strategies in a student centered classroom. A professional development program that models rigorous and relevant instruction.

**Peter Pappas**  
DESIGNS FOR LEARNING  
I served for over 14 years as teacher, K-12 coordinator, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, and consultant.

**The Ninth Grade Academy**  
Eastridge High School  
East Irondequoit CSD  
Rochester NY 14609

In 2003, East Irondequoit approved a new 6-8 middle school and closed a 12 junior high that had been located at the high school. The district saw it as a great opportunity to create a Ninth Grade Academy at the high school. The Assistant High School Principal was named Ninth Grade Academy Administrator. He recruited a group of teachers and school counselors to serve at the Academy. They worked countless extra hours to develop program and policy. As Assistant Superintendent for Instruction at East Irondequoit, I had the opportunity to support the team in the development and implementation of this small learning community. I have since retired from the district, but the Academy continues to...

More resources from Peter Pappas  
Senior Consultant  
International Center for Leadership in Education  
about www.edteck.com


### A Small Learning Community that Works

*Our essential questions:*

"Has our school forged a common vision of teaching and learning?"

"How have we organized to accomplish this vision?"

**Must first forge a common view of teaching and learning**

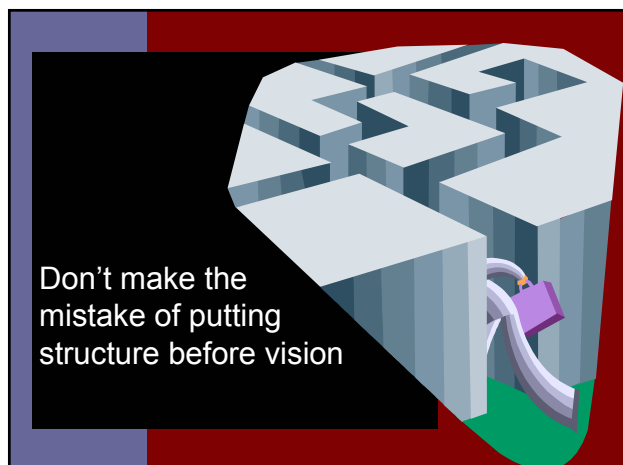


And then treat the organization as an instrument for accomplishing the vision



A Case Study:  
*Ninth Grade Academy*  
East Irondequoit CSD  
Rochester NY

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



Why do you think you need a Ninth Grade Academy?



### The legacy of a decade of budget cuts

- No professional development
- Few viable committees
- Fragmented curriculum
- Low expectations
- Exiting families and teachers

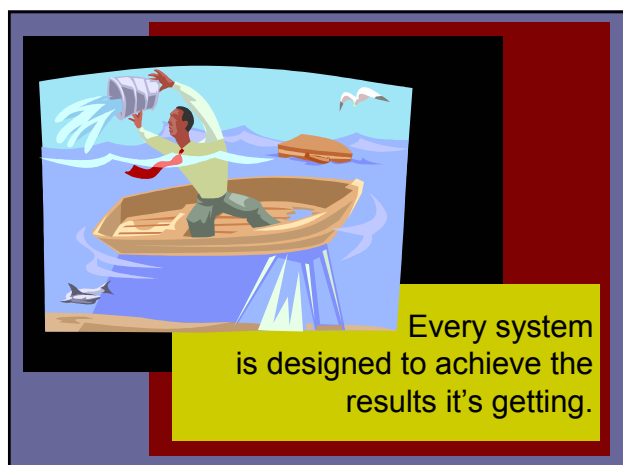


Culture of mediocrity

### Impact on our high school

- Academic rigor took a back seat to climate
- Little district support for HS academic innovation
- High failure rate, most student repeating classes
- Low graduation rate

A solid administrative team that provided a safe environment



East Irondequoit 1999

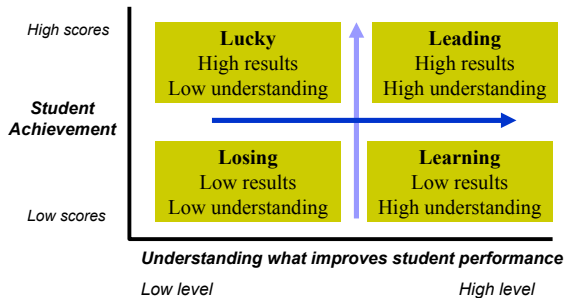


- First year of new state tests
- Lowest scores in the county



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

### Doug Reeves on “targeting success”



How did we use data to target our problems?

*...and explode a few myths*

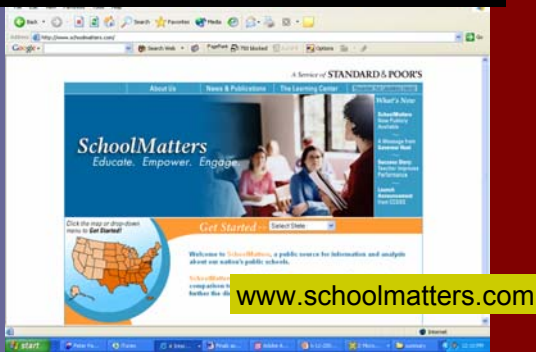


use the data – build a commitment to evidence and hypothesis testing

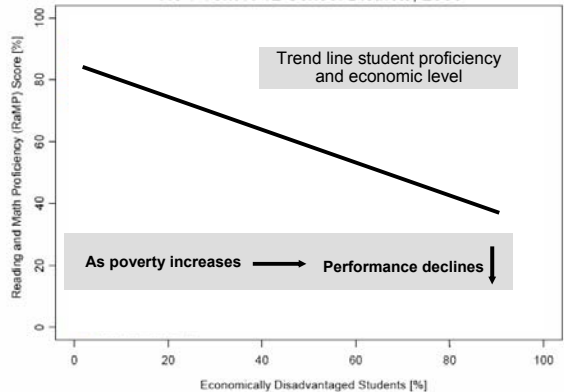
- Don't debate program issues on the basis of what's **popular** with teachers or parents
- Focus on **objective measures** of what's working (or not working!)



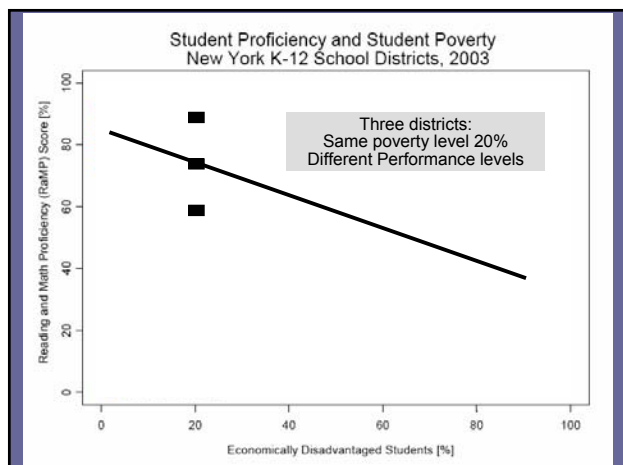
Smashing the myth that student performance is determined by student demographics



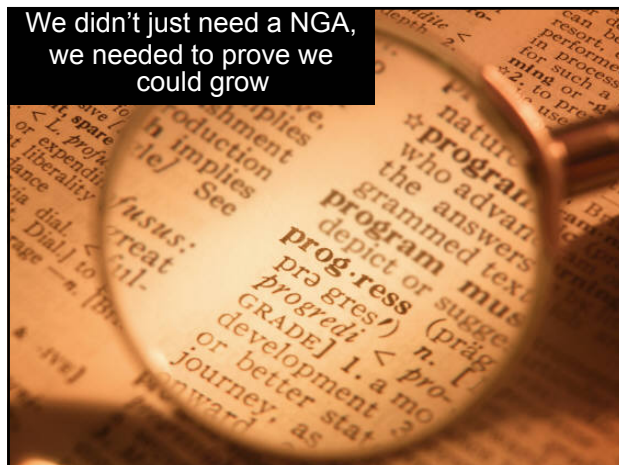
Student Proficiency and Student Poverty  
New York K-12 School Districts, 2003



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



We didn't just need a NGA,  
we needed to prove we  
could grow



Leadership,  
Planning,  
Communication  
and  
Collaboration



In 2003 we replaced our 7-8 Junior High  
with new  
6-8 middle  
school



2002 – our associate principal,  
charged with design of NGA

- Recruit teachers from HS.
- Weekly planning meetings
- Input from parent's committee of SBT
- Teachers work collectively in the planning of all curriculum and program

Matt Laniak - Associate Principal and  
Founding Ninth Grade Academy Director



matt\_laniak@eastiron.monroe.edu

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

A NGA teacher:

"I **first got excited** about the Academy in Jan '03. Matt **saw it through to reality**. Too often reform just comes and goes.

He's concerned about **getting the data we need to support our students**. He knows how to **align it with the standards**.

There's a **huge difference** in how we run the Academy."

A NGA teacher:

"Two years ago we got together. Matt assigned the **teaching roles** and helped us work through the **policy development**.

We didn't set this up in one day - **we all put in many extra unpaid hours**.

It's not about debating ideas. It's been **about collaboration**."

### Staff teamwork

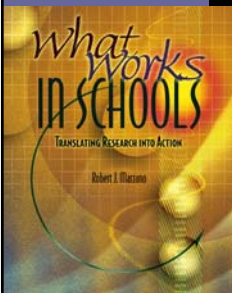
- Meetings are held each Tuesday to discuss student issues with all NGA teachers, counselor and principal.
- Everyone gets to know all students.
- Issues are dealt with quickly and consistently.
- Share problems and successes.

A dedicated staff who share a philosophy and work as one cohesive group

Curriculum,  
data and  
instructional  
model



**What's your vision for instruction?**



Robert Marzano:  
*What Works in Schools*

"35 years of research concretely identifies the factors that are the **primary determinants of student achievement**."

Robert J. Marzano, *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*, 2003

### APPENDIX: SNAPSHOT SURVEY OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FACTORS

	Question 1 To what extent do we engage in the behavior or actions listed below?	Question 2 How much will a change in our practices on the items below significantly change our practices regarding this issue?	Question 3 How much effort will it take to significantly change our practices regarding this issue?
	Not at all	Not at all	Not at all
	1	1	1
	2	2	2
	3	3	3
	4	4	4
	5	5	5
	6	6	6
	7	7	7
	8	8	8
	9	9	9
	10	10	10

What should we focus on?

- Do we engage in this practice?
- How much would it impact student performance?
- How feasible is it to implement?

## Why do students struggle?

The problem is not illiteracy, but **comprehension**. The bulk of struggling secondary readers can read, but **cannot understand what they read**.

~Reading Next

effective programs make a difference

“The districts that are highly effective at the district- and teacher-level factors produce results that **almost entirely overcome the effects of student background.**”



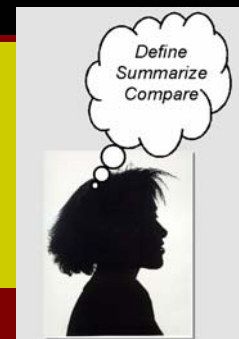
Use consistent approaches

- Academic vocabulary
- Set purpose for reading
- Compact the curriculum
- Learning strategies



Consistent focus on learning strategies

- Define: negotiating meaning
- Summarize: synthesis and judgment
- Compare: assessing similarities and differences



www.edteck.com/read

## content reading strategies THAT WORK

Literacy and Content Area Reading Strategies for Academic Success

Boost student achievement with rigor, relevance and literacy strategies for academic success. Designed for high school teachers of all disciplines, the resource will demonstrate that teachers don't have to sacrifice content or become a reading teacher. Teachers will find out how to support their students while building student literacy skills in mastering vocabulary, comprehension and analysis. Custom resources available... from a few hours to a few days.

by Peter Pappas  
Senior Consultant, International Center for Leadership in Education

About: [www.peterpappas.com](http://www.peterpappas.com)  
Showcase: [www.edteck.com](http://www.edteck.com)  
Blog: [peterpappas.blogspot.com](http://peterpappas.blogspot.com)

Visit my blog and download Literacy Strategies for the Multi-Media Classroom

Model School Conference 2009 Nashville TN

Viewable pdf of Literacy Strategies

## STRATEGIES FOR STRUGGLING READERS



### Meet the "Word-Caller"

The "word-caller" reads orally with accuracy and fluency. Silent reading appears rapid, attentive and purposeful. These students can respond to "right-there" questions when they are allowed to reread but their responses are disorganized and tenuous; they cannot generalize, summarize, synthesize, analyze, infer or evaluate. They do not grasp the relationship of ideas or their importance or relevance. "Word Callers" need support to realize that reading is about constructing meaning and to develop and apply those tools.

The "word-caller" also:

- Provides minimal written responses; their work lacks elaboration.
- Seldom volunteers responses; or raises hand to answer but "forgets."
- Performs poorly on tests that require comprehension or understanding.
- Prefers group work for answers.
- Exhibits poor comprehension skills; may read widely and frequently but without understanding.
- Has limited language and vocabulary; does not grasp multiple meanings, connotative meanings, or figurative language.
- Can decode words that are not in oral vocabulary.
- Appears attentive when "reading" but disengages when response is required.

### What the "word-caller" says about reading and themselves:

- "I can read it, but I do not know what it says."
- "I can read it, but I do not know the answers to these questions."
- "I understand more when someone reads to me."
- "I don't understand what is expected of me."



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

Program,  
schedule and  
facilities



NGA: The Physical space – dedicated / shared



Freshman only -13 core area + gym on 2 halls



Shared specials  
and other facilities



### Schedule

- One 57 minute block that meets 3 out of 4 days for all Regents and Pre AP courses
- Students receive 1 credit per course
- Two 57 minute blocks for math for any student scoring a 2 or lower on the Math 8 exam
- Students only receive 1 credit for taking Math 9 and Algebra

English 9 with emphasis on literacy implemented for the 06 school year for all students who scored a 2 or lower on the ELA 8.

The single highest failure rate in high school is Algebra I

“After pregnancy, it’s the leading indicator of high school dropout.

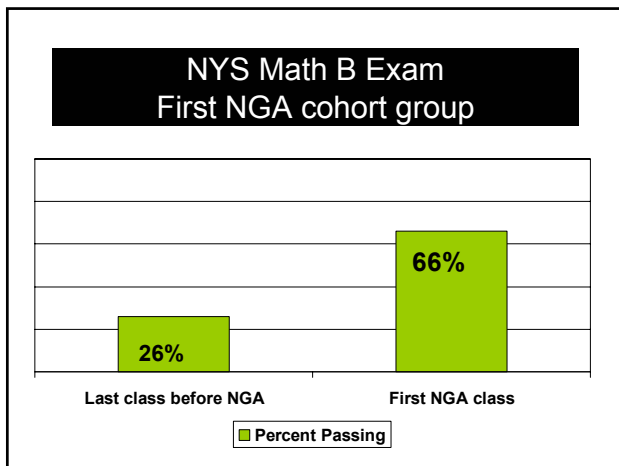
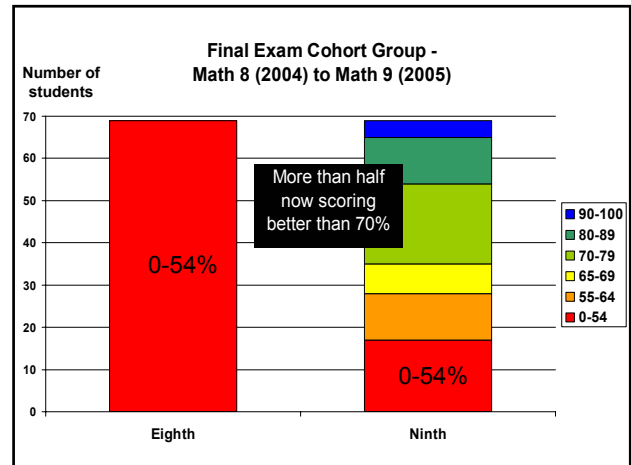
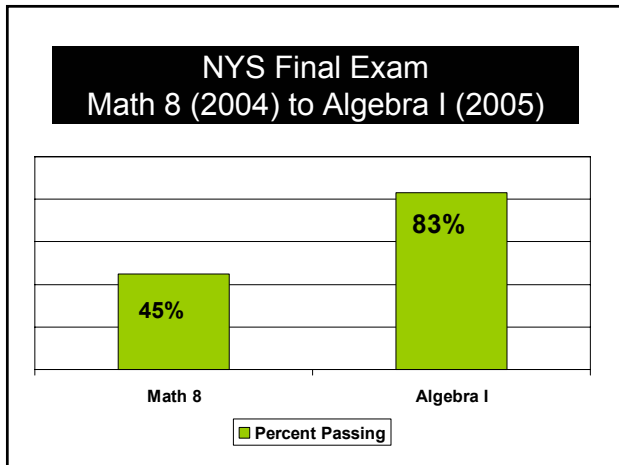
The leading indicator of success in Algebra I is English 8.

The Algebra 1 test is a reading test with numbers”

~ Doug Reeves, District Administrator April '05

Since implementation of NGA:  
Passing rate on Math A  
increased from 72% to 93%

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

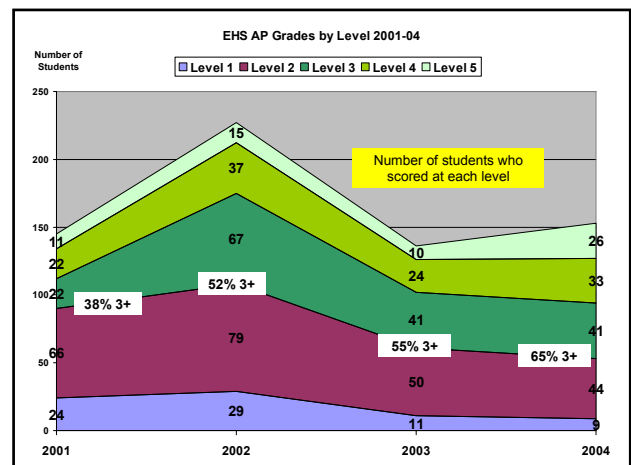


**Challenging goals and effective assessments**

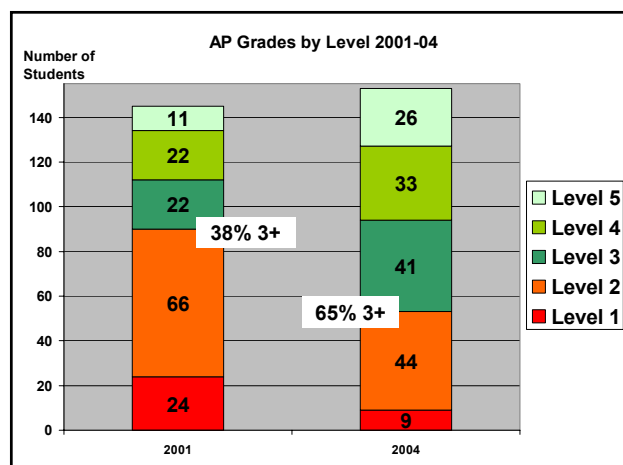
- Use classroom level assessments that **measure progress**, offer **timely feedback** on specific knowledge and skills for specific students.
- Use the feedback to **influence instruction**.

**Launch rigorous honors program with new NGA**

- The development of a true honors program for 9th graders
- Maintaining rigid standards for students to continue in the honors/AP program and holding true to these standards
- Increased summer pre-requisite work

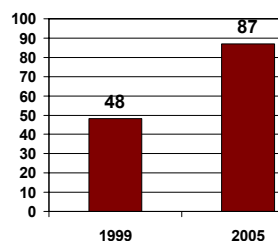


## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



Intensive tracking of student progress toward graduation with NYS Regents diploma

■ % HS Regent Diploma Rate



Bi-annual review of each student 9 - 12  
Principal, counselor and ASI

Identify gatekeeper course that are impeding progress

Now have the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest graduation rate in county



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Technology Use Survey  
Peter Pappas, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
East Irondequoit CSD www.eiksd.k12.ny.us

File Management / Operating System

Section 1 - Basic skills: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ 1. I understand the difference between closing/minimizing/hiding a window and quitting a program.
- ☐ 2. I can select, copy, and paste text and graphics.
- ☐ 3. I can copy and paste between documents from different applications.
- ☐ 4. I know how to find a saved file.
- ☐ 5. I know how to make a duplicate of an existing file.
- ☐ 6. I know how to reorganize folders and files for ease of use.
- ☐ 7. I can save and backup files.
- ☐ 8. I know how to determine where a file will be saved.
- ☐ 9. I know how to give a file a unique name while saving.
- ☐ 10. I know how to
- ☐ 11. I delete files

[www.peterpappas.com/surveys/](http://www.peterpappas.com/surveys/)

We think critically about **technology** and instruction



Change the focus from – *how* to use the technology to a critical analysis of:

- What tools are available? (*comprehension*)
- What can they do? (*analysis*)
- How can they be used to improve teaching and learning? (*evaluation*)

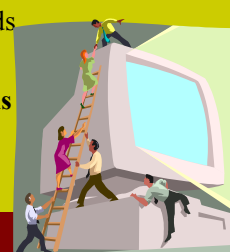
Student-based tools that do more than automate word processing ...

Content mastery of standards

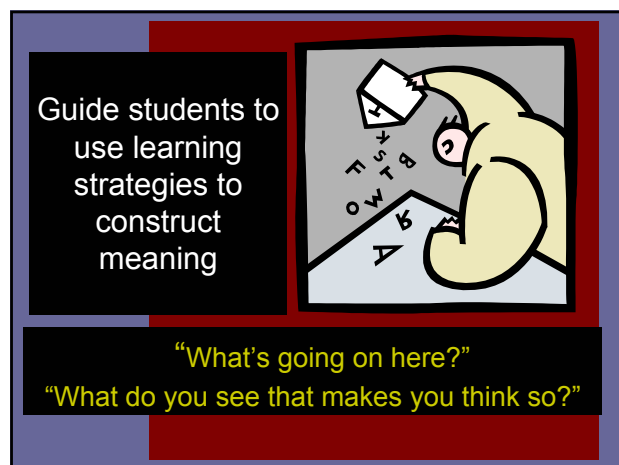
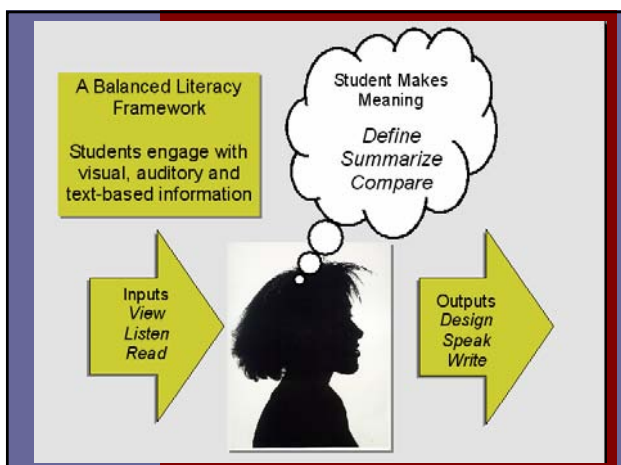
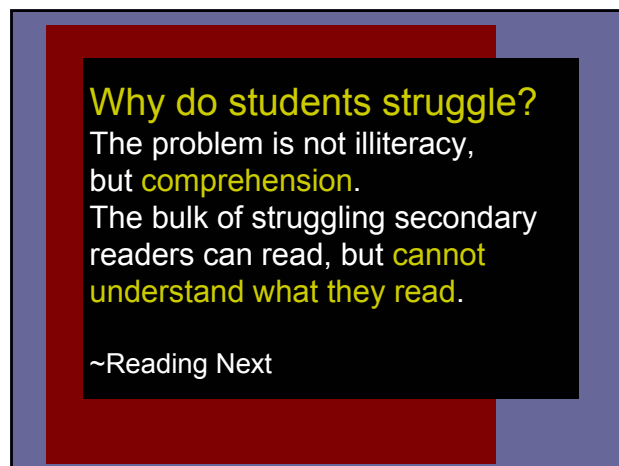
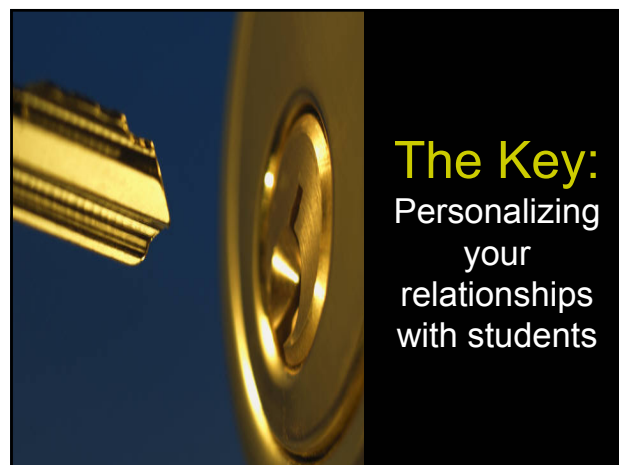
Critical thinking

Appropriate **technology** skills

Effective management of new technologies



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works





## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

### Maintain non-negotiable expectations

1. Come to class on time, prepared and ready to learn. A responsible student will be on time and have all required materials upon entering the room.
2. Complete all homework assignments. A responsible student will complete all homework assignments, with maximum effort, on a daily basis. If the homework assignment is challenging, an attempt must be made with a considerable amount of effort and quality. Homework will be completed in 5 subject spiral notebook.

3. Participate and ask questions. A responsible student will ask specific questions during class time. Participation is essential to success. You will ask questions pertaining to the lesson or homework assignment when necessary. You will also answer questions during class. You will participate at least: 2 times per class.
4. Listen attentively to instruction. A responsible student listens attentively to the teacher's lesson, and asks questions immediately upon any confusion pertaining to the instruction. Notes will be taken in spiral notebook.
5. Complete assigned class work. A responsible student will use class time to complete his or her assigned class work. Time in class must be used constructively. You will complete: all assigned class work.

"At the start of the year I had many students who came to class **unprepared**.  
I made it clear that it **was unacceptable**.  
**When students are unprepared, we all get pulled down.**  
I **set high expectations** – there was no tolerance for students that did not have their homework done.

~ NGA Teacher

NGA teacher,

"Our students are **successful** because we use **learning strategies** that put students **in charge of their own learning.**"

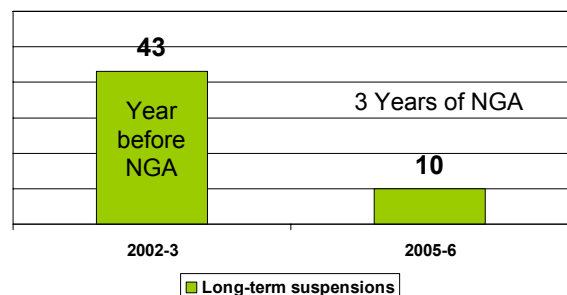


"We **shift the responsibility** of learning from teacher **to student**.

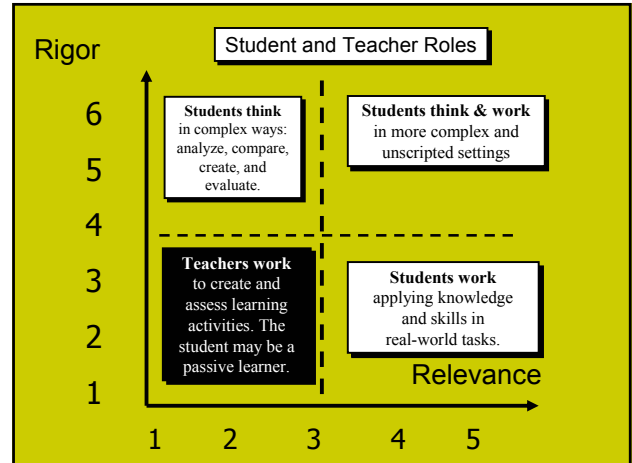
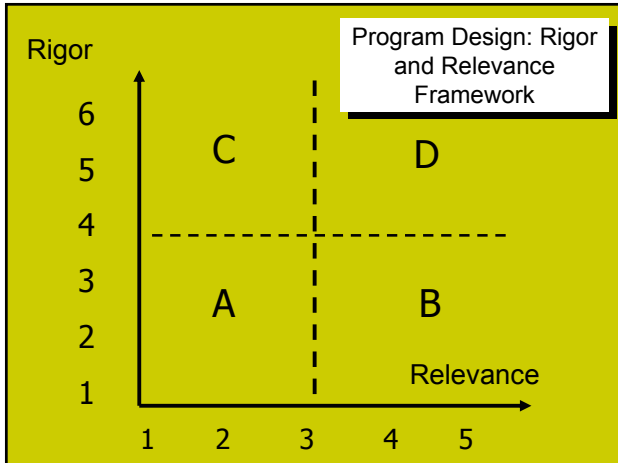
When a student understands how each step maximizes his or her achievement and or success, they enjoy modeling this type of good academic behavior.

Guided and independent practice in **critical thinking, vocabulary, summarizing, analyzing...**" ~ NGA Teacher

### High School Long-term Suspensions



## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works



**Motivate students - connect them to their learning**

**What am I learning today?**  
**Why am I learning it?**  
**How can I use this knowledge and these skills to make a difference in my life?**  
**How can I work with teachers and other students to improve my learning?**

**Goal – students who can function in an academic or real-world setting that is unpredictable and vital**

**Learn to research, think, problem-solve and write like a scientist, engineer, coach, artist, historian, mathematician, writer, musician, ....**

**How do you connect with parents?**

**K-12 Parent Involvement Survey**  
 Developed by Peter Pappas  
 Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
 East Irondequoit CSD [www.eicisd.k12.ny.us](http://www.eicisd.k12.ny.us)  
[www.peterpappas.com](http://www.peterpappas.com)

**Section A: How do you get your information about our district?**  
 Please put a check in the box provided for each of the following communication methods used by our school district.

Information Source	I frequently get useful information from this source.	I do not usually use this source to get information	I would like to see the district expand the use of this source to provide more information to parents.
1. Notices brought home by my child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Class Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. PTA/other Parent Group Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. School Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. District Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. District Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[www.peterpappas.com/surveys/](http://www.peterpappas.com/surveys/)

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

### Engage our parents

- Parenting training
- New website
- Email
- Redesigned family curriculum nights



### Enlist parents as partners

- Many need assistance in supporting an academic home environment.
- Presentation to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, summer orientation, parent university
- Academic pledge of support

"Responsibility is essential to academic success and achievement. We expect our students to enter our class prepared to learn, in order to attain academic success, a student must fulfill his or her academic obligations."

~ NGA Teacher

Eventually, the **parents backed me up** on these expectations.

Before long, students came to class, **fully prepared to learn** with their books, supplies and completed homework.

**Now the students are making great progress.** The Academy has allowed **me to be a better teacher.**" ~ NGA Teacher

How do you recruit and support teachers?



### Staff assignment and teacher support

- Collaborate with teachers union on assignment of teachers
- Recruit NGA teachers
- Dedicate NGA counselor
- ASI trains teachers in learning / literacy strategies
- Classroom walk throughs with ASI and NGA principal

The NGA Principal invited staff ideas and was not afraid to take risks. And he was highly visible in halls and in every classroom - daily.

### Summer academy model - student support plus PD for teachers



Title I and Title III (ESOL) funds pay for student AIS.  
Title II funds pay for teacher training.

## 9th Grade Academy – A Small Learning Community that Works

"Matt is everywhere. He's at our meetings, in the halls, in our classes. All the things he does it what makes the Academy work."

He demand's accountability and the students respect him for it.

He's helped us to show students that they can do it. They now want to be the best and many are now able to guide their own learning."

"We're no different than most teachers, but because of the support we're outstanding teachers."

I'm so grateful for the opportunity I've had to teach in the Academy for the last two years. I'm seeing that it can happen.

This is the best experience I could have hoped for."

Teachers and  
students talk  
about our  
NGA.

