

HIGH STAKES TESTING AND TEACHER RESISTANCE:
NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS IN AN ERA OF INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Bartolo José Liguori

May 2011

© 2011 Bartolo José Liguori

HIGH STAKES TESTING AND TEACHER RESISTANCE:
NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS IN AN ERA OF INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY

Bartolo José Liguori Ph. D.

Cornell University 2011

High stakes tests have become the centerpiece of new educational reform movements within the United States. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 has mandated a renewed emphasis on testing. Prior to its enactment, New York State had changed the graduation requirements for schools throughout the state, raising the standards in 1996 for a high school diploma by requiring all students to take and pass a minimum number of Regents exams.

This project studies the effect of these new laws and standards on teachers in New York City and how they cope with pressures that are placed on them by students, parents, administrators, and other teachers. One concept this study builds upon is test score pollution, which is used in the education literature; however, it is not fully developed in the sociology of education literature. Test score pollution focuses on teachers and administrators rather than students and is used to describe factors that affect the validity of test scores. Some test score pollution strategies include: “teaching to the test,” dismissing low-achieving students on test day, and teachers altering response sheets or their interpretation of a response while scoring. It is

alleged that these strategies are all used in order to improve the passing percentage of schools on regents exams.

In New York high schools, teachers are the individuals in charge of grading their own students' high stakes exams. This conflict of interest leads to one common form of test score pollution called "scrubbing." Scrubbing exams involves changing the grade of an exam from failing to passing. In interviews with teachers, there have been several methods of scrubbing that have been uncovered. Teachers have mentioned that they have erased bubble sheets on regents exams, purposely reinterpreting rubrics while grading students' exams, and purposely lowered students' grades while grading the regents. A better definition of the term scrubbing along with gradations is elicited from teachers. Pressures from administrators, who currently receive incentive bonuses, to scrub are also discussed.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Bartolo José Liguori was born September 8, 1976 in Lima, Perú. He was raised in Brooklyn, NY where he was a student in the New York City public school system. After graduating from Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, he attended Lehigh University in Bethlehem Pennsylvania. In 1997 he graduated with a B.S. in Molecular Biology and went on to become a high school teacher in the New York City public school system. After teaching for 4 years, Bart returned to Lehigh University to study Sociology where he earned his Master's degree in 2002 before enrolling at Cornell. During his graduate studies at Lehigh he met his wife, Stacy Onderdonk. They currently live in Brooklyn, New York with their 3 daughters, Abigail Dolores, Miriam James, and Elizabeth Rachel.

This dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of my father A. Michael Liguori.
He instilled in me a love of learning and a respect for education at an early age. I
know he would be proud of me at this very moment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my wife Stacy for her ongoing love, dedication and support throughout my graduate studies. You have blessed me with 3 wonderful daughters, Abigail, Miriam and Elizabeth. I could not ask for a better wife, friend and companion.

Thank you to my mother Laurie Liguori who has helped me and my family out in innumerable ways. Your love, support and encouragement has helped me complete my education.

Thank you to my grandparents Essie and Alfred Adelman. I wish you both could be with me when I got my diploma.

Thank you to my brother Luis-Mario Liguori, my sister Beth, her husband David Passantino and their daughter, my niece, Alessandra. Your support and kind words throughout my graduate studies have kept me smiling and appreciative of the family that I have.

I would like to acknowledge the friendship and words of encouragement from my extended family and friends John and Mary Farrell; Lisa, Justin, Jacob and Joe Soliday; Joan Onderdonk; Adam J. Kramer; Jim and Penny Kulenguskey; Julie Wright; Jennifer Wilson and Misty Curreli.

I would like to acknowledge the Center for the Study of Inequality at Cornell for a small seed grant that helped me complete my dissertation field work.

Thank you to my committee members David Strang, and John Sipple for their helpful comments and guidance in completing my dissertation.

Thank you to my committee chair, Stephen L. Morgan, who encouraged me to follow this difficult dissertation topic. You have been a patient mentor, advisor, and advocate in this long journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1.....	1
1.1 Literature Review.....	2
Standardized tests: history, advantages, uses and effects on students.....	2
Effects of high stakes testing and incentives on teachers and student achievement.....	7
Effects of high stakes testing and incentives on schools and administrators...11	
Test score pollution and scrubbing.....	14
Effects of the organization of schooling on reactions to high stake tests.....	21
1.2 Questions to be addressed by the study	24
How do accountability standards within schools put pressures on teachers and administrators? How does the school's organization affect teachers' behaviors in relation to high stakes exams?	25
Does the subject taught by a teacher affect the pressures placed upon her/him?.....	26
Does the phenomenon of scrubbing exist? If so, what are the prevailing methods of scrubbing and test-score pollution? Why do/don't teachers engage in these behaviors?.....	26
Does test-score pollution favor particular racial groups over others? If so, which racial groups are favored and why?	27
Do increased administrative pressures on teachers result in more scrubbing on the part of teachers? Does it change teachers' perception of scrubbing?.....	28
Has media pressure had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that goes on in schools?.....	28
Have the New York State Education Department (NYSED) mandates to regrade certain exams had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that occurs? Do teachers perceive scrubbing differently now that there is a mandate to regrade certain regents exams?.....	29
1.3 Methods.....	29
School Report Cards.....	30
Interviews with selected staff members.....	31
Analyses.....	33

1.4	Description of chapters 2-6.....	33
<u>Chapter 2.....</u>		37
2.1	Overview of the schools	38
2.2	Ethnography of John Basilone High School.....	39
2.3	Ethnography of Atlantic High School.....	49
2.4	Ethnography of Parkview High School	60
2.5	Ethnography of Bay View High School	71
2.6	Ethnography of David Dinkins Academy.....	82
2.7	Ethnography of Longshore High School.....	96
2.8	Ethnography of J.P. Morgan Technical High School.....	106
2.9	Rationale for selecting these schools and methodology.....	117
<u>Chapter 3.....</u>		120
3.1	Overview of No Child Left Behind and Teachers' Reactions	121
3.2	Teachers' Misconceptions about No Child Left Behind.....	127
3.3	Disparate impact of NCLB on higher SES schools.....	131
3.4	Overview of the NYS regents exams.	137
3.5	Demographic and Performance Data for NYS, NYC and Target Schools...	140
3.6	Potential Racial Biases on the Regents Exams.....	142
3.7	The Need for Safety Nets.....	146
3.8	The Lowering of Standards.....	149
3.9	Conclusions.....	153
<u>Chapter 4.....</u>		156
<u>Part 1. Pressures faced by teachers and administrators.....</u>		157
4.1	Literature on the Pressures Faced by Teachers and Administrators.....	157

4.2	Pressures Faced by Administrators in a High Stakes Testing Environment...	162
4.3	Pressures Faced by Teachers in a High Stakes Testing Environment.....	170
4.4	Pressures From Parents on Administrators and Teachers Based on Parental SES.....	177
4.5	How Have The Small School and Accountability Movements Increased High Stakes Testing Pressure.....	181
4.6	Literature on the Organization of Schooling and Examples of School Structures Found in the Sample	187
4.7	High Stakes Testing Pressures Follow Different Mechanisms from Teaching.....	195
<u>Part 2 Test Score Pollution and Pressure.....</u>		198
4.8	Literature on Test Score Pollution	198
4.9	Teaching to the test as one example of test score pollution	199
4.10	Gaming the Test by Disenfranchising Poor Performing Students.....	203
<u>Chapter 5.....</u>		215
5.1	Scrubbing as test score pollution.....	216
5.2	Definition of Scrubbing	223
5.3	Methods of Scrubbing	232
5.4	Rationale for teachers to scrub. Why do they do it?.....	241
5.5	Are certain schools more aware of scrubbing than others?	252
5.6	Are teachers at certain schools more likely to scrub?.....	257
5.7	Are certain subject teachers more likely to scrub?.....	260
5.8	Which students benefit from scrubbing most?.....	264

5.9	How widespread is scrubbing? Is it bad?.....	269
5.10	Summary.....	273
<u>Chapter 6</u>		274
6.1	Main Conclusions.....	275
	Effects of No Child Left Behind on Teachers and Administrators	276
	Pressures Faced By Teachers and Administrators.....	280
	Test Score Pollution.....	284
	Scrubbing.....	285
6.2	Discussion of questions addressed by the study	292
	How do accountability standards within schools put pressures on teachers and administrators? How does the school's organization affect teachers' behaviors in relation to high stakes exams?	292
	Does the subject taught by a teacher affect the pressures placed upon her/him?.....	293
	Does the phenomenon of scrubbing exist? If so, what are the prevailing methods of scrubbing and test-score pollution? Why do/don't teachers engage in these behaviors?.....	293
	Does scrubbing favor particular racial groups over others? If so, which racial groups are favored and why?	295
	Do increased administrative pressures on teachers result in more scrubbing on the part of teachers? Does it change teachers' perception of scrubbing?.....	295
	Has media pressure had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that goes on in schools?.....	296
	Have the New York State Education Department (NYSED) mandates to regrade certain exams had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that occurs? Do teachers perceive scrubbing differently now that there is a mandate to regrade certain regents exams?.....	296
6.3	Policy Implications.....	297
<u>Appendix A: Packet Sent to School Principals</u>		300
<u>Appendix B: Tables for Chapter 2</u>		313
<u>Appendix C: Tables for Chapter 3</u>		316
<u>References</u>		323

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1. Approximate demographics of the selected schools in the period of the interviews.

Table 2.2. Graduation statistics of students in the selected schools.

Table 2.3. Percent of students attaining 55 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

Table 2.4. Percent of students attaining 65 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

Table 2.5. Percent of students attaining 85 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

Table 2.6. Staff Characteristics of the 7 schools in the period following the interviews.

Table 3.1: Demographics of the City of New York High Schools compared to the State of NY.

Table 3.2: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the State of NY.

Table 3.3: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the City of NY.

Table 3.4: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the City and State of NY.

Table 3.5: 2008 NYS regents results for the City of NY compared to the rest of the State. (allnyc)

Table 3.6: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the State. (NYS)

Table 3.7: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the City. (nycc)

Table 3.8: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the State and City combined. (target)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HST – High Stakes Test

NCLB – No Child Left Behind Act of 2002.

NYC – New York City

NYCDOE - New York City Department of Education

NYS - New York State

NYSED - New York State Education Department

TSP – Test Score Pollution

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:

New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability

Chapter 1:

High Stakes Testing an Overview

1.1 Literature Review:

High Stakes Testing an Overview.

Standardized tests: history, advantages, uses and effects on students:

Standardized tests have been used for over a century in schools in the State of New York (Beadie 1999). They have many benefits, including high reliability, ease of use, an ability to guide curriculum and can lead to a more productive workforce (Heubert and Hauser 1999; Bishop and Mane 1999; Bishop and Mane 2001); however, standardized tests have also been criticized for having biases. Gender, class and racial biases have all been alleged in our education system (Sewell 1964; Felson and Trudeau 1990; Hauser and Anderson 1991; Walters 2001; Condron and Roscigno 2001) and standardized exams in particular (Eagle and Harris 1969; Bolger and Kellaghan 1990; Faggen-Steckler, McCarthy and Tittle 1996). While some of the gender disparities have been reduced over the past few decades (Klein et al. 1994), there are still disparities between class and racial groups (Hallinan 2001; Kao and Thompson 2003; Newman and Chin 2003). Blacks and Hispanics still trail whites in many educational outcomes including retention rates, dropout rates, college enrollment and scores on standardized exams. More affluent school districts are also at an advantage when compared to less affluent school districts (Kozol 1991). McNeil (2000) argues that the increased emphasis on standardized test scores exacerbates the previous inequities in the educational system. While many of the inequalities that exist in the educational system mirror those of society in general, these disparities are especially troubling because one of the goals of the American educational system is to promote equality.

One of the principles of equality in the education system is that it provides a common curriculum for all children, regardless of background (Coleman 1990). Standardized tests have been used to examine whether or not school districts provide equal opportunities for all students, a common curriculum, and whether standards are being maintained in the public school system (Neill and Gayler 2001). Standardized tests affect students because they are used in promotion decisions and graduation requirements (McNeil and Valenzuela 2001). While there may not be any national exams in the United States, there are testing regimes at the state level. Standardized tests have become more important because of their ease of use and the public's perception of them as integral to measuring educational outcomes.

There are many advantages to using standardized tests. They are norm referenced and they usually have a very high reliability (Kohn 2000). Standardized tests allow comparisons of student achievement within a school from year to year and between schools to be made by determining what skills a student has acquired. They can also be used to hold schools and teachers accountable for student performance. While not a compulsory national exam, a standardized test that is seen as important to both secondary and higher education is the SAT.

Lemann (1999) describes how the SAT was first developed in order to increase recruiting at elite private universities in the Northeast. Its aim was to select new students for scholarships. It was developed from other psychometric tests to be a test of innate ability. Students would not be able to study for this test, nor would it be part of any curriculum. It would be in contrast to exams at the time that were based on curriculum such as the New York State Regents exams, which students would be able to study for in

order to attain high scores. The SAT, once thought to be unteachable, was later found to be coachable by virtue of exam questions being repeated and test taking strategies that could be taught to individuals. Many exams that have been implemented by state education departments for graduation or promotion follow the same rationale for evaluation. They have little or no association with curriculum and they measure other qualities that students should have either learned at some point in their schooling or measure some innate skill. Many of these exams are administered and scored by outside agencies such as Educational Testing Services (ETS). The New York State Regents exams are an example of another type of test, which is based on curriculum and administered by the state education department.

When tests are used to test curriculum, they can be used as a tool to guide curriculum (Grant 2001). When standardized tests are introduced into a new environment, they can have an effect on administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Because standardized tests have been integral in the development of the American system of education since the beginning, it is difficult to understand the full effect of standardized tests on our system of education. However, Kellaghan, Madaus and Airasian (1982) describe how standardized tests were introduced into Ireland, where standardized tests have not always been part of the national education landscape. What was found was that the tests did have some effect, but it was quite limited in the extent to which it affected instructors' views of the students. Teachers used these new standardized tests as one of many tools to determine the progress of a student, which is how standardized tests are intended to be used. Teachers' views of their students were not changed significantly by knowing the results of standardized tests. Students were

found to be motivated by this new type of testing and did not experience any increased anxiety. While the phenomenon of testing was new in Ireland, it is not new in the United States and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) gives us a similar opportunity to see how increased testing standards affect schools, teachers, and students.

High-stakes tests refer to standardized tests that have consequences for tracking, promotion and are required for high school graduation. Two examples of high stakes tests that are required for graduation are the New York State regents exams and the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which has been replaced by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). There are several differences between these two states' exams. One difference is that the NYS regents exams are several exams that each individually focus on one aspect of the high school curriculum, while the TAAS/TAKS is one exam that covers many aspects of the curriculum¹ (Natriello and Pallas 2001); however both the TAAS/TAKS and the NYS regents exams are required in order to graduate from high school.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is run by the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, is a "recurring assessment of a nationally representative sample of youth." Since its introduction in the 1960s, the NAEP has been used to monitor aggregate academic achievement (Hamilton and Koretz 2002). While there have been some problems associated with using NAEP scores, including the tendency to misinterpret or oversimplify NAEP data by non-technical audiences (Koretz and Deibert 1996), the NAEP can be used to measure overall national trends and the efficacy of policies that are

¹ However, one way to satisfy the testing requirement in Texas is to take the end of course exams in Algebra I, English II, and Biology I or U.S. History.

implemented at the statewide and national level (Hamilton and Koretz 2002; Klein, Hamilton, McCaffrey and Stetcher 2000; Koretz 1992; Carnoy, Loeb and Smith 2001). Several studies have measured the effect of the introduction of high stakes tests on NAEP scores in different states.

The recent shift to high-stakes, criterion-referenced, exams has allowed researchers to study whether or not these high stakes tests have had an effect on student achievement and a subsequent increase in NAEP scores. Frederiksen (1994) found that there was an increase in NAEP scores after Minimum Competency Tests (MCT) were widely introduced in the late 1970s and 1980s. The introduction of high-stakes tests in Texas has been attributed to significantly increasing NAEP scores in that state (Carnoy, Loeb and Smith 2001). Further evidence suggests that states that have high accountability tests have outpaced states with less developed testing regimes in NAEP score increases (Carnoy and Loeb 2002). The extent of these gains have been questioned, where the increase in NAEP scores in states that use high stakes tests may not be statistically significant in all subjects and age groups (Amrein-Beardsley and Berliner 2003; Klein et al. 2000).

One state that has undergone a drastic change in high stakes testing is New York States with its reinterpretation of the Regents Examination. The regents exams have undergone several changes over the last decade. The main change the exams have gone through is that they are no longer intended exclusively for elite students (Natriello and Pallas 2001). Schools in New York State previously issued two types of diplomas: a regents endorsed diploma and a local diploma². In the mid 1990s, starting with the New

² In order to get a diploma with an endorsement from the state board of regents, a student was required to take and pass a minimum number of regents exams. The local diploma, issued by a local school board, did

York City Board of Education, the state of New York started to phase out the less rigorous Regents Competency Tests (RCT) and use the more difficult regents exams as the only high stakes test in the state (Bishop and Mane 2001).

At first, there were different grades required on the regents exams to obtain a local and a regents diploma; however, starting with the 1999 school New York began to phase out local diplomas. In order to grade all of the exams and have a rapid turnover³, the students' classroom teachers grade the students' exams. With more students taking the regents exams a situation can develop that can potentially lead to more chances and reasons for teachers to engage in test score pollution on behalf of their students. Heubert and Hauser (1999) predicted that with an increased dependence on high-stakes tests

[t]here is an inherent conflict of interest when teachers administer high-stakes tests to their students or score their own students' exams. On one hand, teachers want valid information about how well their students are performing. On the other hand, there is often substantial external pressure on teachers (as well as principals and other school personnel) for their students to earn high scores. This external pressure may lead some teachers to provide inappropriate assistance to their students before and during the test administration or to mis-score exams (p. 81).

Effects of high-stakes testing and incentives on teachers and student achievement:

Because of their recent emphasis, high stakes tests have been used to drive curriculum and instruction (Haertel 1999). This increased emphasis on testing and accountability has led to increased student achievement (Ladd 1999; Winfield 1990); however, some of these skills that are learned by students that are test-specific and do not

not have the same requirements. At first there were no state-wide requirements for a local diploma; however, in the mid-1980s there were some state-wide standards implemented where regent-competency tests (RCTs) were mandated for graduation with a local diploma. While these tests were required for graduation, they were not meant to be as academically rigorous as the regents exams. This perpetuated the two-tiered diploma system within New York State.

³ Many times some regents exams are administered only 1-2 days before students are due to graduate.

translate to higher achievement on other similar tests of achievement (Koretz, Linn, Dunbar and Shepard 1991). Curriculum Based External Exit Exams such as the NYS regents that define and guide the curriculum have been linked to higher achievement in New York and abroad (Bishop 1998). This may be due to the effects that the exams have in guiding teachers.

Waller (1961) discusses how teachers find legitimacy in their assessments of students and how dutifully they cling to academic standards; however, teachers' assessments of students may be biased because of the familiarity they may have with their students. Previous studies have determined the importance of teachers as among the significant others who influence children into making post-high school decisions relating to college entry (Sewell, Haller and Portes 1969; Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf 1970). Much of the decisions made by teachers on students' preparation for college is tied to family background (Sewell 1971). One possible explanation to the effect of family background on performance outcomes is the cultural capital that students from privileged backgrounds have (Bourdieu 1973; Lareau 1987). Because of these differences in cultural capital, teachers favor the students of parents from middle class backgrounds because they mirror the worldview of the teachers themselves. These preferences by teachers for students who are similar to them can lead to situations where students are graded based on these preferences (Dumais, 2002; Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder 2004; Downey and Pribesh 2004). While these preferences have been found in classroom instruction, it would be interesting to see if these biases are also in grading high stakes exams. These biases may also be linked to administrative pressures placed upon teachers.

Standardized tests affect teachers and administrators because they are used as a factor in determining school funding and measuring teacher performance (Haertel 1986; Smith 1991). One facet that would be critical in explaining how teachers react to pressures faced by new testing regimes would be the relationship between teachers and administrators, and their salary schedules. As Gratz (2005) explains, incentive pay for teachers has existed for over 300 years in several different forms, but it was eschewed in the early 20th century when unionized schools in urban settings began to predominate. There has been resurgence in incentive pay proposals in teaching since the 1980s; however, one difficulty in implementing the systems is the teachers' unions, which have considerable control in determining the pay schedule (Belfield 2005). In negotiating with the unions it was found that implementing alternative pay schedules was most effective when the teachers had nothing to lose and the compensation package was a win-win for both administration and teachers (Conley, Muncey and Gould 2002).

Incentive pay is also known as pay for performance, where teachers are paid at higher rates for higher student performance. Pay incentives have been linked to changing teacher behaviors. Jacobson (1989) studied a school district that used a state grant to improve teacher salaries to reduce teacher absenteeism.⁴ The incentive scheme that was enacted had teachers splitting the grant money based on their unused sick days. The model was successful in increasing teacher productivity because teachers were aware that

⁴ Much of the money went to increasing starting salaries; however, some of the money was to be allocated to teachers that were already employed in the district. The district wanted to reduce the number of teacher absences. A common fund was established where teachers would gain shares of the fund for every absence below the previous year's mean of 7. It was a naturally occurring game where one individual could theoretically take home the entire \$72,800 fund if s/he were the only one with 6 or fewer absences. What was found was that the number of absences did decrease significantly. The number of teachers that had perfect attendance increased from 8% to 34%. This occurred even though the incentive constituted approximately 1% of the median teacher salary in that district. While it may appear to be costly, the school district saved themselves the cost of having to hire substitute teachers that are not as effective as the everyday teacher.

while fewer substitute teachers would be hired, none of their colleagues would be fired for increased productivity. Also, while there would be a decreased amount of money per share if fewer coworkers were absent, the workers were truly competing amongst themselves for a fixed amount of bonus money. One reason why it was able to work so effectively is that it was a variable that was almost always within the control of the employee. Ideal incentive schemes that are to be used in schools should use a similar scheme where teachers would have to compete amongst themselves for a fixed amount of incentive pay that did not threaten the jobs of their coworkers. Once a threat is present, norms against exemplary performance will develop. This model was good at improving productivity by reducing absences. If absences can be changed, it may follow that other types of productivity that enhance student performance, such as high stakes tests, can also be changed by instituting incentive programs; however, this model may not be able to adequately enhance educational outcomes because it may encourage teaching to the test and other undesirable outcomes.

One difficulty in instituting incentive pay schemes tied to high stakes tests in New York State high schools is that not all teachers teach subjects that are tested by high stakes exams.⁵ Furthermore, even in subjects that do require a high stakes test, not all classes are preparing their students for high stakes tests.⁶ It would be difficult to hold teachers accountable for student performance especially if they are not the ones who taught them more recently and it would become very easy for teachers to free-ride if they

⁵ Within the state of New York, there are no Regents examinations in Economics, Physical Education, Art, Music, Special Education, Industrial Arts, or classes offered as electives within schools.

⁶ There is one regents exam for English which requires 4 years of study, one exam for Foreign Language which requires 3 years of study (one of which is sometimes completed in middle school), two exams for mathematics which require at least 3 years of study, and 2 exams for history and government, which requires nearly 4 years of study.

know that other teachers may be picking up the slack in later semesters. This would lead to incentive schemes that do not rely on high stakes tests, but instead rely on professional evaluations and participation in professional development.

Effects of high-stakes testing and incentives on schools and administrators:

Teachers must answer to administrators within their schools. These administrators are responsible for student learning and teacher evaluations. Teacher evaluations are often based upon classroom observations, which are problematic. When supervisors evaluate their employees, there is a tendency for supervisors to evaluate most employees as good or superior, while few employees are rated as acceptable or not acceptable (Lawler, 1971). This would have the effect of lowering the standards that would define a teacher as superior and in effect get rid of the incentive for any teacher to increase the amount of effort they put into their work. When teacher performance is gauged by supervisor evaluations, there is also tendency to make very few observations (Firestone and Pennell 1993). Because administrators make few observations, the ratings would be distorted to favor teachers that perform best when they are being observed. Favoritism and cronyism could also make it difficult to gauge the true performance of teachers solely by supervisor evaluations. Furthermore, in New York City, the teachers' union is designed to act on behalf of allegedly bad teachers in order to remove letters of reprimand or improve any poor evaluations in the teachers' files many times reversing the judgments of administrators (Cooper, Ehrensall and Bromme 2005). Some possible solutions are to use tangible examples of teacher work such as portfolios and to use mentoring programs in order to get feedback from older teachers on evaluations. Participation in professional development seminars could also bridge the gap between

incentive pay and easing teacher-administrator pressures and increasing performance output (Darling-Hammond 2004). While unpopular with teachers, another way to measure teacher performance is to use high stakes exams.

In Philadelphia, the use of an accountability system that incorporate high stakes tests and school funding was considered a success (Porter, Chester, and Schlesinger 2004). The success of the accountability program was attributed to the use of sanctions that did not affect teachers individually, but the school as a whole. The system that was instituted took into account realistic goals for students and promoted fairness in the school district. While the use of high stakes tests were noted in the Philadelphia study as increasing extrinsic motivations for learning, it was noted that this was required as many of the students lacked the intrinsic motivations for learning. Another study found that the amount of control teachers felt had little impact on their levels of professional development participation and that teachers who felt more control were more willing to participate in professional development and professional development was associated with lower rates of teacher turnover (Smith and Rowley 2005); however the responses to accountability standards are different in different school settings. Low performing schools focus most of their attention on fewer students who are near benchmark grades and only in certain subject areas, while high performing schools are able to enhance performance in all subject areas (Diamond and Spillane 2004). Sipple and Killeen (2004) found that teaching test taking strategies was found more in lower income schools and was positively related to higher per-pupil expenditures.

Because of the nature and uses of high stakes exams, administrators put pressure on departments and individual teachers to raise grades (Smith 1991). Parents are one of

the many actors that increase administrative pressure. In private schools, it is easier for parents to pressure the administration because the parents pay tuition and would want the highest return on their investment (Bryk, Lee and Holland 1993). Administrators respond to the parental pressure because parents can take their children out of the school, which will present difficulties for the administration. In the public sector, parents put pressure on schools to produce higher passing percentages for many of the same reasons. Parents in the public sector do not always have the option to take their children out of the public school system; however, with NCLB, parents now have the option of taking their children out of failing schools. Some states have mandated for school vouchers to be given to students of schools that are perpetually failing. The effects of these provisions have had a deleterious effect on both failing (F) and thriving (A) schools alike (Goldhaber and Hannaway 2004). While the incentives to not be deemed a failing school are apparent, there is also a lot of pressure put on schools that are receiving high marks due to the political pressure that parents put on the schools to maintain those scores or even better them. Parents could vote school boards into office or remove them if they are not happy with results. Parents are not the only factor in administrative pressure; changes in administrative pressure could also develop from the policies adopted by the state or federal government.

In New York, the state could also put “failing” schools on probation or even close them. If the state closes a particular school, the principal and other administrators within the school could have their reputations tarnished and, more importantly, lose their jobs. The federal government with NCLB has also increased the pressure put on schools. NCLB requires that all states include some measure of accountability for their student.

This has led to an increased use of high stakes tests, which has placed pressure on administrators to increase scores on standardized tests.

Test Score Pollution and Scrubbing:

Test Score Pollution is a concept that was advanced by Haladayna, Nolen and Haas (1991) that describes any factor that affects the truthfulness of test score interpretation. However, this is a very general term that can include both ethical and unethical acts. In fact, there is no academic term for deliberate acts of academic dishonesty on the part of teachers and administrators. Among factors that could be considered test score pollution are: teaching to the test, dismissing low achieving students on the day of the test, and interfering with test responses. In the regents exams, there are practices that could contribute to test score pollution. Teaching to the test is a well-established practice in New York. In fact, the regents exams define the curriculum in New York. However, in other states, such as Texas, there is much debate concerning the role of Test preparation in the curriculum. In traditionally underfunded regions, there is a high pressure to raise TAAS scores and a substantial portion of the budget is set aside for TAAS preparation materials instead of substantive curricular materials (McNeill and Valenzuela 2001). This leads to a dilution of the curriculum in underfunded regions, which widens the gap between affluent and underprivileged school districts (Valenzuela 1999).

Much of the literature on academic dishonesty focuses on students that cheat and the factors that lead to it, but there is a gap in the literature when it comes to teachers and administrators that commit acts of academic dishonesty and the pressures that are put on them. The increased emphasis on test scores has led many different actors to act in a way

to maximize test scores and test score reporting within their schools, districts and states. The “Lake Wobegon effect” refers to the tendency for all school districts and states to report above average test scores for a particular school, district or state (Cannell 1988a; Cannell 1988b; Hamilton 2003). One example of how districts and states can arrive at the “Lake Wobegon effect” is when school districts or test makers equivocate the terms “mean” and “norm group” for reporting purposes. This allows states to report gains relative to a past norm group rather than comparing current students to other current students from other states.

Gaming the current laws also allows for schools and school districts to report higher achievement in the face of high stakes tests and increased accountability. Since the introduction of NCLB, one provision in several state testing laws is that students that are deemed to require special education services are usually exempt from taking high stakes exams. The number of students being reclassified as requiring special services has increased significantly since the introduction of new testing regimes in some states (Amrein-Beardsley and Berliner 2003; Figlio and Getzler 2002; Jacob 2002; Jacob and Levitt 2002). Furthermore, the reporting of dropout rates, which are sometimes used as a measure of the effects of standardized testing are often politicized and reported incorrectly (Haney 2000).

Because of the potential for school districts and state education departments to game the laws regarding high stakes testing, many have called for a differentiated approach to standards that combine a variety of assessments (Linn 2000; Koretz 2003). There is also an increased pressure that is put on teachers when there is a testing regime is put into place (Shepard and Dougherty 1991). This pressure that is felt by teachers is

much greater in high stakes testing environments as compared to environments where the tests do not carry such a great significance (Wilson and Corbett 1991). Before an exam, teachers review the material that is likely to be on the exam as sound educational practice; however, this practice could quickly degenerate to extreme practices of teaching to the test. More egregious forms of teaching to the test include teachers that actually use their knowledge of the test questions and use it prepare their students accordingly.

Within New York State, previously released regents exams are published in New York and are part of the public record. This allows teachers to use the previous exams to prepare their students. While using previous regents exams is standard practice in New York, some may find this practice unethical and a waste of class time that could be spent on the curriculum. Hoff (2000) describes how two very similar incidents of teachers drilling students on test questions, one in Virginia and the other in Illinois, had very different results. The teacher in Virginia obtained an illegal copy of the test, while the teacher in Illinois used materials that were from a test preparation guide. In Great Britain, there have also been security problems concerning their national curriculum exams (Pyke 1999). Henry (2001a and 2001b) describes several instances of cheating and educational malpractice in Britain. These allegations include obtaining copies of exams in advance and allowing prepping students with those exams. An examination of test score data involving simulations led Jacob and Levitt (2002) to report that possibly 4-5 percent of classrooms in the Chicago public schools encounter teacher or administrators cheating on exams.

Dismissing low achieving students on the day of the test is a practice that does not make much sense in the context of the regents exams and the TAAS/TAKS. In New

York, all students are now required to take the regents exams; therefore, dismissing low achieving students would not have the effect of raising the total passing percentage. The TAAS requirement can be fulfilled as an exit exam that is taken at the end of the 10th grade or as a series of end of term exams at the end of the 10th grade. Because the TAAS is required for completing high school, there is no benefit in dismissing students from taking the exams. However, in Houston there have been allegations of transferring students to other programs and schools to cover-up the dropout rate. In 1999, there were allegations in a case in Austin, Texas where administrators were charged with tampering with state documents when they changed the student identification number of low performing students on state exams. This had the effect of invalidating the students' exams and raising the passing percentage of the district (Johnston and Galley 1999a and 1999b). These administrators later pleaded no contest to a criminal conviction and were fined (Keller 2002).

Teachers and administrators have also been accused of interfering with test responses. There are several ways teachers can interfere with responses; however, there are few mechanisms in place that actually attempt to curb such behavior. One way teachers can interfere with responses is to give hints to students during exams. In one case, teachers admitted to changing the way they read instructions while others admitted to helping students select some answers during the exam (Haladayna, Nolen and Haas 1991). Many of these allegations are uncovered because students report such activities to parents who then report it to district superintendents. However, other than that mechanism, there are no other ways to ensure that students are not given hints throughout the exam. There are different manners in which these allegations are followed up on. In

New York, each school district is in charge of regulating itself. In Texas, there is an office within the Texas Education Agency that is in charge of investigating cheating (Zlatos 1996). While Texas does not have a higher instance of cheating than other states, it takes it more seriously than other states. Joseph Lucio, the officer in charge of investigating cheating is nicknamed the Texas Ranger of Testing and he is the individual that is in charge of overseeing honesty in testing. Lucio found that student cheating occurred more frequently in tests required for graduation, while test score pollution usually occurs in tests covering reading, writing, and arithmetic. There is no such office in the State of New York. Not only is there less oversight in New York when compared to Texas, there are also more opportunities for institutional cheating in New York.

In New York, teachers are the individuals in charge of grading exams. If a student takes the regents exam in earth science, her/his earth science teacher would be in charge of grading her/his regents exam. The only mechanism that checks whether or not exams are graded properly is the threat of a state audit, where the state board of regents recalls the exams to check that the teachers have graded them properly; however, the audit process occurs approximately once every ten years. The practice of having teachers score their students' own exams is a relatively unique phenomenon. In most instances states grade their high stakes exams in a decentralized manner, even in New York, the assessments for lower grades are not graded on-site, but in centralized locations (Martinez and McGinty 2011). Decentralized grading has led to one common form of test score pollution called "scrubbing." Scrubbing exams involves changing the grade of an exam from failing to passing. In preliminary interviews with teachers, there were

several methods of scrubbing mentioned.⁷ These methods will usually hold up to the scrutiny of an audit, but require teachers to do an initial evaluation of the exam. There is also a difference in how the acts may be interpreted by school administrators. This study aims to see whether or not scrubbing occurs on a grand scale and what factors lead to scrubbing. In order to make this determination, regents scores from throughout New York City will be examined.

In the popular press, scrubbing is normally seen as a “dubious practice” (Buckman 2007). Most of the reporting where scrubbing is mentioned usually uses the word “scandal” (Campanile 2004; Freedman 2005; Herszenhorn 2005; Gonen 2010). This may be because either the acts that were reported were outside the norm of accepted practices or there really is a public outcry against scrubbing. In order to further explain the scrubbing phenomenon, a greater fundamental understanding of the process is required. While an easy solution would be to blame the teachers because they are the individuals that are scrubbing tests, they may not be the only group responsible for scrubbing. Administrators may sometimes tacitly approve of scrubbing because of the pressure that is put on administrators from parents, other times administrators overtly

⁷ One method of scrubbing includes teachers entering different grades on report cards and different grades on test papers that way if the papers were audited, the tests would be graded properly; however, the state auditing mechanism would fail because state audits just check whether or not the exams were graded properly, they do not check whether or not the grades were entered properly. Likewise, in tallying up the score of a student, a teacher may make a mistake in tallying up the score. While many times errors in addition are inadvertent, there are many occasions where it is done deliberately in order to give students a passing score. While these exams may be audited, in conversations with auditors, it was mentioned that if there is an addition error of 2 points or less, especially if it is the difference between passing or failing, the addition error is allowed to stand as the students score on the regents exam.

Another method of scrubbing includes physically changing the responses of students. This is usually done when most of the exam is graded and it is known how many points are required to give the student a passing score. Scrubbing can also involve the interpretation of answers on an exam. Certain responses are subjected to a scoring rubric. By definition a scoring rubric requires some discretion on the part of graders. Graders may exercise their discretion differently if they know that one more point may mean the difference between passing and failing. Both of these scrubbing techniques are made to fool state auditors.

demand that teachers scrub their students' exams in order to improve passing percentages. Because all standardized tests have a standard error of measurement, a range of grades that a student may have actually scored under different conditions, teachers may be acting in order to correct what they see as a student's possible performance based on their knowledge of the student. By using this professional discretion, teachers may be enacting their agency within a structure that has been removing many of their rights and privileges.

One way to explain the scrubbing phenomenon would be that teachers are looking to make up for perceived disadvantages in students' backgrounds. As mentioned previously, schooling and standardized exams have a history of bias against minority groups (Bolger and Kellaghan 1990; Eagle and Harris 1969; Faggen-Steckler, McCarthy and Tittle 1996; Kozol 1991; McNeil 2000). Teachers that scrub may be acting in order to correct real or perceived disadvantages in their students' educational careers; however, it would be very difficult to decouple this sense of fairness and equity from the pressures faced by teachers in the new accountability paradigm where teachers and schools are rated on improving the test scores of their poor and disadvantaged students.

With the accountability movement, which began in the 1980s, there has been a shift in the way teachers see their jobs in determining the graduation outcomes of their students. Teachers previously were given a lot of autonomy in their classes and played a much larger role in determining the graduation requirements of their students. Previously, there was a greater emphasis on teachers being the ones who were the gatekeepers. Recently, there has been a shift to exams and high stakes tests determining students' graduation outcomes. Scrubbing may be an act that teachers have traditionally

performed in order to exercise their professional expertise/autonomy perhaps at times used in order to correct some inequalities that may have existed in students' backgrounds; however, in the most recent era of accountability, beginning in the late 1990s, where NCLB and increased state standards have increased pressures on teachers and administrators, scrubbing has changed in character into something that teachers are being forced/coerced into doing by administrators and the state education department in rigidly mandated fashions. This, along with media portrayals of scrubbing as cheating, has made scrubbing a practice which is seen by some teachers as a negative consequence of the increased emphasis on high stakes testing and the school report cards on school administration.

Effects of the Organization of Schooling on Reactions to High Stakes Tests:

The organization of schools has an effect on how standardized tests affect teachers and administrators and subsequently student learning. The modern concept of schools evolved from and is based on urban schools that flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Tyack 1974); however, there is much debate as to how the actual learning takes place within schools, which has led to many different competing models in the organization of schools. The factors that are taken into account are whether or not teachers react quickly to administrative pressures, how teachers react to the social class backgrounds of their students and how the staffing of a school affects the way teachers and administrators relate to one another. Gamoran, Secada and Marrett (2000) summarize four basic organizational frameworks for schools that have been proposed over the past 40 years: the input-output model, the nested layers model, the loose coupling model, and the dynamic, multidirectional model.

Coleman and his research on equality of educational opportunity exemplifies the input-output model of school organization and student learning (Gamoran et al. 2000). In this model, organizational resources are seen as directly affecting student learning. What goes on inside the school is a black box and the interactions between students, teachers, and administrators inside the school are not observed. If teachers or administrators were to subscribe to this model of school organization, they would likely discount the effect teachers and good teaching have on student learning. Schools would succeed and fail based solely upon the socioeconomic characteristics of the students and the economic resources available to the school.

The nested layers model of school organization and student learning is more complex than the input-output model and elaborates on the role of teachers within the school. Barr and Dreeben (1983) discuss the linkages between organizational resources, teachers and student learning, where there is a flow of resources from the school to the classroom, from the classroom to the instructional group, and from the instructional group to the student. Empirical support for this model could be found in Chubb and Moe's (1990) study, where it was found that principals in effective schools have different goals and priorities than teachers in less effective schools. Teachers and administrators that subscribe to the nested layers model would see teachers and schools as getting their direction from the superintendency, which has an indirect and obvious effect on the policies that are implemented in their classrooms including their pedagogical techniques, which have a direct effect on student learning.

The loose coupling model of school organization and student learning addresses some of the deficiencies of the nested layers approach. The loose coupling model

addresses the detachment of the administrative functions of a school and teaching and teaching and student learning. Weick (1976) used the term loose coupling in order to describe the relationships between students, teachers and administrators in the American educational system. In this model, administrators have authority in personnel decisions, physical environment and curricular materials, which all affect student learning, but bureaucratic controls are loosened to give teachers more control of their classrooms (Gamoran and Dreeben 1986). The advantage of loose coupling in the education system is that the system does not have to respond to every little change that may occur. Furthermore, there are more opportunities for self-determination by actors within a system. Drawbacks of a loosely coupled system would be that the efficiency of such a system could be hampered. In relation to high stakes tests, teachers may be slow to adopt all of the recommendations of their superiors because of this loose coupling. While this may be seen as a drawback, it could also be helpful during periods when student requirements are not yet clearly defined. Loose coupling also allows teachers to act as autonomous or semi-autonomous actors when responding to new testing regimes. The loose coupling model may also lead to a view of principal leadership where effective schools have administrators that set out general common goals for the staff to work toward (Gamoran et al 2000). The only factor that impacts teaching practices directly is teacher training and socialization. If this model is correct, there should be a tight link between current teacher behavior and the way they were socialized in their training by other teachers/professionals. If this is the case, administrators may indicate that the school should be committed to raising test scores; however, the specific behaviors associated with test score pollution would arise from teacher socialization.

The dynamic, multidirectional model of school organization and student learning addresses the unidirectional nature of the nested layers model. In this model, the practices of teachers in the classroom impacts not only student learning, but also the school itself. There is a two-way interaction between teachers and administrators, where teachers give feedback to their superiors who in turn change teaching practices directly and via professional development. The relationship between the school and teachers can also shift over time. Teachers and administrators that subscribe to this model would more likely feel that the administration is responsive to teacher requests and behaviors. Much of the success of Catholic schools can be attributed to the successful implementation of this model, where teachers feel administrators listen to them and respond their needs (Bryk, Lee and Holland1993).

While most of the literature discusses how school organization influences student learning, it would also be interesting how school organization affects norms that arise in teaching. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see how reforms at the national level affect student learning. Swanson (2005) looked at how different policies enacted at the national level are implemented at the state level. It was found that there is a level of coordination between the two actors. This project aims to study how teachers view the implantation of these policies and whether or not these policies are important to their everyday interactions with students and administrators.

1.2 Questions to be addressed by the project and hypotheses:

Since the 1980s, there has been a renewed emphasis on using high stakes tests for funding of public schools at the federal and state levels. Parents and administrators have also been using passing percentages in order to determine the efficacy of teachers. While

many other studies focus on the effects of high stakes tests on students, because of the emphasis placed on high stakes tests, teachers have been put under certain pressures to succeed. Teachers have found ways to cope with the pressures put on them by parents and administrators. One coping strategy that has been observed has been the act of “scrubbing,” where teachers deliberately change their students’ grades on high stakes tests from failing to passing. This behavior, which can be viewed as unethical by some, could be mitigated by the reactions of teachers to the phenomenon. This study aims to look at all the pressures placed upon teachers due to increased testing standards and test score pollution in particular. The following are certain factors that would change the pressures put on teachers and the possible outcomes of those pressures. The study will see if these responses are actually found in teachers facing a high-stakes testing regime.

How do accountability standards within schools put pressures on teachers and administrators? How does the school’s organization affect teachers’ behaviors in relation to high stakes exams?

Because schools that are under review have different pressures placed upon them, it is important to see how teachers and administrators react to those pressures and if these pressures differ from schools that are in good standing. Because administrators could be terminated if their schools are not making adequate progress, they may pressure teachers to raise passing percentages on high stakes tests in order to alleviate the added stresses of potentially being closed down. It is theorized that schools that are under more scrutiny will likely have a higher incidence of scrubbing.

Because NCLB has a direct effect on the working conditions of teachers and administrators, it is anticipated both groups would develop an antipathy toward NCLB

and feel that there is a great deal of pressure from new requirements. While administrators may feel that these new mandates are necessary as they are the ones in charge of implementing them, teachers may feel that these mandates undermine their authority and professional expertise and resist the implementation of these mandates. Schools that have a nested layers structure of school organization will implement these mandates more successfully because of the hierarchical nature of the nested layers model.

Does the subject taught by a teacher affect the pressures placed upon her/him?

Teachers that teach subjects that have recently undergone curriculum or exam changes would be more likely to feel uncertain and therefore have more pressures placed upon them to improve scores. Conversely, they may feel that the exams would be to blame for any poor scores that are received by the students; therefore, diffusing the blame. Furthermore, teachers that teach subjects that are not mandatory for graduation would feel less pressure placed upon them than teachers that teach subjects with exams that are required for graduation. Teachers that score exams that have items that require more subjective evaluation of students, like essays, would have more opportunities to act to alleviate the pressures placed on them. Because of the pressures placed on teachers to improve test scores and the opportunities presented to them, teachers who score exams with essays such as English and History would be more likely to scrub exams.

Does the phenomenon of scrubbing exist? If so, what are the prevailing methods of scrubbing and test-score pollution? Why do/don't teachers engage in these behaviors?

Looking at ungrouped regents scores, graphing them and seeing if there was a discontinuity would ideally answer this question; however, access to such data have been prohibited up until recently by school policies. Interviewing teachers to understand

whether or not the problem exists and the motivation of teachers that scrub would be the most feasible way to answer this question. It is likely that the type of test being administered will have an effect on the methods of scrubbing used. Answering this question would go a long way to understanding and contributing to the scholarship on test score pollution. If it is found that there is a significant amount of test score pollution, there would be consequences for the testing regime in New York State. The way the tests are administered and graded or even the types of questions asked may have to be changed in order to minimize the phenomenon. Whether accountability practices affect the propensity of teachers to engage in egregious test score pollution and whether or not it is encouraged more by administrators who have more to lose if the school does not improve is also studied. It is theorized that teachers engage in scrubbing behavior in order to enact their professional discretion in testing; however, in the new accountability paradigm teachers may scrub more because of the pressures that are put on them by their administrators to increase test scores.

Does scrubbing favor particular racial/class groups over others? If so, which groups are favored and why?

The motivation some teachers have to engage in test score pollution is that they do it because they genuinely like their students and would like to help them out. Teachers may be more inclined to help students if they are more like themselves meaning that there would be an effect for matched race pairs of teachers and students. Another possibility would be that teachers may be likely to succumb to the pressures that are placed upon them by parents and students. The parents and students that may place more pressures on teachers may be white, Asian, or financially advantaged based upon the traditional performance of these groups on standardized exams leading to test pollution

strategies that favor these students; therefore it is theorized that teachers will be more likely to scrub for white and Asian students and less likely to scrub for poor, black and Hispanic students.

Do increased administrative pressures on teachers result in more scrubbing on the part of teachers? Does it change teachers' perception of scrubbing?

There are many pressures placed on administrators to improve standardized test scores within their schools. These pressures are shifted to the teachers, where their administrators set up policies for them to scrub exams more frequently. These pressures should increase the amount of scrubbing performed by teachers because they want to please or at least placate their administrator or avoid the repercussions of noncompliance. While teachers have previously scrubbed exams, being pressured into scrubbing by administrators may make them more likely to view the practice in a negative light. While teachers may have previously scrubbed in order to exercise their professional expertise, a directive from a supervisor may make it seem like a practice merely used in order to inflate statistics.

Has media pressure had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that goes on in schools?

Much of the media portrayals of scrubbing have been negative. Since much of the debate concerning scrubbing has been framed by the news media, even teachers who have scrubbed for years may begin to view scrubbing in the light presented by the news media, that scrubbing is always the same as cheating, and that teachers who scrub in any manner are cheaters. This may mean that teachers who have had more access to news reports about scrubbing will be more aware of scrubbing and would view it in a more unfavorable light.

Have the New York State Education Department (NYSED) mandates to regrade certain exams had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that occurs? Do teachers perceive scrubbing differently now that there is a mandate to regrade certain regents exams?

The New York State Education Department does not mandate that all exams be rescored; only exams that fall between 60 and 64 in math and science regents exams. These mandates were instituted in 1999 and 2002 respectively. These directives to regrade these exams should have the effect of increasing the scrutiny of test papers in that score range. Being that there is a state mandate to review test papers, teachers will be more likely to review those test papers than teachers grading exams that have no such mandate. In the subjects where rescoring is mandated, teachers may view the process more stringently and may be more likely to adhere to strict grading interpretations than in subjects where there is no mandate to rescore. Furthermore, in exams where there are no state mandates to regrade the exams, there may be more scrubbing because teachers themselves would set the standards for regrading exams and may exercise their professional expertise more freely than in subjects where there are state mandates regarding the regarding of exams. Because of this state mandate, teachers who have the state mandate would perceive scrubbing differently than those who do not have a state mandate to rescore tests. Those that do not have the state mandate may be able to rationalize and justify changing scores more than teachers who have the state dictating how to regrade exams.

1.3 Methods:

Below is a brief description of the methods used in the completion of this project. The first level of analysis performed was at the state and city level and includes

quantitative data obtained from the New York State Education Department Report Cards. Using the data, changes in test scores were examined to see if there was a corresponding change in staff, parental involvement or student demographics. Using this information, schools were selected in order to complete second level analyses, which included semi-structured interviews with teachers and administrators at selected schools. Schools were selected in order to represent schools of different demographic compositions and academic achievement. Of the schools that were contacted only 7 chose to participate in the study. The interviews focused on the motivations of the teachers, the conditions faced by teachers in a high-stakes testing environment, and test score pollution along with other issues that are relevant to teachers.

School Report Cards:

Prior to selecting the schools, School Report Cards were obtained from every school in the city of New York from June 1994 until June 2008. The purpose of the school report cards is to “describe a school and its performance over the past year.... [in order to] inform parents community and the general public about the progress of New York City public schools.” The school report cards initially began in 1994 by discussing only broad trends in the schools’ performance, but by 2005, they included principals’ statements, school mission statements, and further discussion of students’ backgrounds including Limited English Proficiency (LEP), special education students, immigrant students’ countries of origin and the breakdown of student performance by race, class and gender. The school report cards were used to determine which schools were suitable to be included in the study.

In formally analyzing the data, the 2008 school report cards published by New York State were used as a point of comparison between different schools. The 2008 school report cards were chosen because that was the year that interviews had taken place. Demographic and academic comparisons were made between the 7 selected schools, the city and the state. Using regression analysis, the 7 selected schools were compared to the rest of the city, the state of New York excluding New York City, and the rest of the state as a whole along selected criteria. The selected schools were dissimilar from both the rest of the state (not including New York City) and the rest of the city; however, they were remarkably similar when compared to all of New York State (including New York City). Along with interviews with teachers at the selected schools, information contained in the school report cards were also used in the brief ethnographies of the schools presented in Chapter 2.

Interviews with selected staff members:

All high schools within the City of New York were initially studied. Using existing School Report Card data from the years 1994-2005, the demographics, staffing, parental involvement and student achievement of schools were measured and compared to performance on high stakes exams using school report card data. Afterward, schools were selected in order to conduct interviews with the relevant school staff. After schools were selected, the individuals that were interviewed at the schools included teachers who had experience grading the regents exams and administrators. Students were not interviewed because of the added precautions that must be undertaken in order to interview minors.

In order to conduct interviews at the selected schools, permission was obtained from the New York City Department of Education. Further permission was required from each school principal in order to gain access to their schools. Principals were approached via phone and email to conduct the study at their school. The principals were sent an introductory letter, copy of the interview templates, copies of informed consent forms, sample recruitment flyers, and a research proposal (Appendix A contains the packet that was emailed and/or hand delivered to prospective schools). Over 2 dozen schools were approached in order to conduct the study, only seven granted the study access to teachers and school grounds. Once permission was obtained from the school principals, teachers were mainly recruited through recruitment letters placed in mailboxes, word of mouth, and encounters in teachers' lounges. Approximately 12 teachers and 1-2 administrators were interviewed from each school. In total with 93 interviews were conducted. Due to the disparate sizes of the schools, schools varied in their participation rates where some schools had almost full participation of eligible teachers, other schools had approximately 15 percent of eligible teachers interviewed. Interviews were conducted privately mostly during teachers' planning periods in vacant classrooms during school hours. The interviews were conducted in English, tape recorded, and transcribed at a later date with field notes being taken at the conclusion of each interview day. Interviews with teachers included self reported demographic and human resource information about the teacher and answers to questions concerning high stakes testing and working conditions. Most interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes; however, some interviews were as long as 2 hours and others were as short as 30 minutes. The teachers all gave informed consent to the interviews and were made aware of the

risks being involved in the study. Pseudonyms were created for each of the participants as well as the names of the schools they were assigned to.

Brief Description of Analyses:

Chapter 2 includes ethnographies of the 7 schools. The school report card data along with portions of transcribed interviews are used in order to give a full and accurate description of the schools. Chapter 3 contains analysis of paired t-tests conducted on 2008 school report card data that was publically available on the New York State Department of Education Website. Comparisons were made between the 7 selected schools and the rest of the city and/or state based on demographic attributes such as: ethnic/racial makeup, number of students with Limited English Proficiency Status and the number of students receiving free lunch. Comparisons were also made between the selected schools' and the reference groups' passing and mastery percentage on the regents exams. Chapters 3-5 also contain excerpts of interviews that were conducted with teachers. The excerpts were used to paint a more complete picture of the problems facing teachers in a high stakes testing environment.

1.4 Description of the Chapters Presented:

Chapter 2 will look generally at the schools that were selected for further study and the demographic characteristics of the teachers, students, and administrators. Chapter 3 will give an overview of the tradition of testing within the city and state of New York and the demographic and testing trends within the state and city of New York and Nationwide. Chapter 4 will examine the pressures faced by teachers and administrators in a high stakes testing environment and will introduce the concept of Test Score Pollution. Chapter 5 will define the term scrubbing in more detail and discuss the

effect scrubbing has on schools throughout NYC. Chapter 6 will summarize the findings and give suggestions to remediate any negative effects that are uncovered due to high stakes testing.

Chapter 2:

This chapter will include a brief ethnography of the schools that were selected. The schools will be renamed in order to allow the respondents to remain anonymous, especially since potentially difficult subjects will be discussed in the interviews with school employees. The rationale for choosing the schools will be discussed, as well as the changes that have occurred within the schools collectively over the last decade. The basic structures of the schools will be discussed as well as the demographics of the schools and staffs. This chapter will set the stage for the more complex deconstruction of the schools that will take place in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3:

This chapter will discuss the effects of high stakes tests on New York City in particular. The NCLB act and its effect on classroom teachers will be discussed. Chapter 3 will include data from schools in the city of New York and the performance of schools in New York City when compared to other regions in the state. Discussion of the motivations for and the effect of recent changes in the state regents exams will be discussed. The reactions of teachers and administrators to these changes will be discussed thoroughly to see what changes the schools have undergone in order to cope with the new standards. The demographics of the city will be discussed and compared to trends throughout the rest of the state and the nation in general.

Chapter 4:

This chapter will look at the overall effects of high stakes tests on teachers and administrators. It will look at their attitudes toward high stakes exams, the way they cope with the exams, and whether or not they have engaged in behavior that could be labeled as test score pollution. Any claims of test score pollution would have to be mitigated by the situation they are in and have the teachers in their own words explain whether or not they believe test score pollution has a deleterious effect on learning and assessment. It would also be interesting to see whether or not the teachers themselves see test score pollution as widespread. Again, it would be very important to stress that all measures would be taken to ensure that the identity of the teachers would not be revealed.

Chapter 5:

This chapter will discuss the phenomenon of scrubbing in depth. The term scrubbing and methods of scrubbing will be defined with gradations. Teachers' rationale for scrubbing is discussed in depth. The relationship between teachers' knowledge and propensity to engage in scrubbing and their school's organization is examined. Whether or not teachers of different academic subjects are more likely to scrub is also explored. The chapter concludes with an assessment of how widespread scrubbing is throughout the city of New York and whether certain students benefit more from scrubbing than others.

Chapter 6:

This chapter will sum up the findings of the study how they were similar or different than the expectations prior to the study and the contributions they will make to the relevant literatures. The coping mechanisms of teachers that are faced with higher standards will be discussed thoroughly. Furthermore, recommendations for changes to

the current testing practices will be discussed. The introduction of test score pollution into the sociology of education literature and how it would fit into the current scholarship would be another goal of this chapter.

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:
New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability

Chapter 2:
High Stakes Testing and the City of New York

Overview of the Seven Schools:

For this study seven schools were chosen in order to conduct interviews. The seven schools were all public schools in the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). The oldest school in the sample was established in the 1920s and the newest schools were in their third year of existence. The schools ranged in size from less than 300 (as they were not yet at capacity) to over 2500 students. The two largest schools, both over 2500 students were comprehensive high schools, 2 were high achieving schools both centered on a theme, while the 3 remaining schools were average/low achieving schools that were centered on a central theme, 2 of which were recently opened.

Among the schools, there were some that had serious performance issues and others that were among the most competitive in the United States. The schools were in neighborhoods all throughout the city, historically poor black communities, working class ethnic white communities, business districts and affluent white areas of the city. The schools ranged from mostly black on one extreme to mostly white and Asian on the other extreme; the two largest schools in the sample were the most ethnically diverse having almost equal parts white, black, Hispanic and Asian. The seven schools were each given pseudonyms in order to protect the schools' and the teachers' identities: John Basilone High School, Atlantic High School, Parkview High School, Longshore High School, Bay View High School, David Dinkins Academy and J.P. Morgan Technical High School.

School characteristics:

Overview of John Basilone High School:

John Basilone High School is a comprehensive high school in New York City (NYC). It opened in the 1960s as an experimental school, and is currently in its second year labeled as a School Requiring Academic Progress (SRAP) after failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for several years in English and Math; however, the school is trying hard to get out of that status. The school was never used as a “zoned school,” always requiring students to apply to the school while in junior high school. The school is in a working class neighborhood that is sandwiched between housing projects on one side and a traditionally working class Italian neighborhood on the other side. The Italian neighborhood has become increasingly Chinese in the last 15 years. Along with the rest of the surrounding neighborhoods, the turn of the century has brought increasing housing prices and condominiums built across the street from the school, which retail for more than \$500,000 for a 2 bedroom unit.

The school has a wide sprawling campus, which is rare for NYC. Students are often found sitting on the campus grounds in between classes or sometimes instead of classes. The campus is encircled by a 12 ft chain link fence that has controlled entrances manned by New York Police Department School Safety Officers (SSOs). Security at the school is tight with metal detectors and cameras set up throughout the campus. The SSOs use radios to communicate with each other throughout the sprawling campus. While the daily attendance of the school may be at 90%, the tendency of high school students in the city is to “cut” individual classes. For example, they may go to their English class religiously, but may attend their math class sporadically. This would be a phenomenon

that does not show up in data reported to the state, since class attendance is not taken into account in these statistics. At Basilone in particular cutting is a major problem. Students are allowed to be on the campus throughout the day and they have a lot of down time built into their schedules. The large sprawling campus and the school schedule makes cutting class, a large issue for the school.

The school is walking distance from Thaddeus Kosciusko High School, a school that is in the midst of closing down after several years of low performance and an atrocious safety record. Kosciusko High School is being replaced by several smaller schools including David Dinkins Academy, which is also profiled in this study. While students from all over the city may enroll in Basilone High School, most of the students are from the surrounding neighborhoods. Many students travel to the school by city bus or subway. There is a city bus stop not far from the school. The school is also adjacent to an elevated subway line. Like most schools in the NYCDOE, students do not drive to school.

Demographics:

John Basilone High School is home to over 2,500 students and was the largest school in the sample. Table 1 summarizes the racial and ethnic makeup of Basilone, which is very mixed as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE. Approximately 30 percent of the students are black, 30 percent of the students are Asian, 20 percent of the students are white, and 20 percent of the students are Hispanic. The number of Asian students in the school has increased to 30 percent from less than 15 percent 10 years prior with a corresponding decrease in the white population. Approximately 14 percent of the students are English Language Learners (ELLs), with

most immigrants coming from China, Haiti and Russia. The percentage of students eligible for free lunch is less than 40 percent while similar schools and schools citywide have approximately 50 percent of students eligible for free lunch. There are more girls than boys at the school by an almost 6 percent margin. The school is currently over 125% capacity.

Academics:

John Basilone High School was managing to maintain good standing; however, it was previously labeled as a SRAP and after the field interviews did not manage to make AYP making it an SRAP once again because it did not make AYP that year. Table 2 describes the graduation statistics of the school. The total graduation rate for the school was 59 percent for the 2002 cohort (the most recent data available). The most recent school report card saw 79 percent of graduates receiving regents diplomas, with almost half of those students receiving regents diplomas with advanced designation.

In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations. Table 3 describes Basilone's performance on the regents for students to achieve the minimum graduation requirements. Basilone performs well on the English regents with more than 85 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the English regents exam. The school performs well on the Math A regents with 90 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the Math A regents exam. In the school report card period following the field interviews, more than 80 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, nearly 80 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and more than 90 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. Table 4 shows Basilone's performance for

students to earn a regents diploma, and Table 5 shows Basilone's students' performance in attaining mastery on individual regents exams. As seen in Table 5, Basilone High School has problems getting its students to attain Mastery in all of these subjects with 20 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the English regents, 10 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the Math A regents, 20 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents, 47 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History, and only 11 percent of students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, nearly 90 percent of students score greater than 55 on the chemistry regents, but only 5 percent score above an 85 on the chemistry regents and nearly 70 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents but only about 10 percent score above an 85 on the Math B regents. The inability of the school to have students scoring high on the regents has affected its AYP status.

School Administration:

The school does have a Mission Statement, which was crafted by the principal in conjunction with a school leadership team. The mission statement includes language referring to its origins as an alternative school and giving students more agency in decisions that affect their educational careers; however, whether the teachers are aware of the mission statement or if it trickles down to the students is up for interpretation. Like many of the schools, teachers claim to have been involved in crafting the mission statement, but of the teachers who were interviewed most did not know what the mission statement was or they were unable to mention key parts of the mission statement. The principal also seemed to be unaware of the school mission statement.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Mr. Schwartz does not remember exactly what the school's mission statement is.

Liguori: [D]oes the school have a well stated goal or mission statement?

Mr. Schwartz: Yes we do.

Liguori: [W]hat is it?

Mr. Schwartz: Well, I would have to be embarrassed to say that I don't have it memorized. But I could give you a copy.

Ms. Stein, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Stein knows that there is a school mission statement, but is not quite sure what it is.

Liguori: Next some questions on your perception of the school organization. Does the principal have a well-stated goal or mission statement for the school?

Ms. Stein: Yeah. But don't ask me what it is (laughs). It's posted everywhere. This is a non competitive school, so it's posted everywhere. Not in this room it's not posted.

Liguori: Were teachers involved in developing that goal or mission statement?

Ms. Stein: May have, but he didn't ask me (laughs). I'm sure, I'm sure, because he does involve others. He does involve teachers. He's a very nice guy.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi does not know what the school mission statement is and claims he would not stay true to it if he knew what it was.

Liguori: Were teachers involved in developing that mission statement?

Mr. Askenazi: I would think so, I don't know for a fact, but I would think so.

Liguori: Approximately what is that mission statement?

Mr. Askenazi: I have no idea. I think it's been made and I think teachers might have participated; I don't think it's been verbalized often enough or communicated strong enough to the staff. I don't even know if it's necessary, I'm cynical about those things.

Liguori: If you had known what it is, would teachers stay true to that mission?

Mr. Askenazi: I know I wouldn't.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Askenazi: Because I think that it would be as much to satisfy those people above who need to see stuff like that, but it really has nothing to do with what's going to go on in the classroom that's of benefit to the students. I think so much of what we are asked to do is just window dressing.

The school calendar consists of four cycles that last nine weeks instead of two semesters that last 20 weeks. Students change teachers and schedules every cycle. The school follows a band schedule where not every band meets every day and certain class periods are longer than others depending on the day of the week. The school operates on an

extended day where students can work with teachers and get more assistance in their courses. The school also allows for students to attend “Resource Centers” (RCs) where they can find reference materials to aid them in their coursework. This schedule can hamper teachers getting to know their students.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn claims that with changing teachers all the time, many students have learned different things from different teachers.

Liguori: Just a couple of questions about your expectations for your students for passing the regents. Approximately what percentage of your students do you expect to pass the regents exam?

Ms. Penn: This past year, I think I had somewhere around 85 percent passing.

Liguori: For both Biology and Earth Science?

Ms. Penn: So, I had I think a little lower for Biology and a little higher for Earth Science, I think my Earth Science was about 90 percent, and I think that this is because the way that we switch classes here. So in Biology I only had those students for 4th cycle, and I think that switching teachers 4 times disrupts a lot of the continuity you need for a class, like a science class, that builds from the first semester to the end of the year on more basic knowledge over to more complex topics, on the other hand for the Earth Science because I’m the only ESL Earth Science teacher, I have the same students for the entire year, they switch them on my few classes, but they were always my students, so they got a lot more continuity and I was able to constantly give them tests on the material from the cycle before so we were constantly reviewing all year, which I thought I couldn’t do with the Living Environment students, and I think that because of that I had better passing rates.

Liguori: Were you guys on the same foot with the Biology classes. I could imagine in a school where you change teachers 4 times a year, it must be very difficult, do you guys sort of like coordinate with each other?

Ms. Penn: Yeah, we try to, but I’d say that every time we switched, there were at least ¼ to ½ of the teachers in our department who were a week to 2 weeks behind where they should have been at the switch point, so that was definitely a week or 2 of instruction that the students then mixed, because as soon as they switched to a new teacher everyone started again on their own material that was for that cycle, even the teachers who had been behind.

The current principal of the school has been a principal at the school since September of 2001. He was previously a principal at another school for 4 years and an assistant principal for 6 years. Besides the principal, there is 1 assistant principal in charge of Organization (APO), one assistant principal in charge of security, one assistant principal in charge of programming the students, one assistant principal in charge of guidance and several assistant principals each in charge of an academic department.

There are several deans that are in charge of disciplining students. This is typical of large, comprehensive, high schools. Like many schools in the sample, the department chairs serve as supervisors and liaisons to the principal.

Ms. Russell, 49, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Russell discusses the chain of command in her school which emanates from the superintendent.

Liguori: Do you as a teacher have any effect on decisions that administrators make?

Ms. Russell: No.

Liguori: So there's a big disconnect?

Ms. Russell: I think it comes from the superintendent, superintendent filters to the principal, principal filters to administrators, administrators filter to teachers. No, we don't make any types of decisions, or he'll listen to us, he does, you know you have a problem and he'll see what he could do, so he's very helpful.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn feels that the principal is very hands off while her direct supervisor spends much more time with her.

Liguori: Another question about your opinions regarding school organization. How well do administrators interact with the teachers?

Ms. Penn: Um. So it depends on the level that you're talking about. The principal here is very hands off. So I don't think he's ever seen me teach, in the year and a half that I've been here. He doesn't really walk around or come into teacher's classrooms, which is something that I have experienced at the other school that I was at. My assistant principal is also probably a little bit more hands off than the AP of the school that I was before this. But he definitely has seen me teach several times and generally I feel like I had a fairly good relationship with the department chair.

Ms. Goldstein, 52, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 15 years will be an Administrator the following semester. Ms. Goldstein feels that she impacts school decisions through consulting with her Assistant Principal.

Liguori: What about with Mr. Schwartz, do the decisions he makes, those decisions, do those decisions affect your teaching or students learning?

Ms. Goldstein: Well, not so directly, because he would speak to the APs and they would speak to us. So, indirectly, yes.

Liguori: Indirectly yes, but not directly...

Ms. Goldstein: It's funny because I team teach with him (laughs), so his decisions directly affect my teaching only because of that. He's very hands on in the whole school. He's very involved in everything and he's also very open to new idea. Anything. like, the space science academy, we had to go for approval for that, I mean he's always been open for these kinds of things.

Teaching Staff:

There are more than 100 teachers at the school. More than 95 percent of the teachers fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes certain

attributes of the teaching staff of Basilone High School. Approximately 70 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Approximately 11 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is quite experienced with only five percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The turnover rate for teachers with fewer than 5 years experience is 25% and the overall turnover rate is 10%. One teacher seems to blame the turnover rate of younger teachers on the principal.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan feels that many young teachers have left Basilone because of the principal.

Liguori: No he doesn't? How well do the administrators interact with the teachers? Let's start with Mr. Schwartz, how well does he interact with the teachers?

Mr. Sagan: Not very well.

Liguori: How so?

Mr. Sagan: I don't know what his deal is; I think he's like slimy.

Liguori: In what way?

Mr. Sagan: He will smile in your face knowing the very minute you turn around he's about to get you, he's about to do something shady to you, and that's not cool. That's one of the reasons that if you look at the Basilone roster of teachers, all of the 30 year old teachers are gone, they left.

Parental Involvement:

The attempts to incorporate parents in the school environment include: workshops for parents, having a parent coordinator, including parents on the school leadership team, and having parent-teacher meetings 4 times per year. According to the parent coordinator, many parents do not make use of the coordinator unless it is a last resort when they are unsure of what to do with their child. According to teachers, parental involvement is limited to only a handful of parents. While there are attempts to involve parents in school life, according to teachers, parental involvement is limited.

Ms. Goldfarb, 51, Special Education Assistant Principal, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been in education 28 years and an administrator for 15 years. Ms. Goldfarb laments the lack of parental involvement in the school.

Liguori: What about the parents, do they put the pressure on you?

Ms. Goldfarb: I wish they would (laughs). I might get a handful, but I don't get as much parent communication as I would like. So like during open school night not very many parents come. Umm, the PTA, I think it's PA now, it's parents association, not as many parents come as you would like. I mean we send communications off like the times we send the report cards out an update on the IEP. And even when we invite the parent up for their IEPs, their annual review of the IEP.

Liguori: So you don't feel that much parental pressure to raise scores.

Ms. Goldfarb: No, in certain schools, parents. I think it depends on the school. Here personally, I think they can they're a tremendous force. I think the parents, they should be probably be more making the opportunities if they want to. But I don't feel unless when we're trying to get an individual parent that really is pushing their kid. We attempt to follow the rules and regulations, so I don't really kind of want to do. But every once in a while you get a parent that pushes, but that's the rare, I've found. Where if you ask the guidance counselor, they might give you another answer in general ed.

Ms. Stein, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Stein feels that parents are not very involved in the school with most parents not participating in parent teacher nights.

Liguori: What about Parents. What's the role of parents?

Ms. Stein: Not great.

Liguori: What do you mean?

Ms. Stein: Parent Teacher Conference you do not get the majority of parents coming down. You do not get a majority. Maybe [in] a better class like you know, like a calculus class, a better class, where the kids are serious and the kids come from serious homes the parents are going to get more involved. A lot of them we have parent conferences 4 times a year because we change [classes] 4 times a year, twice during the year during the day, [we're] not going to speak to many because a lot of [the parents] are working. Working class, so if they miss a day of work, they don't get paid. I think when parents come, the sad thing is, there really is no change with the kid. I've had parents come and I've never seen the kids. The parents didn't know the kids cut out the whole cycle. I say sorry your kids not in my class then I realize, oh yeah this kids supposed to be in my class, but then I never see the kid again. Parent teacher conference pretty much is a parent coming down, just hearing it, but I've never seen any real changes. Kid doesn't do homework, kid will continue not to do homework, Tell the parent the kid's not doing homework, homework's still not being done. It's very hard for a parent to change a kid

Mr. Shapiro, 59, Special Education and History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Shapiro describes the lack of parental involvement in the PTA.

Liguori: Just in general, the expectations of the parent. What is the role of parent in this school?

Mr. Shapiro: The role of parents is to be actively involved. Are they? NO! You can have a PTA meeting, you can count on one hand, no, one finger how many parents show up. And this is a school with 2500, 3500 students.

Liguori: Do you ever feel pressure from parents to pass their child in a class? Your class?

Mr. Shapiro: We can't get in touch with the parent. I try all the time. I have a building and many of the students who go to the school live there and I'll see them in the street and I'll see their parents and talk to them and say "hey, you know your son hasn't been in my class in the last 6

months.” “what do you mean” She goes “she comes to school” and he’ll say “I’m on my way to school, but I never make it into the building.” “I’ll speak to them”

School Expenditures and Facilities:

The school spent approximately \$8000 per pupil in 2004. This is significantly less than the \$11,300 per pupil average spent across New York City. More than 60 percent of the money was spent on classroom instruction, 15 percent was spent in supervisory support, and approximately 7 percent was spent on building services. The need for resources was described by the principal who feared that large schools were getting shortchanged by the city in favor of smaller theme oriented schools.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Mr. Schwartz describes how he feels shortchanged in his school’s annual budget.

Liguori: Now does access to resources help out with being an effective administrator?

Mr. Schwartz: What type of resources?

Liguori: How about monetary?

Mr. Schwartz: In our case, without question. Because we run an extended day and we depend upon additional funds where we had been funded at higher rates to help pay teachers additional to work a longer day since students can go to what we call “Resource Centers” where there is more individualized instruction for the kids, uh, independent study time for the kids, so they can progress at the better rate or self paced rate or to do catch up as necessary. We feel that we have been cookie-cut into a mold like other schools, where any kid is like every other kid, and they produce widgets. The product is a widget at the end of the line in 4 years get them out. Um, every student is different their needs are different, their abilities are different, their interests are different and resources in terms of funding are critical to our program to run effectively. We have never been shorted as we feel we have been for the last couple of years. Um, we have our own speculation that a lot of funds have been drawn off and given to small school initiatives. Um, when we ask “well, can you explain why we don’t have comfortable funding as in past years?” the standard answer has been “it’s in the budget, it’s in the budget.” When things are delineated by line item so you can actually see where moneys were and where they came from, all of a sudden now one it’s giant pot and there is no way you can find where it is to make a comparison to say “yeah, well we received this amount one year, last year was less, this year because you can’t see this year because it’s in there.” The standard line has been “it’s in the budget.” Where? “It’s in there.” We don’t have proof of it, so we feel we’re being shortchanged.

Liguori: That’s gotta be hard especially at Basilone, where a lot...

Mr. Schwartz: Especially at Basilone. And other comprehensive high schools are feeling the same thing.

However, being in such a large school, many teachers do not feel that they have a lack of resources as they are able to get whatever they need to run their classrooms.

Ms. Russell, 49, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Russell feels that she has access to all the resources she needs for her classroom.

Liguori: Just in general, do you feel that access to resources would that or does that affect your teaching? For example, money for books, computers, or whatever it might be.

Ms. Russell: Yeah, if it's not available, but we have those resources available you know all the time. As a matter of fact, we just got new laptops in our department. So the kids do have access to the Internet. All throughout the school year, throughout the day, they do have resources in library, they do have time to sit down in between to get tutoring or help during their day, during that academic day so the kids have that available. For the kids that want to use it and need extra help it is always available.

Overview of Atlantic High School:

Atlantic High School was opened up 3 years prior to the field visit and it had not yet graduated a class. There was a great contrast between Atlantic and Basilone high schools. While Basilone High School is large and comprehensive, Atlantic High School is small and centered on a theme. It also has an outside entity that it partners with in order to enhance students' educational experience. Because it is a smaller theme school, it was never a zoned school, always requiring students to apply. Because it is a new school, it has never been on probation or failed to make AYP; however, it's first few years have been plagued with several changes in administration due to scandal. Basilone is established in the neighborhood, while Atlantic, a brand new school is still finding its way and trying to earn a reputation. This means that fewer students who attend Atlantic may have listed it as a first choice on their NYCDOE high school application.

Atlantic is in a well established neighborhood bound by apartment buildings on one side and bordered by highways on the other two sides. The residential neighborhood that surrounds the school is comprised of high-rise apartment buildings. The apartment buildings are mostly Mitchell-Lama¹ co-ops and rentals that were built in the 1960s. The overwhelming majority of the first occupants in the 1960s were Jewish; however, due to

¹ The co-ops and rentals were built by developers, but the State of New York guaranteed the mortgages. This was done in order to create white, middle-class, housing in the neighborhood.

natural loss and migration, the neighborhood has become both a Naturally Occurring Retiring Community (NORC) and a thriving Russian/Eastern European neighborhood with Russian and Eastern European immigrants who arrived in the mid 1990s through the turn of the century. The co-ops are in the middle of becoming private, where residents can now sell their apartments on the open market, where prices range from \$300,000 for a one bedroom apartment to over \$1,000,000 for well situated 3 bedroom apartments.

Atlantic High School is surrounded by a 20 foot chain link fence. The school shares this enclosure with another school and uses the enclosure as a parking lot. The fence boundaries are the school building on the first side, another high school on the second side, the street on the third side and the highway on the fourth side. There is also an adjacent high school. The adjacent school is a large comprehensive high school with a rich history and famous alumni; while the adjacent school is well known, it is past its prime and having performance issues. This leaves Atlantic High School, a school in its third year of existence, in the shadow of a much larger more established school. Adding to the school's anonymity is the fact that it shares facilities with a well established junior high school built decades ago.

Unlike the larger schools that were studied, Atlantic high school is much smaller and much more intimate. The school consists of two hallways on two floors. Teachers share a lounge with the student library and a semi- enclosed guidance counselor's office. The teachers all know each other and all of the students. Because of the size of the school, the principal and assistant principal are very visible. Unlike Basilone, a much larger school, and David Dinkins Academy, another small school, which shared facilities with other schools, the security at the school could be described as lax at best. While I

was asked to sign in every day at most other schools, the 2 security guards at the school only asked me to sign in on the first day and from then on did not bother to even ask for identification. Despite the lax security, there was talk amongst teachers about a culture of violence that extended to the parents, one of whom threatened a teacher during my field study of the school.

Demographics:

When the field research was done, the school had not yet graduated a class. At the time of the field research the school was home to fewer than 500 students. The capacity of the school when it is at capacity will still be fewer than 500 students. Table 1 describes the demographic makeup of Atlantic High School. The school is comprised of mostly black and Hispanic students as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE, where approximately 30 percent of the students are black, 30 percent of the students are Hispanic, 30 percent of the students are white, and 10 percent of the students are Asian. Approximately 11 percent of the students are ELLs, with many immigrants coming from Latin America and Eastern Europe. The school is in receipt of Title I funds with 100% of students eligible according to the NYCDOE. All students receive free lunch at the school. There is also a large gender disparity at the school, with girls comprising nearly 60 percent of the student body.

Academics:

Atlantic High School is in good standing; however, this is because it has not yet graduated a class and schools that have not graduated students are not graded. In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations. Table 3 describes Atlantic High School's performance on the

regents in order to meet minimum graduation standards and Table 4 shows its performance in order to meet the minimum standards for regents diplomas. The school performs well on the English regents with more than 95 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the English regents exam and more than 90 percent passing at the 65 level. The school performs well on the Math A regents with more than 95 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the Math A regents exam and more than 80 percent getting a passing grade of 65 or higher. In the school report card period following the field interviews, nearly 80 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, more than 80 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and almost 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. Table 5 Shows Atlantic High School's students' performance in attaining mastery scores on the regents exams. Compared to Basilone, Atlantic High School has fewer problems getting its students to attain Mastery in all of these subjects, with more than 40 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the English regents, 20 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the Math A regents, nearly 30 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents, nearly 50 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History, and less than 10 percent of students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, only 50 percent of students score greater than 55 on the chemistry regents, with only 25 percent passing at the 65 level and only 1 student scoring above an 85 on the chemistry regents. While 90 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents, only about 20 percent score above an 85 on the Math B regents. The fact that the school is a small school affects its ability to quickly change percentages and resources to address the performance issues;

however, this has sometimes run into some resistance from teachers claiming that there is not much administrative support for some subjects that are not graded by NCLB or used in determining AYP.

Ms. Hurwitz, 24, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her first year teaching. Ms. Hurwitz laments that there is more attention focused on hiring Math teachers than history teachers.

Liguori: How effective is your principal?

Ms. Hurwitz: I don't know. So, I'm not sure how effective he is in terms of things. In terms of budget and other things he's supposed to do that I have no part of, it seems like parties are not often what would work for an entire school. Like there are 4 different teachers that teach math and there are 2 history teachers. And the 4 teachers who teach math, granted they're not all teaching Math full, well 2 of them are full time. But the fact that there are 2 others, so let's say the equivalent of 1 more full time teacher in math. That means there are 3 math teachers and 2 history teachers. There's no reason for that. Like it's very ridiculous. Of course, I'm a history teacher, so I notice my own problems. I can't help it.

School Administration:

The school does have a Mission Statement, which was crafted by the principal in conjunction with a school leadership team. The mission statement includes language referring to the theme the school is centered on and the partnerships it has in the community. Like other schools in the sample, the teachers were not really aware of the school's mission. In discussing the school's mission, the principal did not mention the outside partnerships that are in the school's mission despite the fact that the mission is posted clearly on the wall opposite his desk. The teachers who were aware of the school's mission were critical of the attention the school's central theme got with some mentioning that the partnerships detracted from instructional time.

Ms. Hurwitz, 24, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her first year teaching. Ms. Hurwitz claims that teachers loosely adhere to the theme of the school.

Liguori: Does the principal have a well stated goal or mission statement for the school?

Ms. Hurwitz: They have one. In terms of our school being an environmental science themed school, but it...I don't see it carried out as much in a way that is really beneficial at this point. There's still just struggling as a school to deal with the basic issues of taking the required courses that every kid in the city needs to have, which is difficult when you're trying to encourage different kind of curriculum. We don't really have resources or time built in yet. It's not really set up; we don't have the teachers for it I don't think.

Liguori: Were teachers involved in formulating this mission statement?

Ms. Hurwitz: I have absolutely no idea. Honestly. I would say probably not.

Liguori: Where might it have come from?

Ms. Hurwitz: It might have come from previous administrators who pitched the idea for this sort of school. I don't know the background of how it came to be, or who decided this would be good. I don't. I don't know.

Liguori: Do you feel that teachers stay true to this mission statement?

Ms. Hurwitz: I think that the science teachers try to. Especially the environmental in the freshman level Living Environment. But the problem is that we are required to...part of our programming is that the kids go to the [outside agency] a lot and I think that it is detracting a little bit from their other subjects just because they do miss their other classes to go to these trips. So I feel like this school is trying to focus on science, but it's not doing a good enough job to justify the fact that the kids are going to be harmed in other subjects as well.

Liguori: Does the mission statement filter down to the students?

Ms. Hurwitz: A little bit. There are kids who really are attracted to that idea of that's why they wanted to go here. Like the kids who come to [take care of classroom environmental issues] every day. I mean they are the kids who are obviously interested in [the environment]. So, I can see that for some of them that's what they were really interested in doing. On the other hand I know as a history teacher, I should try to teach environmental history when I can, because that's actually part of the theme.

Liguori: Do you feel that you do?

Ms. Hurwitz: I try to. I try to. And I think when I get to, when I get to environmental movements in American History especially it's going to be easier to identify and connect with the kids. There are things like actually learning who [Atlantic] is and things like that.

Ms. Gogol, 29, Chemistry Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her second year teaching. Ms. Gogol feels that the theme of the school is not evenly implemented and sometimes causes her students to fall behind in her class.

Liguori: Do their decisions effect students learning in any manner?

Ms. Gogol: Umm. Yeah. Yeah, of course. I mean, they're trying to do the best job that they can, like I know that, but, you know, sometimes, with the things that they do, like right now with these [outside agency] trips and all these other trips, I've been out of my class probably 10 times in the last 2 months because of field trips and it's just things that weren't thought about or planned for and every time I'm missing, and it's the same period I'm missing. So my ninth period class is so far behind because I've missed their class. You know more than ½ dozen times. It's stuff like that where they're trying to do the right thing because they want us to have this partnership with the aquarium, but they're not thinking about the effects that me being out of their classroom for 9 times is going to have on their classroom instruction and of course that in turn hurts the students. So, some of the things that they do I think they need, maybe with experience, they'll learn for the upcoming year don't do that.

The school calendar consists of 2 semesters that last 20 weeks. Students do not change teachers ever semester and meet each teacher every day. Since there are few teachers in the school, the teachers have a common planning period every day where they can discuss their students' progress, work together as a staff and occasionally have meetings.

There is a great amount of collaboration between teachers on exams as they give a common midterm and final every semester. This common planning period takes place during the students' lunch period, so teachers occasionally tutor students during the common planning period. The relatively small school building facilitates teacher-student interaction and compliance with the school's mission statement.

Mr. Hanratty, 28, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 5th year teaching. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Mr. Hanratty discusses the close relationship teachers have with the students and how that would permit teachers to express the mission statement down to the students if there was such an emphasis.

Liguori: Do you feel that [the mission statement filters] down to the students?

Mr. Hanratty: Yeah. Absolutely. I think that being such a small school, we have definitely a better relationship with our kids. I obviously don't see all of our students, but I know them all by face. I know if there's somebody in this building who doesn't belong here. I know when certain kids are not here. That kind of connection that we have with the students, if we had that guidance from above would certainly filter down. I have no doubt.

Mr. Lescher, 59, former Science Teacher, Assistant Principal, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an Administrator for 7 years. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Mr. Lescher feels that the teachers do a good job of transmitting the school's mission statement to the students.

Liguori: Does the goal or mission statement filter down to students?

Mr. Lescher: It will filter down I know this, I always tell the kids, we always tell the staff that these things are important, and we always remind the staff that they have to mention that to the students, and when we meet with students, we tell them the same thing, so when we have assembly, we have small intimate meetings with students, and we keep reiterating the importance of success, the importance of doing the work and the importance of doing well, and the teachers repeat that message all the time.

The current principal of the school has been a principal at the school for over a year. The school, in its short 3 year history has been through several principals. The original principal of the school, who was seen by much of the staff to be the heart of the new school left in scandal shortly after the school opened. After the first principal left, several other principals have taken charge of the school. The most current principal, Mr. Gottfried, has been at the helm the longest of all the principals. This is Mr. Gottfried's first assignment as principal. He was previously an assistant principal at another school

for several years. Besides the principal, there is 1 assistant principal, Mr. Lescher. Unlike other schools that have several assistant principals in charge of different aspects of the school, because of the size of the school, Mr. Lescher is the sole assistant principal. Mr. Lescher is in charge of everything from supervising teacher instruction to disciplining students. The principal and assistant principal work very closely together setting school policy. They also have a close personal friendship where they commute in together and get together socially with their wives. As administrators, Mr. Lescher is the one who runs the day to day micro affairs of the school and staff, while Mr. Gottfried takes care of larger items.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci discusses how the leadership dynamic involves the administrators playing the roles of good cop and bad cop.

Liguori: How effective would you say your principal is?

Mr. Matucci: I think he is very effective in letting the teachers be creative and giving them the freedom that they want so they could help their students succeed is very supportive of us. So if we need something, he'll do his best to get it. I know he's under limitations with certain things, you know, but he's very supportive.

Liguori: What about your AP?

Mr. Matucci: Sighs

Liguori: Remember this is all confidential.

Mr. Matucci: It needs to be confidential. It's more of a good cop bad cop, I happen to like him a lot, we get along very well. But I know that there are a lot of teachers where there is a lot of friction in between, there's a lot of friction more so than the principal. The AP, I think it's more of the role he has to play as an administrator. It has to be my way and that's it. Where they can play almost a good guy/bad guy type of dynamic. And they do that very well, they do that very well. You know it doesn't make the AP the most popular person by any means, but it's necessary to have that type of personality.

Mr. Klein, 27, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Klein discusses how the 2 administrators work together very closely.

Liguori: What kinds of pressures are placed on you by the principal? What about from the AP?

Mr. Klein: The same thing, I mean those two think about it...exactly alike. They carpool, it's like Pinky and the Brain actually for lack of a better term, whip out my animaniacs references, but that's what they remind me of.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien feels that the 2 administrators are entrenched in their roles where Mr. Gottfried works behind the scenes and Mr. Lescher is the disciplinarian.

Liguori: Are there any pressures from the principal's office for you to raise regents scores?

Mr. O'Brien: Umm. When there is pressure that's where it is coming from, the principal and assistant principal.

Liguori: What about just the principal?

Mr. O'Brien: Not really, because again, Mr. Lescher's the one who talks to everyone pretty much. I call them instead of good cop and bad cop, they're bad cop and invisible cop. Mr. Gottfried, you never see him and then Mr. Lescher's just running around yelling at everyone. You know whether you're a student or a teacher, he's the one who's going to get sent to talk to you.

Teaching Staff:

There are fewer than 20 teachers at the school. Nearly 90 percent of the teachers fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes selected characteristics of the teaching staff. Approximately 20 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education. Approximately 25 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is a mix of journeyman and new teachers with 33 percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The turnover rate for teachers with fewer than 5 years experience is 20% and the overall turnover rate is 20%. The problems of having a young teaching staff is apparent in the comments of some of the teachers.

Ms. Hurwitz, 24, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her first year teaching. Ms. Hurwitz claims her inexperience makes her much more nervous about the regents than a more experienced teacher.

Liguori: What are your opinions concerning the regents exams?

Ms. Hurwitz: I think they're very nerve wracking. And unnecessarily so in a lot of ways.

Liguori: Why? What makes them nerve wracking?

Ms. Hurwitz: As a new teacher, I am worried that if I miss, it'll be the one thing I miss that will get a lot of attention on the regents. It won't necessarily even reflect my kid's abilities and that's nerve wracking, not just because...it doesn't mean I'm a bad teacher, it just means that I have a different point of view as to what's important to mention in that era of history. I think that every history teacher has their own view of what's important and what isn't. It doesn't give me a lot of

room to...first of all it doesn't give me a lot of room to go into the things that I really want to go into more detail about because I have to cover so much. But, yeah.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci mentions that the school is more prone to mistakes because it is a young school that has not experienced certain problems meaning that protocols are not yet in place for all conceivable situations.

Liguori: Do you feel that the current atmosphere allows you to report school violence properly?

Mr. Matucci: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Matucci: Because they want you to report everything. You want to be a mandated reporter, but then they're going to take these points away from you, these mysterious things they're going to take away from you. So, if you say something and something happens you're going to be held accountable for it. So, what I see happening in a lot of schools, they're brushing a lot of the incidences under the table, whereas before a fight between 2 kids would be an automatic suspension, an automatic this, an automatic that, now it's like, if he really didn't get hurt, and the fight didn't really go on, maybe we could do it in house. People are afraid to report things. So things that should normally be recorded because you don't want to get a bad report card is not being recorded. That is allowing a lot more situations, and it's allowing the public not to see. It's painting an unrealistic picture for the public, and for whose benefit, the politicians? The administrators? Who's going to eventually lose? The students, the teachers and the actual school itself.

Liguori: Do you feel that happens at Atlantic?

Mr. Matucci: I think Atlantic is too new. I do not think that the proper channels are in place yet to deal with some of the situations. I don't think they're being dealt with correctly, I think it's because of the immaturity of this school itself. Whereas other schools have 10-15 years of experience dealing with certain school problems, we don't have that and we don't have the personnel, we have relatively new staff, so we don't have the personnel that have seen everything. So, something that in another school might be like "that's nothing." Here it's a big deal and we're not ready to deal with it. So, yeah, I don't think things are getting handled as well as they should and could be.

Parental Involvement:

Because of the size of the school, parents are considerably more involved in the school. Like many new schools, teachers feel that the parents of the first class of students in the school are the most responsive and "buy into" the school's mission more.

Mr. Franklin, 32, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. He has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Franklin discusses how an incident early in the school's history managed to change the tone of parental participation.

Liguori: What happened to [a former administrator who left in disgrace]?

Mr. Franklin: [S/he's] ...gone. I don't even know where [s/he] is. That stigma is on the school because it was all over the news. It was all over the newspapers and a lot of people took their kids and left. We had a good group that first year of parents, of students, the PTA was quite involved. After that year, it's gone downhill since then. Last year our quality of students that came in were coming in because the district said this was a dumping ground. I'm telling you the God's honest truth. They saw this as a dumping ground so they said that the kids that aren't going to go to [another local school], send them over there.

Liguori: So you got the rejects from [the other local school]?

Mr. Franklin: or Kosciusko... this is what happened.

Ms. Hunter, 54, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ms. Hunter discusses how parental participation changed after there was a change in administration but it is still relatively high.

Liguori: Just in general, what is the role of parents in this school?

Ms. Hunter: It's really changed, when [the former administrator was at this school], she did a big outreach and a lot of parents responded, the 11th graders now, and we got some very good parents. So far, the 11th grade parents who have in a large group have been consistent. The SLT meeting, I think there's one sophomore parent in that. I don't know if the PTA meetings are very fully attended right now. I don't think. I wish we had more parents who were like, kicking butt here, because if we didn't have college advisors until a couple of months ago because they weren't even thinking about it, and it was mentioned at an SLT meeting, by one of the teachers and because the Juniors' parents were there, it got done, but I don't think...also the dress code thing, which is not working and which they're holding onto, they're holding onto because one of the parents, I know who it is, refuses to let go of the idea of the dress code.

However, compared to other schools, the level of parent involvement is still much lower, where teachers often wish more parents were involved; however, there are parents who have become involved and hampered their child's progress.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci laments that parents do not have high expectations for their children.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you to raise the class grades of students?

Mr. Matucci: No, I've never gotten pressure from a parent to change a grade or anything. When I was upstate, yes, not in the city. You know sometimes that would actually show that parents cared a little bit about the performance of the students. I mean the city, "you're giving my child a 65, oh, terrific." It's a 65, a 65 is I'm barely, minimally passing.

Ms. Gogol, 29, Chemistry Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her second year teaching. Ms. Gogol describes an altercation that took place between a parent and a student.

Liguori: Does the current atmosphere allow you to report school violence properly?

Ms. Gogol: We've had some issues with this. We've had a few incidents where there is some violence that took place outside of school. Like right in the front. It was after school hours. It had to do with a parent like coming up and yelling at some students and a student of ours got hit and...

Liguori: By the parent?

Ms. Gogol: By the parent.

Liguori: Not his or her parent?

Ms. Gogol: No. It was just like another student's parent. We don't know what was ever followed through with it. If it was actually reported to the police or not. Or if the student didn't want to report it. But if a parent hits a child, that has to get reported. That's my idea of thinking. I don't know when things get done at this... They've been getting better at sharing the details with us. I

think that's just our UFT person sort of got on them about it and was like you have to make sure you're doing this properly and following the proper procedures.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

Because the school is relatively new, the school does not have data on how money was spent on school services; however, It should be noted that the school shares facilities with another school. Because the schools share facilities, many programs, especially the science programs get shortchanged with lab space being almost non-existent.

Ms. Gogol, 29, Chemistry Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her second year teaching. Ms. Gogol describes how ill equipped the school is to teach a lab science course.

Liguori: Do you feel that access to resources affect your teaching in any manner?

Ms. Gogol: Yeah. It definitely does. I teach Chemistry lab as well. For the regents the students need the lab. They need to have 30. This is my lab (points to classroom). [Both of us laugh]. I don't have resources. I've got a closet full of some beakers and flasks and I've got little tiny kits filled with little vials of chemicals, but this is it, there's no...we don't have a lab assistant, which means that I have to set up everything, which I don't mind, but usually my lab is immediately after my class, so it's a little crazy and hectic and because of our situation, I can't really do anything more than like using household chemicals (laughs). You know it's like ok, today we're going to mix together vinegar and baking soda. It's like, ooh we did this in middle school. You know, the kids, bless them, they still get excited about it, but I was like your level of learning should be much higher, it's like I shouldn't be doing middle school science with you, but I'm so limited by what I have. I mean, I try to be as creative as I can when I'm doing these things, but I don't even have a working sink in here. So it's...

Liguori: If someone gets hurt...

Ms. Gogol: So, that's why we don't use anything dangerous in here. It's like quick run to the water fountain. It's stressful. This year, I'm at least more prepared, but last year it was my first year ever teaching chemistry. I had nothing and no one to work with. You try to make the most of it. It definitely requires you to be a little bit more creative in your lesson planning.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci describes how small schools are at a disadvantage when it comes to capital resources.

Liguori: Do you feel that access to resources does that affect your teaching?

Mr. Matucci: Without a doubt. Without a doubt. Being such a small school we don't have the equipment, you know, it's not a big wheel that's just turning, you have to grease the wheel. You have to get the equipment, you have to build the wheel. So far I've done what I can. But we do, we need more equipment, we have to have a real lab. This room we're sitting in now was an art room that I converted into like a makeshift labroom. Is it working? Yeah. The kids getting the best experience they could possibly get? Probably not. But they're getting a good experience.

Overview of Parkview High School:

Parkview High School is a small, high achieving, high school in a part of the city that has undergone a transformation in the last few years. Parkview High School is a

very small school with a population less than 500. The school is a magnet school that has opened within the last 10 years graduating a handful of classes in its history. It has a student body from diverse backgrounds with blacks and Hispanics making up half the school population and whites and Asians making up the other half. Like other small schools that were opened in recent times, it is centered on a theme, which is loosely adhered to by the school's administration. Because of the nature of the school, it has no problems making AYP by NCLB standards; however, it does have challenges achieving internal goals set by the administration and the NYCDOE where it is judged against other high achieving schools in its peer horizon determined by the NYCDOE and against performance goals set by the administration and the superintendent.

As stated previously, Parkview is a magnet school with a diverse student body. Parkview was never a zoned school; in fact the students must apply to attend the school. Most students are not from the neighborhood. While most students come from two boroughs, students from all 5 boroughs of New York City (NYC) are represented. Like Atlantic High School and David Dinkins Academy, Parkview shares facilities with another institution and is adjacent to another high school in the NYCDOE. Parkview shares facilities with Hudson University, a local university with a long and storied history in the city. Hudson University has occupied the site for many years and has many famous and notable alumni in many fields. The adjacent high school performs at a much lower level than Parkview, but is in good standing. The adjacent high school is much larger (more than 3 times larger) and its demographic makeup, where most of the students receive free or reduced lunch and 96 percent of students are black and Hispanic, stands in stark contrast to Parkview, which is mixed along racial, ethnic and class lines.

The fact that Parkview has to share facilities with Hudson University leads to increased cooperation between the two institutions; however, due to the weaker position of the high school, it is often lacking in certain facilities; for example, one administrator uses the teachers' lounge as a workspace because he lacks a proper office. This situation would be almost unthinkable at other schools; however, because of the lack of facilities, the situation is tolerated by all parties involved. Also, unlike the other schools that were in the sample, security was not controlled by SSOs, but by the University's campus police. Like many of the other small schools, security at the school was lax and sometimes non-existent; however, unlike Atlantic High School, the teachers mentioned almost no school violence.

Parkview High School is in a historic part of NYC. Almost all students travel to the school by subway. There is a large commercial district that is situated blocks from the campus. The commercial district includes restaurants, storefronts and apartments, which leads to a historic district with many notable houses and parks. The neighborhood, which has been mostly black and/or Hispanic for several decades, went through a prolonged period of urban blight ending in the 1990s. While the neighborhood shows signs of gentrification, there are still signs of a grittier past. While there is one street leading to the school that is lined with trees and beautiful homes, another street leading to the school seems desolate, abandoned, and unsafe. Upon leaving the school, I was warned by the principal not to go through a particular exit past a certain hour as the park that is adjacent to it is unsafe and rife with illicit drugs and violence; however, for teachers these concerns are quickly dwarfed by the beautiful campus and the high performance of the students.

Demographics:

When the field research was done, the school had graduated a handful of classes. Parkview High School was home to fewer than 500 students and the school was at capacity. Table 1 describes certain demographic characteristics of Parkview High School. The racial and ethnic makeup is very mixed as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE, where approximately 30 percent of the students are Hispanic, 30 percent of the students are Asian, 20 percent of the students are white, and 20 percent of the students are black. Very few students at the school are labeled as ELLs. The percentage of students eligible for free lunch is less than 20 percent and fewer than 20 percent of students are estimated to receive public assistance. There is also a large gender disparity with boys outnumbering girls by a nearly 2-1 margin.

Academics:

Parkview High School is in good standing; however, this is because it is a magnet school that draws talented students from all over the city. In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations, which students at Parkview High School have no problems attaining as indicated in Table 3. In order to obtain a regents diploma students are required to obtain a score of 65 on a certain number of regents exams; however, the school sets a target for 85 percent of its students to score 85 or above on each and every regents. Table 5 shows Parkview High School's performance on the regents exams at the mastery level and Table 6 shows its graduation statistics. The school performs excellently on the English regents with all students scoring at the 85 level or greater on the English regents exam. The school performs extremely well on the Math A regents with nearly 95 percent of students

scoring at the 85 level or greater on the Math A regents exam. In the school report card period following the field interviews, 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. While in many subjects Parkview High School does an excellent job getting its students to achieve mastery, Parkview has problems getting its students to attain Mastery in subjects not required for graduation. Parkview does an excellent job in getting its students to score mastery scores in exams that are required for graduation with 90 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents and 96 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History and 74 percent of students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, approximately 90 percent of students score greater than 55 on the chemistry regents, but only about 10 percent score above an 85 on the chemistry regents and nearly 100 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents but only about 30 percent score above an 85 on the Math B regents. The administration's efforts to get 85 percent of its students scoring 85 or higher are noted by teachers. Also, the administration's frustration with the performance gap between some subjects was discussed at length.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan describes the pressure his school is under to raise Mastery percentage.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage on regents exam in your school?

Mr. Brannigan: Passing percentage, we have an extremely high passing percentage, so there's no real pressure for us to raise our passing percentage.

Liguori: What about mastery?

Mr. Brannigan: Some of that's internal pressure. Some of that's internal goals we set, but some of that is now worked into our progress reports. So there is some pressure to do that. We have typically 100 percent passing. Not on Physics and Math B, but on the other regents exams, we typically have 100 percent passing. We usually have 85 + percent mastery rate. Actually most of them earn 80-90 and most earn high 90s. But there is a bit of pressure, because now I'm compared

not to other NYC schools, I'm compared to specialized high schools. And the way they set up the progress reports is very twisted and very bizarre and they keep changing it. So there is, there's some high pressure. How the press reports how our kids do on these exams how the city itself looks at it and how parents look at it. When we do open houses "How are your kids doing on the regents exams?" does it really matter if they got a 91 or 95, no it doesn't but God forbid, the average of my kids taking the regents exams dips and I have to explain that to a group of parents the following semester. Or how come the Mastery level in chemistry is below that of Physics? "You've got to fire that teacher!" No. She's outperformed, my 2 chemistry teachers, their passing percentage and their mastery percentage is far, far exceeding the city average, the state average. I tell them, listen if you look at how many kids across the state take the chemistry exam, it's a lower percentage, most schools don't force the kids to take the chem. "You pass the living environment, great, no problem. You don't want to take the chem.? Don't bother. You passed the regents you're done." Here we make every kid take, so yeah there are some kids that don't pass it. But some of it is motivation on their part. They know they don't have to pass the test in order to get a diploma, they've already met their requirement some of them if they got a 90 on the regents, they don't even need it for a regents diploma with honors, so there's some battles there. I think that a lot of the pressure on regents data comes from the parents. They look at it as if it were a benchmark...

Later in the interview.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Mr. Brannigan: Parents play a pretty powerful role,. They do have a voice and we do listen to the voice, part of my concern is that they don't always understand the data that they're looking at. That's part of the problem with these progress reports.... It's very hard to convince parents that they're not looking at apples to apples when they look at results in the chemistry regents and they don't like what they see and you sit down with them and you try to explain to them, look at the passing percentage in NYS, look at the passing percentage in NYC, look at our passing percentage, look at the mastery percentage in the state, the city and at our school, look at the fact that a higher percentage of kids take it at our school than in the state. You have to compare apples to apples, but I have not been able to convince my parents of that, they don't understand why we don't have 100 passing in chemistry and 85 percent mastery in chemistry.

School Administration:

The school does have a Mission Statement, which was crafted by the principal in conjunction with a school leadership team. The mission statement includes language referring to the theme the school is centered on and focuses heavily on the partnership it has with the University that it's paired with. Like other schools in the sample, the teachers were not entirely aware of the school's mission. Teachers were aware of the mission of the school to be a magnet school, but they downplayed the collaboration with the University to a great extent, with several teachers not even mentioning it in discussing the mission statement.

Mr. Yao, 26, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing high school. He has been teaching for 3 years. Mr. Yao does not feel that the mission statement affects his teaching on a daily basis.

Liguori: Does the principal have a well stated goal or mission statement for this school?

Mr. Yao: I don't know, he might, but if he does, it doesn't particularly affect me on a day to day basis in the way I do my job.

Ms. Smith, 32, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing school. She has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Smith is aware that there is a mission statement, but does not know what it is also questions the usefulness of the mission statement.

Liguori: Would you say the principal has a well sated goal or mission statement for the school?

Ms. Smith: I think it's articulated to a certain extent with the staff, but I don't know. I don't know, I just question the, and this is why I said definitively that I would not be an administrator, I remember where some of that is actually jargon and semantics that have to meet certain goals for the larger superintendency, or the district, or the region or other things. So, I don't question all of the sincerity there, but I don't know.

Liguori: What is it approximately?

Ms. Smith: Sighs, It's a good question Bart. Um,

Liguori: I've had principals who couldn't come up with it.

Ms. Smith: That's sad, that's worse. I don't feel as bad. I mean I know what our goals are, and what I certainly shoot for in a classroom, but as far as the school, I know we have a more gifted population and so pushing them along with those goals to reach their highest potential, I don't know what kind of gifted jargon it's set in. You know, it's funny, it's sad, I don't even know how he's actually worded it myself.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Shriver mentions that there are two mission statements an explicit one and an implicit one.

Liguori: Does the principal have well stated goal or mission statement for the school?

Ms. Shriver: Um, I think he has a well stated goal, which is the stated goal, but then he also has, he also has a goal, which is not stated, but very well understood.

Liguori: What's the first one?

Ms. Shriver: The first one of course is that we are competing with [other high caliber] schools and we are producing great students who will go on to high quality colleges and excellent universities. I think the unstated goal is that he wants keep our numbers up and make our school look great on paper.

The school calendar consists of 2 semesters that last 20 weeks. Students do not change teachers ever semester and meet each teacher every day. The relatively small school building facilitates teacher-student interaction. The current principal of the school, Mr. Brannigan, has been a principal at the school for a few years; however, he started at the school as a teacher and was heavily involved with the teachers' union. Before becoming principal, he was previously a supervisory assistant principal at Parkview. Unlike the other small schools, David Dinkins Academy and Atlantic High School, there are several assistant principals and coordinators at Parkview High School. The assistant principals

are in charge of larger umbrella departments such as Humanities or Science, while coordinators are in charge of particular subject areas like English, History or Foreign Language. The lack of space in the school allows for greater interaction between teachers and administrators.

Mr. McCormick, 43, Physics Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. He has been teaching for 13 years. Mr. McCormick discusses how friction occurs between the staff and administration only when the administration is implementing NYCDOE regulations.

Liguori: How well do teachers and administrators get along?

Mr. McCormick: Great. Pretty well.

Liguori: What's the nature of that interaction?

Mr. McCormick: Well, it's a very small school with a [small] staff... and the nature of the interaction is casual and collegial and pretty much cooperative. I think whatever friction occurs primarily occurs at times when the principal is acting as an instrument of the department of education as opposed to the leader of this group of teachers. When he's enforcing other people's rules, that's when there's going to be friction.

Mr. Yao, 26, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing high school. He has been teaching for 3 years. Mr. Yao mentions how the principal can interact socially with teachers at his school.

Liguori: How well do administrators interact with teachers?

Mr. Yao: Um, I mean, fairly well, I mean we're social enough where the principal can come out to a happy hour with us on occasion and there's no kind of, there's no feeling that we need to tighten up or not discuss certain things with administration around us. I think other than that, like I said, from my experience, there's a lot of leeway given for administrators for how the teachers do their work, so basically there's a kind of almost an unspoken trust that the teachers will carry out their jobs to the best of their abilities, and no one is kind of, none of the teachers that are here are not putting in their best effort, or there's no suspicion that teachers are kind of trying to take advantage of the system.

Teaching Staff:

There are fewer than 40 teachers at the school. All of the teachers are licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes selected characteristics of the teaching staff. Approximately 40 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Only 2 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is a mix of veteran, journeyman and new teachers; however, the school did not furnish the state education department with the

exact numbers. Turnover does not seem to be much of an issue at the school; however, exact numbers could not be obtained from the state education department. Overall the teaching staff is happy, with many of the teachers understanding the opportunity they have being at a magnet school and the prospect of teaching at other more difficult schools.

Mr. Laufer, 26, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years. Mr. Laufer contrasts his current assignment at Parkview to his previous assignment at a failing school.

Liguori: How would you rate the ability of your students on a scale of 1-10?

Mr. Laufer: I would say the vast majority of our students are...the vast majority of them are probably between the 7 and the 8. Then we have some students who are probably beyond a 10, their intellectual capacity is incredible.

Later in the interview

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Mr. Laufer: No. My previous school was. It was far along on the list actually.

Liguori: Is that school being closed?

Mr. Laufer: I don't think just yet, I think they came close to making numbers in one term, but I found out that most of the experienced teachers left that school.

Liguori: Does not being under review change your teaching style?

Mr. Laufer: There's definitely less pressure. I mean working at this school is just less pressure because you don't have this constant fear that if my students don't obtain this level on the exam, I'm going to lose my job. Certainly in a bad school, you really have to teach more to the test. It's also an ethical thing, you're a state employee, the state says they have to know this, if you don't like it, go to a private school. And also, at some point it probably becomes more important for the average student to graduate high school than it is for them to know the nuances, or have a discussion on the ethics of civilian bombing or something like that. It's probably more important that first and foremost, you train a student to pass the test, so they can pass the test, so they can then go do something with their lives.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease because you are in a school that is not under review?

Mr. Laufer: Certainly it's less stressful. Working in a school, it's totally different, it's always hanging over your head. You always have people, not only administrators coming in, but you have outside people coming in to observe you for a few minutes at a time, not saying anything, you might have a whole group of people one day just walk in your classroom and you know, it's a little unnerving.

Mr. Yao, 26, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing high school. He has been teaching for 3 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Yao mentions how he relates better to his current students than he did at his last assignment at a failing school.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease being here as compared to a SINI school or SURR school?

Mr. Yao: Definitely.

Liguori: How so?

Mr. Yao: This is definitely a city school, but I think because, um, a lot of the comfort of being at this school as opposed to [my last school] is that I come from a background that's more like this student body comes from. I relate to these students much more than my students at [my last school].

Parental Involvement:

Because of the size of the school and the students' abilities, parents are considerably more involved in the school. According to the teachers, the students come from a mix of different backgrounds spanning the gamut from poor working class to upper middle class families. Interaction with parents can sometimes become adversarial in nature. Compared to other schools, the level of parent involvement is much higher, where parents often email teachers to ascertain their child's progress.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan discusses how parents compare his school to other similar schools in the city and they put pressure on him to improve student performance.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Mr. Brannigan: Parents play a pretty powerful role. They do have a voice and we do listen to the voice, part of my concern is that they don't always understand the data that they're looking at. That's part of the problem with these progress reports. You take a school like [a large high performing school] that [did not get an A, that school] is a great school. It's very hard to convince parents that they're not looking at apples to apples when they look at results in the chemistry regents and they don't like what they see and you sit down with them and you try to explain to them, look at the passing percentage in NYS, look at the passing percentage in NYC, look at our passing percentage, look at the mastery percentage in the state, the city and at our school, look at the fact that a higher percentage of kids take it at our school than in the state. You have to compare apples to apples, but I have not been able to convince my parents of that, they don't understand why we don't have 100 passing in chemistry and 85 percent mastery in chemistry.

Liguori: Do the parents look at other schools in making comparisons?

Mr. Brannigan: Usually they want to make a comparison. How come your website isn't as good as the one in [another school]. [The other school has] got 4000 kids, 250 staff members, I'd like to have a few more hands to get this website done. I'm always compared to those other schools, the one advantage to the progress reports, is that I got to tell a couple of people, you want to keep comparing me to them, look at the numerical score, you want to tell me the metric is flawed and bogus, I agree with you, but you know what you have comparisons right in front of you that the city put together with its best minds and we came out ahead

Liguori: Is it the parents association?

Mr. Brannigan: No, it's not the PTA, they're a fairly good group, they're fairly supportive on a lot of issues including finances and other, it's usually you get a parent who's unhappy and they find a bunch of other parents who are unhappy. About 2 years ago, we had a very irate mom who flipped out about how her son was failing chemistry. Her son was failing just about everything else

as well. But she went into this tirade about chemistry and she rallied a bunch of people behind her and they really started going after this one teacher. That was a popular parent, our parents are very connected, they talk to each other via email, they have their own website, my PTA has its own website, they also have their own Yahoo list group, so when a parent complains about a teacher, it's read by probably a quarter of the families in my school or at least somebody in the household sees that. Like anything else, if I have 5 percent of the people unhappy, it looks like a larger problem than it is.

Liguori: Do they every put pressure on you to raise class grades?

Mr. Brannigan: They could try.

Liguori: Do they try?

Mr. Brannigan: Different people have approached me on things like that.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Shriver discusses how parents at Parkview put pressure on teachers to raise students' grades.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Ms. Shriver: Our parents are really active, most of our parents are professionals, a lot of our parents have Masters degrees, we have some professors with PhDs, so parents are really active, but their goal is using our school as a step into a great college and a step into scholarships and so they're really active. It's weird, because there's this push to have our scores really high and to have our kids perform well on exams from parents, but then there's also a push to not have our school be as rigorous or demanding in regards to "oh, our school gives too much homework;" "oh, our teachers expect too much;" "oh, this book's too hard, I didn't read that until I was in college" so I think we get both responses from parents.

Liguori: Do you ever feel pressure from parents to raise the grades of their children?

Ms. Shriver: Yes. Yes.

Liguori: How so?

Ms. Shriver: Like at parent teacher conference and a parent tells me "Oh, I read my son's essay and I thought definitely that was definitely not less than an 87, and yet you gave him an 82, so can you explain that?" or "isn't there any extra work that he could do, isn't there any extra...can you give him an extra assignment or can he just make this assignment up so his grade can be higher?" "what can we do to get that grade higher?" or "in all of his other classes this is his score, so shouldn't his score in this class also be that way?" I've never been to PTA meetings because the teachers I do know who have been there say that they seem to be aggressive, hostile, meetings and that the parents seem to be really demanding of the school and the teachers, which is fine, totally fine, but there is this sort of pressure to give it to them both ways.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

The school spent approximately \$13,992 per pupil in 2004. This is significantly more than the \$11,300 per pupil average spent across New York City. Nearly 70 percent of the money was spent on classroom instruction, 16 percent was spent in supervisory support, and approximately 4.5 percent was spent on building services. The availability of resources was described in the following interviews.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan mentions how access to resources makes his school more effective.

Liguori: Do you think that having access to resources matter in being an effective administrator?

Mr. Brannigan: Yeah, certainly having more resources or tools if you will certainly makes you more effective. At this point for me, it's a matter of selecting the most effective tools. I may have 10 tools in from of me, I can't use all of them, all of them may do what I want them to do, but which one is going to work in the fastest amount of time, which one is cheapest and the most cost effective, so that's really what I have to decide. For professional development, I send a lot of my people to different conferences around the country, it's not cost effective, but at the level of instruction we offer here and the level of our students, a lot of the PD (Professional Development) that my staff would benefit from I cannot get in NYC. It's not something I would get from sending them to another high school in New York City, unless it's [at a high performing school], and [it sometimes is], but on some occasions we actually go outside of the city and when we get there, when I got to Dallas a few months ago, and I was there with the principal of [other high performing school], and the only reason the principal of [another school] wasn't there was she broke her leg about 2 days before, she was scheduled to be there, but that's the kind of thing, professional development at that conference is at such a high end, the cost, the financial cost was outweighed by the benefit the staff would get.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz compares his experience at Parkview to his old school, which did not have the same access to resources.

Liguori: Do you feel that access to resources matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?

Mr. Arnaz: Oh yeah, absolutely. Yes definitely. I've taught at a school, where you had to give a school aide something you want copied, something you wanted copied often a week in advance to get it back. Here those sorts of resources are much more available. Just general supplies in other schools were not as available, here you do have to get your assistant principal to sign off on it, but everything comes in a petty timely manner. For higher end materials, videos, manipulatives, and things of that sort, I have not taken too much advantage of it, but one of my colleagues here, who I am very close with, has and has always received what he's asked for. I am very impressed with that.

Ms. Kent, 25, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school (A small high achieving school). Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Kent feels that she is lucky to be at a school with access to many of resources.

Liguori: Does access to resources matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?

Ms. Kent: I definitely think so. We are lucky in that we are able to have textbooks for all of our students and additional resources on top of that so not only the textbooks but then this literacy initiative with these novels and then on top of that things like Newsweek, we got a pocket constitution for every student also so I think that definitely helps and I think that students are engaged with more materials and more things we can provide for them.

Overview of Bay View High School:

Bay View High School is a high achieving high school in the NYCDOE. It has been opened for several decades and has graduated alumni who have gone on to great success in many fields; however, its alumni are most successful in the science and technology sectors. The school is nominally centered on a theme that it adheres to and

fosters among its students; however, the school seeks improvement outside of this theme setting up ties to other schools internationally. It is among the elite schools in the city, state and nation. Bay View is much larger than Parkview High School and it has its own facilities. The school is defined by its high achieving students and their acceptance to elite colleges and universities. Part of their reputation also hinges on their performance on New York State Regents, the SAT and Advanced Placement (AP) exams. Like many other high performing magnet schools, Bay View High School has no problem making AYP by NCLB standards. It also has no problems meeting the internal goals that have been set by the administration and district superintendent; what drives Bay View High School is the pursuit of higher goals like giving its students broader access to AP exams and to compete with other schools on the national level. Admission to Bay View High School is strongly competitive; however, recent changes in the admissions criteria concern teachers and parents alike as they feel that the changes in the admissions criteria may dilute the applicant pool.

Bay View High School is located in a mostly white, middle class, neighborhood of NYC. It has a long history of settlement and certain prominent Americans are buried nearby. It is very close to a commercial district with many shops, big box retailers, movie theaters and auto dealerships. Immediately surrounding the school is an affluent, middle class neighborhood; however, most students travel from different neighborhoods to attend Bay View. Bay View High School's student body is overwhelmingly Asian and white and it draws most of its students primarily from two boroughs, though students from all five boroughs can attend. The school also has a relatively low percentage of its students receiving free or reduced lunch. The school is also not far from a large body of

water and city and national parks. Like the other schools in the sample Bay View is close to another public high school. The school adjacent to Bay View is a zone school and much more indicative of the neighborhood; it is a much more average high school and is in good standing. The adjacent school is much more diverse than Bay View with blacks and Hispanics comprising approximately 40 percent of the student body and more than half of the population receiving free or reduced lunch.

Unlike other schools that were visited, there is no controlled access to the school and there are no elaborate security cameras set up. While students must display their identification cards, school security is not intrusive and metal detectors are not employed. The recent changes in admissions policies have led to a small increase in school violence where there was previously a negligible amount the current year has seen 6 suspensions. Unlike other schools in the sample, Bay View seems to have a great deal of space and has ample facilities. Because of the additional facilities, administrators allowed me to conduct interviews in an unoccupied office. This was in contrast to the other schools in the sample where interviews were conducted in classrooms that were empty for a period, library nooks and vacant hallways while students were in class.

Demographics:

Bayview High School is home to over 500 but fewer than 2,500 students and was one of the two medium sized schools in the sample. Table 1 describes some demographic characteristics of Bay View High School. Bay View High school is the whitest school in the sample where approximately 75 percent of the students are white, 20 percent of the students are Asian, and 5 percent of the students are black or Hispanic as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE. White enrollment at the

school has actually declined in the past several years after a change in admissions standards. The number of Asian students in the school has increased to 21 percent from less than 15 percent 3-5 years prior with a corresponding decrease in the white population. There are also more blacks and Hispanics at the school since the change in admissions standards. Very few of the students are English Language Learners (ELLs), with most immigrants coming from Russia and China. Much of the demographics are driven by its status as a local magnet school in one of the whitest parts of NYC. The percentage of students eligible for free lunch is less than 10 percent while similar schools citywide have approximately 50 percent of students eligible for free lunch. Since the change in admissions standards, there are now more boys than girls, reversing a previous trend. The school is currently below capacity, but with the change in the enrollment procedure, the school may approach capacity soon.

Academics:

Bay View High School is among the top schools in the city and has no problems managing to maintain good standing; however, like Parkview High School its focus is not on simply making AYP, it is to surpass other schools citywide and compete with schools nationwide. Mr. Catalano, the school's principal, while concerned about the state exams is more concerned about the school's progress on AP exams, with an emphasis on giving students greater access to the exams. This strategy seems to be paying dividends as the schools rankings by outside observers such as U.S. News and World Reports has been on the rise. The total graduation rate for the school was 100 percent for the 2002 cohort (the most recent data available). The most recent school report card saw 100 percent of

graduates receiving regents diplomas, with all but a relatively small number of those students receiving regents diplomas with advanced designation.

In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations, which, as Table 3 shows, students at Bay View High School have no problems attaining. To obtain a regents diploma students are required to obtain a score of 65 on a certain number of regents exams. Statistics for Bay View High School at the 65 level are shown in table 4. While Bay View students perform well in achieving the minimum scores for regents diplomas, the school sets a target for 85 percent of its students to score 85 or above on each and every regents. Table 5 shows how the school has no problems achieving mastery on most of the regents exams. The school performs excellently on the English regents with over 90 percent of students scoring at the 85 level or greater on the English regents exam and 100 percent passing at the 65 level. The school performs extremely well on the Math A regents with approximately 95 percent of students scoring at the 85 level or greater on the Math A regents exam. In the school report card period following the field interviews, 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and 100 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. Despite a lack of emphasis on 85 percent of students attaining 85 percent on regents exams, Bay View manages to do quite well in getting most of its students to achieve mastery on the regents exams. Like Parkview, Bay View does an excellent job in getting its students to score mastery scores in exams that are required for graduation with more than 90 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents and 96 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S.

History and more than 85 percent of students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, almost all students scored greater than 65 on the chemistry regents, with about 40 percent scoring above an 85 on the chemistry regents and 100 percent scored above a 65 on the Math B regents with nearly 70 percent scoring above an 85 on the Math B regents. While the administrators may set 85 the target of 85 percent of its students getting 85 or higher on all regents, the teachers seem to be unaware of the initiative, with many teachers not knowing what the cutoff score for mastery is. While Parkview was focused on the regents, teachers at Bay View seemed to try to rise above it, mostly thinking of the regents as an inconvenience.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino is unsure of what score is mastery even though according to administrators his goal is to have 85 percent of his students achieve mastery; Mr. Lomangino also mentions that he has not seen a student fail the regents in the 7 years he has taught at the school.

Liguori: Are you aware that there's a mastery level, what percent is mastery?

Mr. Lomangino: I think it's 85 or 90 depending on the school. I'm not sure what the city is using right now.

Liguori: If it's 85, what percentage of your students do you expect to get mastery?

Mr. Lomangino: Again, I'm teaching the advanced placement level, so those students have been selectively chosen so they are technically at the higher end. I tell them that I expect them all to get over a 90, and I actually do. In the past where I was teaching all regents exams. In that case, I didn't necessarily expect all of my students to get mastery but I expected the vast majority to get mastery, so we're looking at maybe 85 percent at mastery.

Liguori: When you taught all [non AP classes], did everyone pass the regents?

Mr. Lomangino: Yes. I haven't seen a failure since I've taught.

Ms. Onderdonk, 48, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 14 years. Ms. Onderdonk expects all of her students to pass the regents in her subject.

Liguori: What percentage do you expect to pass the regents?

Ms. Onderdonk: 100 percent. I mean we expect them to get in the 90s.

Liguori: What percent is Mastery level?

Ms. Onderdonk: 85 and above.

Liguori: Does that get treated any different?

Ms. Onderdonk: Yes, and actually our statistics were measured against last year's statistics and we went up tremendously and we don't...but a lot of it is not our teaching, it's the type of student we're getting this particular year. Next year is going to be the first year that we're having students that [came in under the new admissions standards], so they may have a different background. Even though it's an exam based on 3 years of material, we're still really addressing things that they've learned in their fundamental years.

Liguori: In your mind is it 90 or above or 85...

Ms. Onderdonk: In my mind it should be 90 and above. I don't think it's such a difficult exam, it shouldn't be below 90.

School Administration:

As opposed to other schools in the sample, the principal actively involved teachers in crafting the mission statement every year. At the beginning of the year, teachers are each sent a copy of the mission statement and they are asked for feedback. The new mission statement is then presented to the teachers and voted on. While this may seem like a good way to get teachers involved in crafting the mission statement, some teachers criticized it as an exercise in futility.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino discusses how there is some continuity in the school with many alumni returning as teachers, this causes people to buy into crafting the mission statement.

Liguori: You mentioned that the principal mentions it at the beginning of the year, does he elicit teacher input into forming it?

Mr. Lomangino: Yes. Every year he gives us the mission statement and says alright, edit it, change it, tell us if we're doing this, tell us if you don't like the way it's worded specifically, you know, we're all basically on the same page here, the teachers. A lot of them have been doing it for a long time, there's about 10 alumni who are teaching here now, so we kind of know what the place was, and we know what we want to keep it.

Mr. Sullivan, 48, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Mr. Sullivan discusses how the annual ritual of the teachers crafting the mission statement is an exercise in futility.

Liguori: Do teachers stay true to that mission statement you guys write together.

Mr. Sullivan: No, the mission statement is written in a meeting; it was written a long time ago, and then at the first faculty meeting that we had we break up and we go over and parse the words and an English teacher moves a comma from here to there and the mission statement gets put away and no one ever thinks about it or looks at it until the following year when there's what the same faculty meeting where we move a comma back to where it had been in the first place.

The mission statement includes language referring to parental involvement, the State standards and excellence on regents and AP exams; however, it does not mention the initial theme of the school. Like the other schools, teachers claim to have been involved in crafting the mission statement and remember reading it, but of the teachers who were interviewed most did not know what the mission statement was or they were unable to mention key parts of the mission statement. However, unlike some of the other schools, the principal seemed to be quite aware of the school mission statement.

Mr. Catalano, 58, former Math Teacher, Principal, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing school. He has been in education for 38 years and an administrator for 24 years. Mr. Catalano discusses the mission statement.

Liguori: Approximately what is [the school's mission statement]?

Mr. Catalano: Each year the teachers are presented with the school's vision and mission statement. When I came here 6 years ago, we were defined as an Engineering school. Once we started to look at what Bay View really is, it went from an engineering school, which is really a college, we went down to a preengineering school, and then a number of faculty said that we're more than a preengineering school, we're a comprehensive high school where the kids are gifted and talented as proven by our stats that we'll discuss later on, and it includes the humanities, mathematics and it goes well beyond just engineering.

The school calendar consists of two semesters that last 20 weeks with students changing teachers and schedules every semester. The school follows a schedule where every period meets every day for the same amount of time.

The current principal of the school, Mr. Catalano, has been a principal at the school since September of 2001, previously he was a principal at another school and was even an administrator at Basilone High School a long time ago. Besides the principal, there is 1 assistant principal in charge of Organization (APO), and assistant principals each in charge of an academic department. There are several deans that are in charge of disciplining students. According to the teachers the department chairs serve as supervisors and liaisons to the principal. The principal has a sometimes strained relationship with his teachers and the other administrators, but the teachers are happy with the overall direction of the school.

Mr. Napolitano, 57, former Math Teacher, Assistant Principal, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing school. He has been in education for 36 years and an administrator for 25 years. Mr. Napolitano expresses some concern over Mr. Catalano's leadership skills.

Liguori: How would you rate the effectiveness of the principal?

Mr. Napolitano: I would say this principal is relatively ineffective. That he's a detriment to the school.

Liguori: What makes him ineffective?

Mr. Napolitano: I don't think his level of intelligence is where it should be. I think he lacks in a lot of different fronts. He's a poor leader, he's a poor speaker, he's a poor everything and I think the school is carrying itself on its own momentum and I think he has made this school lose a lot of life especially on the faculty level. It used to be much, much, higher.

Liguori: What should the job of the principal be?

Mr. Napolitano: The principal should be the leader of the school in every facet, he should be cheerleader, he should be the motivator, he should be the person that everyone in the school should be proud of to say that this person represents them. He should be a strong decision maker, should be confident and I see that lacking.

Mr. Sullivan, 48, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Mr. Sullivan discusses how he is much closer to the APs than to the principal.

Liguori: How well do administrators and teachers get along?

Mr. Sullivan: The administrators, in this school, you would separate the administrators out into the principal and the assistant principals, they are by no means a block, because the principal is a very difficult person to kind of deal with, not that he's cruel or anything like that, I think that he just has serious sort of personality issues, he doesn't get along with people very...he's friendly enough, but he doesn't have people that really like him all that much, he's not liked. He's a hard guy to like I don't really hate him; he's a hard guy to like. My point is that the administration, there's really 2 administrations, there's him and then there's his APs. The previous 2 principals, you would say that there was just one administration, but there is not, this is....and so the faculty is really close to the assistant principals and not particularly close to the principal.

Liguori: How well do they work with the APs, is it a very nice collegial relationship?

Mr. Sullivan: Very collegial, absolutely.

Mr. Alvarez, 50, Technology Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching 28 years. Mr. Alvarez discusses how administrators do not act collegially toward the teachers.

Liguori: How well do administrators interact with teachers?

Mr. Alvarez: Um, I think that they try to interact well with teachers, but at the same time I feel that I guess you would say social skills are lacking a little bit with teachers. I think it's just a personal thing where they might have a kid in class who's a quiet type of kid and doesn't know how to interact with others, and sort of acts a little funny. I think the administration is sort of the same way, not that they communicate, they're constantly trying to communicate with the teachers. I have a feeling that they don't know how to go about it at the same time. They're lacking some social skills.

Mr. Catalano, 58, former Math Teacher, Principal, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing school. He has been in education for 38 years and an administrator for 24 years. Mr. Catalano discusses how trust is lacking between teachers and administrators.

Liguori: Is the relationship a good relationship?

Mr. Catalano: Well, I would like to think so, but, I do have some stats, the teachers completing the NYC survey for teachers, parents and students, I think 17 teachers responded to that survey and a lot had to do with trust and there was some sort of bar code on it, and only 17 teachers responded to it last year, now recently we looked at the numbers and 37 out of 60 someodd teachers responded to it, plus 69 percent of the staff felt comfortable enough to respond to this survey, so I would say there's still more discussion that we have to have.

Teaching Staff:

There are approximately 50 teachers at the school. More than 95 percent of the teachers fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes selected characteristics of the teaching staff. Approximately 70 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Approximately 6 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is quite experienced with only fifteen percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The turnover rate for teachers with fewer than 5 years experience is 0% and the overall turnover rate is 18%. This suggests that much of the turnover is due to attrition and teacher retirement.

Parental Involvement:

Of all the schools in the sample, Bay View had the highest level of parental involvement. In fact, the mission statement offered language that encouraged parental involvement. The Parents' Association is quite well developed, meets regularly, and has a say in most school policy decisions. Parents are also known to be quite involved in their children's academic life. They attend parent teacher conferences regularly, email and call the school regularly and are known to fight for higher grades for their children. While at other schools teachers seemed to want more parental involvement, at Bay View, teachers saw the increased parental involvement as a mixed blessing.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino discusses how parents are always pressuring teachers to raise students' grades.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you to raise class grades of their children?

Mr. Lomangino: Always.

Liguori: How so?

Mr. Lomangino: They come out and directly ask you for it, they ask you how you got your grade as a way of trying to argue that you're not doing it their way. It's not so bad, what happens is that you know that the parents want high grades, the students want high grades, it's very grade driven here and they do exert their pressure sometimes indirectly and sometimes very directly.

Ms. Mukherjee, 40, Chemistry Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Ms. Mukherjee discusses how parents at the school are very involved and demand a lot from the teachers.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Ms. Mukherjee: Parents are pretty involved in their children's education in this school. Uh, for the most part it's very advantageous, because the kids know if they don't do well, for example today was report card day, so one of the kids looked at it and said "oh, my parents won't stab me after all." Laughs. You know, so that shows you that the parents are monitoring what the kids are doing. That is a very good thing. I do embrace that aspect of parent involvement. In this school all the parents are very involved. The flip side to that is sometimes I would rather not have that parent interference in certain things. Because they don't know what's going on in the classroom. They assume certain things and they demand that it needs to be fixed. They fail to see that their child is somewhere in the middle in the whole thing and it's not the teacher's fault, it's like "oh my child has always been good I science since middle school or high school, he's always gotten a 95 or 100, how come the grade is only a 80 or a 70?" Instead of addressing maybe my child needs to put in more effort or this is the first time I'm recognizing that the child, my child, my heart, might struggle in this area and this is not my child's strong point, the first thing that they do is jump at the teacher and say "you're not doing something right; this needs to be done" type of a thing.

Ms. Woods, 55, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 27 years. Ms. Woods mentions that sometimes parents enable their children's laziness.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Ms. Woods: Parents are very involved in this school. Sometimes they are too much involved I think in this school. Sometimes, we use the term enablers, sometimes the parents are the enablers for the students who are not that hard working or mommy or a mother will come running in and want special, not favors necessarily, but just to make sure their child is getting a fair deal and they're very concerned with grades and scores and they're very involved, most of the, many of them, sometimes too much.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

The school spent approximately \$9500 per pupil in 2004. This is significantly less than the \$11,300 per pupil average spent across New York City. More than 60 percent of the money was spent on classroom instruction, 15 percent was spent in

supervisory support, and approximately 3 percent was spent on building services. The availability of resources was described in the following interviews.

Ms. Mukherjee, 40, Chemistry Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Ms. Mukherjee discusses how she has free rein to develop courses at her school. She claims that the school's access to resources facilitates her involvement in the curriculum.

Liguori: How well do teachers and administrators interact with one another?

Ms. Mukherjee: I have had a pretty good relationship; I have felt that the administration has been very supportive of my ideas. I introduced a new course, biotechnology is a course that I introduced and I am the only person running it, and I have full freedom in how I want to shape the course, how I started it and where I want to take it, and financial support I have gotten in, within the realms of what they can do, I think they have been extremely supportive, both the principal and the assistant principal. There has been, if there is a disagreement, we have been able to resolve it very well. It has never gotten to the point, so far, where either they are upset about something or I am upset about something. If I am upset about something, I go tell them I'm really upset about this, can we talk about this, and it has been received very well and we have always come to a mutual understanding in this whole thing. So, my experience has been very positive. I might not agree with everything they do, they might not agree with my vision, but we have always been able to find a middle ground, because the focus has been to the advantage of the students. I feel me and the administration share that and as long as we are aligning in that particular aspect, we are fine.

Mr. Ben Zion, 31, Math Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Ben Zion compares his experience at Bay View to his old school where there were very limited resources.

Liguori: Does having access to resources matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?

Mr. Ben Zion: Absolutely. You need. There's something...again, here there's something I need, I know I'll get it, I could ask for it and I'll get it. Whereas if I was in another building, you know I'm just giving an example, smartboards, we had 1 in my entire building, and it was just set up in one room and it was only used...I never got to use it. Here you have it in every room. It's the most amazing thing in the world, so having that is a definite advantage, I think it does help with my lessons and such, it could be interactive, it flows a lot nicer, it allows for a lot of different things

Overview of David Dinkins Academy:

David Dinkins Academy is a new school opened up by Mayor Bloomberg's small schools initiative. It still has not graduated a class and so far has up to a junior class. Like many small schools, it is centered on a theme. Like Atlantic HS, David Dinkins Academy has an outside entity that it partners with in order to meet the educational theme of the school. In addition, it also has a community group that has a presence in the schools administrative structure. David Dinkins Academy was created in order to fill the void left by the closing of Thaddeus Kosciusko High School, which was plagued by years

of school violence and academic underperformance. Kosciusko was built in the late 1930s and has many accomplished alumni in the entertainment and athletic industries. Before moving to its present location this year, David Dinkins Academy occupied another building that was recently acquired by the city, which was closer to its outside sponsors. David Dinkins Academy now shares facilities with 3-4 other schools in the building that Kosciusko once occupied by itself. What remains of Kosciusko HS still occupies space in the building along with the other schools. As Kosciusko is phased out, more schools and students will be brought into the building. While the schools are separate entities, they compete together in athletic events comprising one team, the Kosciusko Educational Campus (KEC); otherwise, the schools have little contact amongst themselves.

Because David Dinkins Academy is a new school, it has not yet been eligible to be scored under NCLB and its AYP status is not yet defined. While its first 2 years have showed solid results, many of the teachers fear that the move to the new facilities and the addition of new teachers have made it more difficult to maintain good results. The teaching staff at David Dinkins is not comprised of members of the Kosciusko staff that were let go by its closing; however, by coincidence a lot of the original staff and the administrators came from another school that has since closed down, James Buchanan High School. These teachers and administrators left Buchanan together en masse during its phase out. The principal of David Dinkins Academy was previously an Assistant Principal at Buchanan who was promoted to principal of the nascent David Dinkins Academy. The principal, Ms. Oxford, handpicked her staff from Buchanan and offered them jobs at her new school. Many of the teachers took her up on her offer as she is a

charismatic and goal oriented leader. Due to the schools natural growth, there is much apprehension among the senior staff, who came from Buchanan, as to whether the newcomers will buy into the same values that they set forth in founding the school.

Since moving to the KEC, many changes have occurred at David Dinkins. In their old location, they were the building's only occupants; this allowed David Dinkins to have more interaction with their outside partners. While the old location was in an area with a lot more pedestrian and automobile traffic and more potential dangers for students, it afforded the administration and teachers an opportunity to keep a close eye on a small number of students. When the school moved to the KEC, which was in a different (but adjacent) neighborhood, it moved to a building that was much larger and had been plagued by violence for several decades. Sharing facilities has led to many stressful situations; for example, David Dinkins Academy will need to move all of its belongings to a different wing of the school to make room for another school that is joining the KEC.

Upon entering the KEC, all visitors, even adults, are required to go through a metal detectors and screenings. The SSOs are well trained in keeping drugs and weapons outside of the school. A system of high-tech cameras reminiscent of Las Vegas are set up all throughout the school and all access points. The cameras are monitored from many different security stations throughout the school. Whereas in other schools, the SSOs seemed distracted by trivial matters and day to day ennui, the SSOs at the KEC were constantly vigilant using sophisticated cameras to focus on every inch of the school including garbage cans outside the school that are frequently used to "drop" contraband.

David Dinkins Academy is also nearby to another school in the sample: John Basilone High School. While the schools are in the same neighborhood, there are many

differences between the two. Firstly, the KEC is closer to single family houses and a bit further removed from the elevated subway line that runs next to the schools. Whereas John Basilone is a racially integrated school drawing its racially diverse students from the surrounding neighborhoods, Kosciusko High School, David Dinkins Academy's predecessor drew the vast majority of its students from the surrounding projects and the nearby Asian immigrant community. While the neighborhood that surrounds David Dinkins Academy is home to a large Asian population, Asians make up less than 3 percent of the school's population and David Dinkins Academy is nearly 90 percent black and Hispanic. While there is some degree of class diversity at Basilone High School, more than 80 percent of David Dinkins students receive free or reduced lunches.

Demographics:

When the field research was done, the school had not yet graduated a class. At the time of the field research the school was home to fewer than 500 students. The capacity of the school when it is at capacity will still be fewer than 500 students. Table 1 displays some demographic information about David Dinkins Academy. The school is comprised of mostly black and Hispanic students as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE, where approximately 65 percent of the students are black, 25 percent of the students are Hispanic, 10 percent of the students are white, and few of the students are Asian. Approximately 1 percent of the students are ELLs. 75 percent of students receive free lunch at the school. There is also a large gender disparity at the school, with boys comprising nearly 80 percent of the student body.

Academics:

David Dinkins Academy is in good standing; however, like Atlantic High School, this is because it has not yet graduated a class and schools that have not graduated students are not graded. In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations and to earn regents endorsed diplomas, students must score at least a 65 on a required number of regents exams. Tables 3 and 4 shows David Dinkins Academy's performance on the regents at the 55 and 65 levels. Compared to other schools in the sample, David Dinkins Academy has lackluster results on the English regents with approximately 80 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the English regents exam and approximately 70 percent passing at the 65 level. The school also has lackluster results on the Math A regents with less than 80 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the Math A regents exam and less than 60 percent getting a passing grade of 65 or higher. In the school report card period following the field interviews, only 50 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, less than 60 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and approximately 60 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. As seen in Table 5, compared to the other schools in the sample, David Dinkins Academy has the most problems getting its students to attain Mastery in all of these subjects, with fewer than 10 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the English regents, less than 5 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the Math A regents, less than 7 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents, none of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History, and none of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, only 25 percent of students score greater than 55 on the

chemistry regents, with less than 10 percent passing at the 65 level and no students scoring above an 85 on the chemistry regents and approximately 30 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents but only about 20 percent score above an 65 on the Math B regents and none of the students attaining mastery. David Dinkins Academy's inability to get a lot of its students passing the regents frustrates some teachers because the regents exams have in fact become a point of tension between teachers and administrators. Also, many teachers feel that they are fighting an uphill battle with limited resources and an economically disadvantaged student body.

Ms. Stone, 42, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 15 years, Was formerly assigned to a school that has been closed. Ms. Stone rates her current students as low proficiency students who have many behavioral issues.

Liguori: What is the academic ability of your students?

Ms. Stone: I know we have a fair amount of what are called 1s and 2s, which is disconcerting to me. I dealt with older kids, 18 and up, um, how would I rate them? A lot of them are pretty low. How would I rate them, I would say a lot of them who are in junior year, are probably more like freshman year level or lower. Out of the freshman, a lot of the freshman are about 7th grade. Their reading levels is really lower, but they can manage, but it's really their behavior that's dragging down their improvement, not their ability.

Liguori: So they're wild kids?

Ms. Stone: Yeah, even though they look well behaved, they're really not, they're not doing the work. It's not just insolence, it's a resistance to work, it's very strange, and I think that's the thing that interferes with the kids' improvement to ability.

Ms. Bales, 26, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Bales mentions that for many of her students college is not a realistic goal.

Liguori: Do teachers stay true to that mission that you described?

Ms. Bales: Uh, yes and no, depending on the teacher I would have to say.

Liguori: Are you one of the teachers that stick to it?

Ms. Bales: Um, I feel that with, I would like all my students to go to college, but I feel with some kids, it's a more realistic goal to let's get them out of high school first and then we'll see, or let's get them into a vocational. At this point an 18-19 year old freshman, it's difficult imagining them going to college, I'm not saying that's the right attitude to have, but I feel like there might be more realistic goals for some of these children.

School Administration:

The school does have a Mission Statement, which was crafted by the principal in conjunction with the founding teachers of the school. The mission statement includes language referring to the theme the school is centered on and the partnerships it has in the community. Unlike other schools in the sample, the teachers seemed very aware of the school's mission, especially the emphasis of the school on trying to prepare students for higher education. One interesting insight into the seeing how the school's theme was developed. The theme developed after the administration and staff was put in place and was chosen without the staffs' input.

Ms. Oxford, 43, Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. A former Math Teacher, she has been in education for 21 years and an administrator for 8 years. She was previously an administrator at James Buchanan High School. Ms. Oxford discusses how the school was started.

Liguori: Who was involved in developing that goal or mission?

Ms. Oxford: We have a core team that started with me, started developing the school when I was approached at the very beginning when the chancellor was going to do these small schools, put together a team, and the team and the team was really too large and in terms of looking at what the Dept of Education structure was for a small school, it was something at the time I really couldn't buy into, so I removed myself from the team, and then 2 years later, some of the core same people decided to write a school and things just really kind of came aligned with the partnership with the [New York] Consortium and people who wanted to see a school in this community and that's the birth of [David Dinkins Academy].

Liguori: So who?

Ms. Oxford: Some community people from this immediate area, myself and my core team put our heads together and put down what we thought could be a viable option, so we were the ones who created a draft for the school.

Liguori: Does that include teachers?

Ms. Oxford: Oh yes, teachers, myself as an administrator, a guidance counselor, some community and different departments.

Liguori: What is the [corporate partner's] involvement in all this?

Ms. Oxford: They were the lead business partner in terms of they would be able to provide the experience and resources as it relates to [the theme of the school].

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins discusses how the planning team did not have any input into the school's theme.

Liguori: Who is involved in developing [the school's mission]?

Ms. Likins: The core team, the core planning team. There's a group of us, who are all still here except for one teacher, who we sat down long nights and said "you know what, if you can create your dream school, what would it be?" The [school's] theme was kind of thrust at us, but we had our hands in everything else.

The school calendar consists of 2 semesters that last 20 weeks. Students do not change teachers ever semester and meet each teacher every day. Since there are few teachers in the school, the teachers have a common planning period every day where they can discuss their students' progress, work together as a staff and have meetings; however, the administration does allow teachers to miss the meetings if they are tutoring students for the regents exams. This is an especially common scenario in the weeks leading up to the regents exams.

Ms. Ledesma, 42, Chemistry Teacher, Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 16 years. Ms. Ledesma tutors students both on Saturdays and during the common planning period.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you on the regents?

Ms. Ledesma: Yeah, there was one parent who wanted her son to have tutoring outside of school, but I can't give him any tutoring and I don't know someone else. So, I just told her to have him come 6th period and then Saturdays.

Mr. Slaughter, 31, Social Studies Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. This is his first year teaching. Mr. Slaughter mentions the school's use of the common planning period to tutor students for the regents.

Liguori: Who's putting these pressures on you would you say?

Mr. Slaughter: You hear it all around, administration is going to...it brings it up, they're...you asked me a question about what decisions that they make that affects their academics, well, we're this whole 6th period thing to tutor students and to give them regents preparation, that was a big thing that they encouraged us to that. Um, but yeah, it's important that they pass the test, we get it from the administration, but then you hear it from the state level, you hear it from the city level, you hear it from the federal level, you know, the state level as far as for new York, as far as it goes, you're getting it from everywhere.

The current principal of the school, Ms. Oxford, has been the principal at David Dinkins Academy since the school's inception. This is Ms. Oxford's first assignment as

principal. She was previously an AP at the same school most of the staff came from, so the staff is used to seeing her in a supervisory position. Besides the principal, there is 1 assistant principal, Ms. Likins. Like Atlantic High School, because of the size of the school, Ms. Likins is the sole assistant principal. Ms. Likins refers to herself as the AP-E, which stands for the Assistant Principal of Everything. The principal and assistant principal work very closely together setting school policy; however, it is clear that Ms. Oxford is calling the shots in terms of school policies.

Mr. Slaughter, 31, Social Studies Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. This is his first year teaching. Mr. Slaughter discusses the relationship between Ms. Likins and the teaching staff.

Liguori: How would you describe the job of an AP?

Mr. Slaughter: Uh, [she has a job very similar to the principal], what I noticed, if I had to explain the difference, I have the assistant principal is probably the one doing more interaction with the faculty. The principal, you know, she's handling, while my assistant principal might be around doing more frequent observations, the principal might be dealing with a much larger issue that's affecting the school; however, it's kind of like if you're looking at military terms, you would have the 4 star general, she would be like a 3 star general or something like that.

Liguori: How effective is your AP?

Mr. Slaughter: She's great. Just like with our principal, we're working for her, we value her feedback, you know, at the same time she supports us and from my perspective, she's got me working for her, like I want to make her happy.

Ms. Bales, 26, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Bales describes the relationship between administrators and teachers.

Liguori: What is the role of a NYC principal?

Ms. Bales: Balancing act between the bureaucracy above him or her and possibly malcontent teachers below in the effort to move students in a standards driven environment.

Liguori: How effective is your principal based on that?

Ms. Bales: She does, uh, manage the balancing act very well. Regardless of the focus or regardless of the methods, we do a pretty good job of getting kids who I don't think would normally get through the regents through the regents.

Liguori: What is the job of an AP?

Ms. Bales: Balancing act between the principal and the bureaucracy above her again with below the teachers and motivating the teachers to broaden their horizon and really effectively teach and differentiate in the classroom.

Liguori: How effective is your AP?

Ms. Bales: She's wonderful.

As administrators, they seem to complement each other very well, each plugging holes in the other's credentials. Ms. Oxford is an Ivy League educated woman with a number of years experience in the NYCDOE, while Ms. Likins is a product of the CUNY system and grew up for a time in the housing projects across the street from the KEC. Ms. Oxford is all business with the students, while Ms. Likins seems to be more of a surrogate parent to the children. Overall, they work together well for the benefit of the school.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins describes how her experience growing up in the housing projects across the street from the school helps her relate to her students.

Liguori: Is it mostly a racial difference between teachers and students?

Ms. Likins: Uh huh. Yeah.

Liguori: What about the black teachers, do they have a better time reaching the children?

Ms. Likins: Yep.

Liguori: What about from your experience being a black woman from not far from here...

Ms. Likins: Across the street really.

Liguori: Do you have a better relationship with them?

Ms. Likins: I am the disciplinarian and the party person all in one sentence (laughs). Literally, Literally. I call myself the AP-E, the Assistant Principal of Everything, I do the suspensions, but I plan the parties (laughs) so the kids come to me for tutoring, come for lotion, come for food, come for money, come for a hug, come to get yelled at when they know that they're in the wrong. Come to tell me "listen this is what happened today, I know you're going to kill me..." but they always come regardless they still come.

Liguori: So you're in a sense a parent or a foster parent?

Ms. Likins: I am definitely mama. There are some kids who are Mama Likins and I have to get in their tails, pull your pants up, braid your hair, wash your hands, it's crazy, it is crazy.

Ms. Rosario, 25, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Rosario claims that she would not return to the school if Ms. Likins was not there.

Liguori: How effective is she?

Ms. Rosario: Oh, If I found out she wasn't coming back, I would definitely find a new job. For me she's like my hero. Without her and the dean, I don't want to be anywhere near the functioning of the school, because those are my go to people. The kids respect them enormously. They're great at walking in and letting you do the discipline and they just kind of stand there. Like uh huh that's right. She's magic. Ms. AP is magic.

Ms. Oxford, 43, Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. A former Math Teacher, she has been in education for 21 years and an administrator for 8 years. She was previously an administrator at James Buchanan High School. Ms. Oxford describes the relationship that developed between her and Ms. Likins in order to serve the school better.

Liguori: How effective is your AP?

Ms. Oxford: Effective and learning. She is good cop when I need to be bad cop and she's bad cop when I don't feel like being the chief judge jury all at once, so there are time where immediately my instinct is to jump in and let me settle it but when she's there I give her full rein. If I think it's either taking too long or we're not making good on this, I'll jump in and the rule is the rule she gets a suspension or gets her mother on the phone, I think a lot of times being the caretaker, we default from this professional place and treat kids like they're our own and we become sympathetic and empathetic, but do you know what this is school. There's a penalty for this behavior get your mother on the phone and even with our fathers, your parents are workers, so wherever your parent is on their job, you get your parent on the phone and get them and explain to them why your behavior is that you want to have a farting contest in class and they send you to learn and now it becomes a light bulb moment because the parent gets a call about farting because it disrupts an entire classroom and to my understanding this what your son/daughter said this is what you do at home with you and that's when it now shifts and the kid comes with a letter and gets a week of detention, so helping kids understand there are policies and procedures and expected behavior.

Teaching Staff:

There are fewer than 20 teachers at the school. All of the teachers are fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes some characteristics of the teaching staff at David Dinkins Academy. Approximately 20 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Approximately 20 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is composed of mostly new teachers with approximately 60 percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The overall turnover rate for teachers is 20%. The main divide in the teachers is the uncertainty of whether the new teachers buy into the school's mission like the core of older teacher did when they founded the school.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins compares the skills of older more experienced teachers to those of the newer teachers.

Liguori: Do you feel that teachers who developed that mission, do you feel that they are more cohesive to that mission as compared to other teachers.

Ms. Likins: Yeah. Yep Yep. There is a clear and distinct culture between the first year teachers and the second year teachers, and the first year teachers' part of it is that we all came from

Buchanan together. We all knew each other before we opened David Dinkins Academy so there was already that camaraderie, so now we bring on a new flock of 7 who were basically all teaching fellows and were all first year teachers, and as opposed to saying you know what let me follow the path and let me ask the people who know, let's ask each other, it's kind of like I tell the kids all the time "why would you ask your retarded 15 year old friend for advice?" When they're retarded and 15, because every 15 year old kid is a nutcase, and I tell the teachers that, "you're asking someone brand new who's having the same problem you are for advice, not as just to vent or sounding board, but like what should I do, and if both of you don't have the answer, why not seek out the people who do?" You know, so that's the issue that we face a lot too.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. Was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School. Dr. Wang mentions that a lot of the school's inaugural staff is still involved in the school.

Liguori: Do the teachers stay true to the mission that was set out for them?

Dr. Wang: I would say that the initial teachers stay true to the mission, the newer teachers it depends whether or not they buy in because it's easier for a person who was there initially to say "OK this is what we agreed on" vs. someone who comes in let's say in our 3rd year of existence and say "OK I'm just here in order to have a job."

Liguori: Of the people who were here initially, are they all still here?

Dr. Wang: We lost one.

Liguori: Out of 10...

Dr. Wang: Oh, no we lost 2. We lost an English teacher and a Math teacher.

Liguori: Out of how many?

Dr. Wang: About 10 or 12.

Parental Involvement:

Because of the size of the school, parents are considerably more involved in the school. Compared to other schools with similar demographics, parents could be reached quite easily. Many times this could be done by contacting an outside community agency with deep ties to the school.

Ms. Stone, 42, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 15 years, Was formerly assigned to a school that has been closed. Ms. Stone mentions that parents are in contact with the school on a regular basis.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school? Are they very involved?

Ms. Stone: Some of them are, there's a handful of them who work with the [school liaison] who is a one man CBA. They come in they bring things they call parents other parents to build involvement in an activity. They seem to be very hands on. I don't know how many of those there are. I feel a little like there's a rope around the [school liaison].

Ms. Vincent, 33, Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 7 years was previously assigned to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Vincent discusses the role of the school's community liaison.

Liguori: How involved are the parents in this school?

Ms. Vincent: We have some parents that are very involved and some that you know they're not there. But I think we have that celebrity sophomore thing, we have [Mr. X], who's constantly outreaching to parent.

Liguori: Who is [Mr. X]? What is his role?

Ms. Vincent: I think he's like, he's almost like a community liaison for the school. I think he gets the parents involved, the teachers are always pushed to call home to parents, to keep parents involved, call them for the bad, call them for the good. So parents constantly hearing from teachers you know. Your child is doing great, your child is doing bad, you know, it keeps them on task, and keeps them involved in the school. So some parents you call them and they run coming for anything for their kids just because they're always used to hearing from us.

Ms. Rosario, 25, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Rosario mentions that the school's community liaison is very helpful in contacting parents.

Liguori: How involved are parents in this school?

Ms. Rosario: Some parents very. Others not at all, there's a whole collection, a big chunk that I couldn't get in touch with if I wanted to, there's others who you know, when you don't want to be bothered with their 85 child any more who's fine, so you have these really interested ones. But when we need to get a hold of a parent, everybody gets involved. The community leader does what he's gotta do to get a hold of them. He can do more than I can.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

Because the school is relatively new, the school does not have data on how money was spent on school services; however, it should be noted that the school shares facilities with other schools. The school is also at its second location, which has caused an increase in school violence.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. Was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School. Dr. Wang discusses Ms. Oxford's strengths and weaknesses.

Liguori: How effective is your principal?

Dr. Wang: Um, some parts she does very well, like she keeps track of stuff that happens in the building between her and the assistant principal, um, the number of fights in our building are very few, in our first 2 years I think we had only 5 fights which is very low I hear compared to other schools. Then as for like getting the vision casting, she's able to vision cast it in the beginning of the year. But as the year goes on sometimes you have leakage within the vision for the people and sometimes she is not able to give pep talks to individuals based on where they're at, so we get blanketed yellings or blanketed statements like for example, people aren't coming in with their lesson plans, people aren't preparing for their classes, so if I'm a teacher that has my preparations done, then why are you yelling at me, I don't understand, tell me what I'm doing wrong. Now she is trying to scoop up kids to make sure that they understand within the allowed amount of days left, you gotta get your act together, you're in promotion in doubt if you don't do X, Y and Z, it's not our fault, we've given you so many amounts of possibilities for you to be passing.

Ms. Vincent, 33, Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 7 years was previously assigned to James Buchanan High School. Ms., Vincent discusses how Ms. Likins is constantly at suspension hearings.

Liguori: Do you feel that you're ever encouraged not to report school violence in the schools?

Ms. Vincent: No, the one thing I know about Ms. Likins is kids do wrong, she's going to report it. Again, it's coming from Ms. Oxford where she's not losing her job for anyone over anything, so if something happened in your classroom, we fill out a form, we give it in, I think this year, in this building has been the most fights since we've gotten here, but for what I know is that there's always an incident report filled out and Ms. Likins has to go to a suspension hearing.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins discusses how the school has changed locations previous year and will move again in the next year.

Liguori: Do you have an impact on the decisions that the superintendent's office makes.

Ms. Likins: No. Laughs. No. I wish. I really wish that that was the case. We're kind of in a unique situation. It's our 3rd year, but it's our first year here. When we were in the last location, we were completely left alone. When I say that, nobody came to visit, nobody came to nitpick, nobody came to bother us whatsoever, then when we first started, toward the end of the year, it was at these regional task force meetings where we have to sit down with the superintendent of safety and all these head honchos. And they were held here at the library, and they would put everyone's accountance report, that's like what's happening in the building up online and they got to (school name), good old (school name), you guys don't have any fights and the guy had said very publicly in a room of 40 people, if you know the answer to how to get kids to stop fighting, why don't you bottle it and sell it; it's either that or you're hiding your stats. I'm like I'm not hiding my stats, what are you talking about. SO he goes on this whole tirade for 10 minutes about how they're hiding stats and they're fudging numbers, about a week later, they do a surprise walkthrough. Where are your fights at? I swept them under the rug, that's what I told you guys. He was so mad at me. He was so mad at me. Now he sees me in a different capacity, I was a dean then and now I'm an assistant principal. Oh, listen, we need to sit down and meet. OK, no problem we can sit down and meet. When? Whenever I come, because I need to pick your brain about something. He's the superintendent of safety for every school in this district, you're looking at my stats, at first you say that I'm fudging them, then you do a surprise walkthrough, you see that we're not, then you want to sit down with me to ask me questions, but you don't have time to sit down with me to ask me questions to help you, so no.

Liguori: How is it being here as compared to there?

Ms. Likins: I miss the one hallway, because in the other building we were literally 1 hallway, 8 classrooms, that was it, nothing above us, nothing below us, no nothing. The gym and the auditorium was the same location, you put the chairs on the floor it's the auditorium, you slide them up to the side, it's the gym, so I do miss that closeness, coming here we have to deal with, just me carrying lunches with a stack of IDs, before I would have grabbed the lunches because we didn't have a lunch lady, we were the lunch lady. I would've just grabbed lunches and gave them out to kids, now, everything has to be accounted for because the lunch lady needs numbers, we didn't have a level 3 SSA, our school safety agents because there were no fights, they would put up our bulletin boards, now that camaraderie with the whole school is gone, so I miss that.

Liguori: Are you staying at this location?

Ms. Likins: Yes, but next year we're moving to that end of the hallway and then upstairs.

Overview of Longshore High School:

Longshore High School is a large comprehensive high school in the NYCDOE. It shares many attributes with John Basilone High School. In the sample it is the closest to a traditional large neighborhood city high school. Longshore opened in the 1920s and still occupies the same facilities that it did when it opened; however, there have been many renovations and additions to the school including taking over facilities that were once occupied by a junior high school. Many of the students that attend Longshore High School are from the Longshore neighborhood of New York City.

The Longshore neighborhood is adjacent to a large body of water and is in the shadow of a historic bridge. The neighborhood is a traditional working class neighborhood with roots that go all the way back to the founding of the state and nation. The Longshore section of the city was inhabited by Italian immigrants and other white ethnics in the first half of the 20th century. In the latter half of the 20th century blacks and Hispanics moved to the Longshore section of the City. The most recent history of the neighborhood is one of interracial and interethnic conflict. This conflict has led to an extended period of blight and violence. Immediately surrounding the school are older houses in various states of disrepair. Among the boarded up storefronts, there are several businesses nearby including an Italian deli that is patronized by the students and faculty alike. Despite it being an Italian American Deli, students of all racial and ethnic groups can be found eating there without issue; however, when I visited, there was an instance where a deli worker suggested to a black student not to put ketchup on a particular sandwich and to put on oil and vinegar instead. Walking up to the school in the morning, there are many students that hang out on the schools front steps, which are yards away

from single family homes. There are metal detectors in the school; however, unlike the security at David Dinkins Academy adult visitors were not required to pass through them.

While it is not in immediate danger of closing, Longshore is currently a School Requiring Academic Progress (SRAP); a very undesirable status. The school is making great efforts to get out of that status in order to make progress in the years to come. The school is outperformed by most schools in the neighborhoods that surround it and is often disparaged by other schools in surrounding neighborhoods. Unlike the other schools in the sample, while students nominally have to apply, Longshore is a zoned school taking mostly neighborhood children. The student body reflects the demographics of the neighborhood with 1/3 of its students being Hispanic, 30 percent black, 30 percent white and a small percentage of Asian students; approximately 45 percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch.

Like many large high schools, there is much that could be improved at Longshore High School; however, there are also pockets of Longshore that are doing very well. In the same school there are students who are getting advanced regents diplomas and taking multiple AP classes while other students are getting IEP diplomas, which are in essence just a certificate of attendance. This type of school is targeted by the Bloomberg administration for extinction. If it were closed, the city would open smaller, theme focused schools like David Dinkins Academy in the same facilities. While Longshore is in no immediate danger of being closed down, many staff members wonder if one day it may be closed down and replaced with smaller schools.

Demographics:

Longshore High School is home to over 2,500 students and was the second largest school in the sample. As seen in Table 1 the racial and ethnic makeup of Longshore is very mixed as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE, where approximately 30 percent of the students are black, 30 percent of the students are Hispanic, 30 percent of the students are white, and 10 percent of the students are Asian. The number of white students in the school has decreased to 30 percent from almost 60 percent 10 years prior with a corresponding increase in the minority population. Approximately 6 percent of the students are English Language Learners (ELLs), with many immigrants coming from Mexico. The percentage of students eligible for free lunch is less than 40 percent. There are roughly the same number of boys and girls at the school. The school is currently over 106% capacity.

Academics:

Longshore High School was a school that was not in good standing, but was a SRAP for the 5th Year. The SRAP status was due to insufficient performance in Math and English and in order to be in good standing, the school requires 2 years of making AYP to be removed from SRAP status. Administrators at Longshore were optimistic that they would make AYP for the next couple of years and no longer have the SRAP status. Table 2 shows that the total graduation rate for the school was 67 percent for the 2002 cohort (the most recent data available). The most recent school report card saw 67 percent of graduates receiving regents diplomas, with fewer than a third of those students receiving regents diplomas with advanced designation.

In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations and in order to earn a regents endorsed diploma,

students need to score at least a 65 on a required number of regents exams. Tables 3 and 4 show Longshore's performance on the regents at the 55 and 65 levels respectively. Longshore performs well on the English regents with more than 90 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the English regents exam. The school does not perform as well on the Math A regents with 82 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the Math A regents exam. In the school report card period following the field interviews, more than 75 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, nearly 70 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and more than 80 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. As seen in table 5 Longshore High School has problems getting its students to attain Mastery in all of these subjects with approximately 20 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the English regents, less than 5 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the Math A regents, approximately 10 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents, approximately 30 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History, and only 6 percent of students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment Exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, nearly 70 percent of students score greater than 55 on the chemistry regents, but only a handful of students score above an 85 on the chemistry regents and approximately 50 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents but only about 5 percent score above an 85 on the Math B regents. Compared to Basilone, the other large school in the sample, Longshore underperforms at many levels. The inability of the school to have students scoring high on the regents has affected its AYP status in the past and causes some tension within the

school administration; however, many teachers are simply unaware of the school's status as an SRAP.

Mr. Walsh, 49, Principal, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Former Math Teacher, has been in education for 28 years and has been an administrator for 11 years. Mr. Walsh describes the school's status as an SRAP school.

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Mr. Walsh: No.

Liguori: Does it have any label place on it?

Mr. Walsh: We're an SRAP-4 school. School Requiring Academic Progress.

Liguori: Does being an SRAP-4 school influence or change your leadership style?

Mr. Walsh: Well, it influences me by ensuring that I'm looking at those students that are causing us to be a school in good standing and we try to address those deficiencies so we get that population of students achieving at a higher level that would be the only thing it impacts.

Liguori: Do you mention that you're an SRAP-4 school to teachers or anything like that?

Mr. Walsh: I would guess that they don't know that. I think that they know that we don't hit AYP every year, but my sense is that they don't know that specifically we're at SRAP-4.

Liguori: Do you feel any more pressure on you because you're in an SRAP-4 situation?

Mr. Walsh: Um, external pressure? Yeah, because you don't want to progress down the line and become a SURR school, so there's that pressure and the fact that the only category that we don't meet AYP is with students with disabilities, you know, it's when you're that close and you can get it done and last year it was by 1 student in math, and you're like, let's just get it done and get passed this.

Ms. Dimaggio, 36, Assistant Principal Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. A former Social Studies teacher, she has been in Education for 15 years and an administrator for 9 years. Ms. Dimaggio mentions that she is happy that her department is not the one that is causing the school to have a label of needing improvement.

Liguori: Have you ever heard the term SURR school?

Ms. DiMaggio: I think we are in year 4 of SINI students.

Liguori: Are you getting out of it?

Ms. DiMaggio: I think we are, you know, it all depends on Math and English and I know that the English scores have gone up, maybe not the math, or they're climbing slower.

Liguori: Does being in that situation influence your leadership style?

Ms. DiMaggio: No.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because you're in that situation?

Ms. DiMaggio: No. You know, we're here to help kids and get them to graduate. I'm still providing the same opportunities or more because funding became available, not because of SINI. I don't even think that the teachers know we're SINI. They know we're not SURR, but I won't even put that pressure on them.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease that it's not your department causing you to be a SINI?

Ms. DiMaggio: Absolutely. Laughs. Absolutely.

Liguori: Do they go through a lot more problems?

Ms. DiMaggio: Loudly and laughing. Yes. Yes. Yes. They're the reason a school would close, are you kidding, of course I'm not English or math. You closed the school!

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell is unaware that her school has any label on it she believes that it would not be allowed to happen in that particular neighborhood.

Liguori: Have you ever heard the term SURR school?

Ms. Campbell: Yes, it's a school that's put on academic probation or is at risk of closing because they have low scores on test exams. I know people who were from SURR schools that got closed.

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Ms. Campbell: No.

Liguori: Is it in danger of becoming a SURR school?

Ms. Campbell: I don't think so. The reality is that they don't put SURR schools in [this part of the city]. There's too many rich white people here for that. You know what I'm saying, they just wouldn't tolerate it, no one would tolerate.

Liguori: They would immediately improve it?

Ms. Campbell: Absolutely, They would play with data to make it get off the SURR school if they had to. There's none of that in [this part of the city], I think 2 schools got a D in [this whole area]. I mean, you're going to tell me that only 2 schools got a D. Give me a break.

School Administration:

The school does have a mission statement; however, in a collection of vague and generic mission statements, Longshore High School's mission statement seems to stand out as the most vague and generic. The mission statement includes language referring to its need to help the students become lifelong learners and good citizens. The principal seemed to be aware of the vagueness of the mission statement and said it was among the things that he was working on that year and had mentioned that his predecessor had not changed the principal's message for the school in nearly a decade and that was one of the things that his office was seeking to address.

Mr. Walsh, 49, Principal, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Former Math Teacher, has been in education for 28 years and has been an administrator for 11 years. Mr. Walsh mentions that the mission statement was developed before he was assigned to the school several years prior.

Liguori: Does the school have a well defined goal or mission statement?

Mr. Walsh: Um, yes.

Liguori: Approximately what is it?

Mr. Walsh: That we will provide a nurturing environment for students of all levels that will support them to become lifelong learners.

Liguori: Who was involved in developing that goal or mission statement?

Mr. Walsh: That was developed before I got here, so I'm going to say it was probably the school leadership team, we're presently working on a new one, we're doing that with both the leadership team and a group of teachers involved in an administration program.

The school is a large comprehensive high school and like most large schools in the NYCDOE, the school calendar consists of two semesters that last 20 weeks. Students change teachers and schedules every semester. The school follows a bell schedule where every period meets every day and all periods are the same length.

The current principal of the school has been a principal at the school since September of 2004. He was previously an assistant principal at another school for several years. He seemed to be well liked by his staff and fellow administrators, while the principal of a large school is not often seen or heard from in a large school, he makes it a point to do the morning announcements every day and tries to make himself more visible to the students and staff. Besides the principal, there is 1 assistant principal in charge of Organization (APO), one assistant principal in charge of security, one assistant principal in charge of programming the students, one assistant principal in charge of guidance and several assistant principals each in charge of an academic department. There are several deans that are in charge of disciplining students. According to the teachers the department chairs serve as supervisors and liaisons to the principal. Like most large schools, the teachers all congregate within their departments and have little interdepartmental contact. The department cohesiveness is usually determined by the strength of the AP in charge of the department. As can be seen by the following

comments, some departments have more faith in their administrators than others affecting their perception of the administration in general.

Ms. Lorenzo, 31, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Ms. Lorenzo feels that her administrator treats her with respect.

Liguori: How well do teachers and administrators interact?

Ms. Lorenzo: Again, that varies widely, for the most part in our department, our Administrator is pretty laid back and she lets you teach and as long as you're doing what you're supposed to you're fine. Um, a couple of other departments, it's very top down and I mean, you relate as adults or you relate as a boss and a worker, but there's not much in between that.

Mr. Eisenberg, 56, English Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Eisenberg claims he does not trust his AP.

Liguori: How effective is your AP?

Mr. Eisenberg: On a scale of 1-10? A 6.

Liguori: Why a 6?

Mr. Eisenberg: I don't think she inspires confidence and instills leadership in terms of what she feels is important for, you know, English teachers to accomplish in a classroom, not that we need to be told by anybody, but the fact that we...people should have a strong background in their field in terms of actual teaching experience before they assume the mantle of Asst. Principal, and because only through experience can you really gain for how tough the job of teacher is. I don't think she has that experience to inspire the confidence that she's been through the wars like other people have and I think the fact that she has a title she expects that people should automatically follow just because she's the general and all the troops are supposed to follow.

Liguori: Are you going to mutiny there? Are you going to sail off to Pitcairn?

Mr. Eisenberg: How do you know there haven't been any before.

Liguori: Have there been any?

Mr. Eisenberg: There have been one or 2 times, it's not exactly like we can throw her overboard, but there has been an occasion or 2 where she has known of the department's displeasure of how things have been run or particular issues that affect the department.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell claims that the teachers are displeased with the administrators at the school.

Liguori: How well do teachers and administrators interact with each other?

Ms. Campbell: Surface? Like superficially? I would say in general, like 1-10, I would give it about a 5.

Liguori: Why so low?

Ms. Campbell: Because I think that teachers are displeased with the administration, certain departments, not this department, but certain departments, there's a great deal of...I would say almost animosity. A lot of people really are being directed by people who don't have the leadership skills necessary to make the department move itself into becoming a better department. A lot of work pushing incentive, like this is your responsibility, the administrators we get paid for it, but I'm gonna literally delegate it back to the teachers and that's common in quite a few departments. Teachers are really carrying the AP.

Liguori: Which departments?

Ms. Campbell: English specifically is what I have in mind.

Teaching Staff:

There are more than 100 teachers at the school. More than 95 percent of the teachers fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes some aspects of the teaching staff. Approximately 40 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Approximately 11 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is quite experienced with only seven percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The turnover rate for teachers with fewer than 5 years experience is 15% and the overall turnover rate is 5%. While it is not the most desirable location in terms of student performance, many teachers see this as a desirable location because of the commute. Many teachers from the neighborhood would rather teach at this school than a better school that is further away because of the time that would be spent commuting and the cost of gas and tolls.

Parental Involvement:

While there are attempts to involve parents in school life, according to teachers, parental involvement is limited, but many feel this is typical of large schools in the NYCDOE.

Mr. Walsh, 49, Principal, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Former Math Teacher, has been in education for 28 years and has been an administrator for 11 years. Mr. Walsh claims that parents at his school have low expectations for their children.

Liguori: Are parents involved in this school?

Mr. Walsh: I would say limited, I would like them to be more, but I think in this particular school, and several [schools in the area] is the dynamic that parents have low expectations.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell discusses how abysmal she feels PTA participation is.

Liguori: Do parent put pressure on the school in order to raise regents scores?

Ms. Campbell: No there's no parent involvement whatsoever in this school. I think they have, what, 13 [parents] actually take part in PTA, they have 13-25 people in the PTA meeting of a school with [over 2500 students].

The most common complaint from teachers is the complaint that is echoed throughout schools nationwide, that it's mostly the parents of the children who are doing well who are involved and they wished that the parents of poor performing students would become more involved.

Ms. Testaverde, 40, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 17 years. Ms. Testaverde discusses how parental involvement is predictable.

Liguori: How involved are parents in this school?

Ms. Testaverde: I never see them much involved at all in this school.

Liguori: Do you ever get pressure from parents to raise the class grades of their kids?

Ms. Testaverde: Very rarely. I think depending on the course that you're teaching, if I was teaching an honors class, yes, I think I felt that more, even now when I'm doing that double block, I've had parents say "well, my son is always good in history and social studies" and "how come you only gave him an 85." But my ESL never.

Mr. Eisenberg, 56, English Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Eisenberg says that there is no pressure from parents at his school.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you to raise the class grades of their children?

Mr. Eisenberg: There is no pressure from parents. I wish there were. I wish parents would take more of an interest.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

The school spent approximately \$8000 per pupil in 2004. This is significantly less than the \$11,300 per pupil average spent across New York City and similar to the amount of money spent by Basilone, the other large school in the sample. Less than 60 percent of the money was spent on classroom instruction, 13 percent was spent in supervisory support, and approximately 6 percent was spent on building services. The need for resources was described in the following interviews.

Ms. Dimaggio, 36, Assistant Principal Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. A former Social Studies teacher, she has been in Education for 15 years and an administrator for 9 years. Ms. Dimaggio complains about her lack of resources.

Liguori: Does access to resources matter in being an effective administrator?

Ms. DiMaggio: Yes, absolutely.

Liguori: Does that make teaching more effective would you say?

Ms. DiMaggio: Yes. Smartboards are a perfect example, you know I finally got them in 3 rooms and then I have a portable one and then I have a room that it's mounted, we're really stressing what you can do with this thing. And those people who were against this technology and the whole thing, when they see what it's capable of, they start changing and then it's How do I do this, what am I doing, so, like, on staff development day, we're having a scavenger hunt. Find a site where you can stress vocabulary for the regents exam. They'll go to regentsprep.org and circle, so the money plays a major role. You can't put a computer in every classroom, you can't update all the computer rooms without the money, without a grant, without giving a 0.2 so they can be a grant writer for the school. IT all takes money, and you're talking about every point is about \$20,000, so can you afford to give this person a 0.2 and hopefully they will produce a grant that will produce \$100,000? There's not guarantee. The only guarantee is that you're spending \$20,000 she might not produce anything. Xerox machines, a perfect example, we have copy centers and without money it's a problem, you have a copy center that runs copies for the teachers, with massive budget cuts, maybe teachers will have to give up their teacher's choice and pay for their copies in the building. 100 teachers, \$100,000. I don't think Mr. Walsh would do that, but you know, you need money to teach.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell feels that resources are not shared appropriately in the school.

Liguori: Does access to resource matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?

Ms. Campbell: Resources? Yes. I mean, we don't have a computer room, we don't have big enough classrooms, I'm in 5 different rooms on different floors, I'm less likely to bring supplies and props down with me because it's complicated to carry through the halls. Some departments have computer rooms that they monopolize all year, we don't have a computer room. Absolutely! There's things that we could show visually for visual learners that they can get a lot easier, they get access to multimedia sources, that's one for a whole department.

Overview of J.P. Morgan Technical High School:

J.P. Morgan Technical High School is a small to medium sized high school that is focused on a theme. It is among the first schools opened in the city's small schools movement. It was opened in the early 1990s and has seen a tremendous amount of change in its approximately 15 year history. Morgan Tech is a school in good standing and has been making AYP. Its student body is 60 percent black and Hispanic and 30 percent Asian. More than 70 percent of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Students come from all five boroughs, but most come from only 2 boroughs. It has a prime location in the city located near a large non-residential commercial district. During

its 15 year history, it has been marred with a high level of staff turnover, where only one teacher remains from the founding of the school and the administrators have changed frequently.

While other schools have some level of cooperation with their outside partners, Morgan Tech has the most cooperation from its outside partner. Every week all students participate in hands on instruction from people working in the field that the school centers its theme on. Students are all expected to attend and eventually do an outside practicum in that field. The expectation of the school is to prepare its students for a career in the field the school is centered on. The school and the NYCDOE hope that the cooperation of its corporate partners will give the students a leg up in having learned the ropes of the field from professionals in that field and give the students possible contacts in the field. When students graduate they can be employed in an entry level position in the field; however, it is the school's hope that they attend college to improve their chances for further advancement in that field.

Because the school is in a commercial district, there are very few people who live in the neighborhood immediately surrounding the school. This means that the entire student body must commute to the school from throughout the city. Most students commute to the school by subway as there is a subway stop that is across the street from the school. Walking to the school, you can get a sense of the history of the neighborhood. Despite it being a commercial district, there are parks and places for students and faculty to relax and unwind nearby. There are also nearby historic sites that predate the American Revolution and other sites that are part of modern American history.

One upside of the facilities other than its location is that they are quite large. This means that there is enough classroom and office space for its students and staff. There is a teachers' lounge that can be used without much encroachment from the administration. Because of the size of the facilities, many teachers do not see their administrators on a regular basis outside of meetings. This also means that there are a lot of places for students to hide out, which gives the SSOs a daunting task. There are no metal detectors present at the school but the SSOs are quite vigilant in checking IDs at the front door. School security is not as visible as other schools, but that may be because there are fewer incidents of violence at Morgan Tech.

While the NYCDOE occupies the building that houses Morgan Tech, it is not owned by the NYCDOE or the City of New York. The NYCDOE merely leases the multi-story building that houses Morgan Tech. Because of this, any maintenance requests must be made to the building's owner. The tenant-landlord relationship is at times strained with many staff members grumbling about the time it takes for routine maintenance, such as fixing the elevators or changing light bulbs to be done. Another complaint is that there are no windows in the building except for the top floors, which can be viewed as a hazard should there be a catastrophic event such as a fire or school shooting; however, because of the school's proximity to its corporate sponsors, there is little chance that it will leave the facilities in the near future.

Demographics:

When the field research was done, the school had graduated approximately a dozen classes. At the time of the field research the school was home to more than 500 students but fewer than 2,500. The school is currently at capacity. As seen in Table 1, the

school is comprised of mostly black and Hispanic students as indicated by the most recent annual school report furnished by the NYCDOE, where approximately 35 percent of the students are Hispanic, 25 percent of the students are black, 10 percent of the students are white, and approximately 30 percent of the students are Asian. Since the school opened the percentage of Asian students has doubled with a corresponding drop in the percentage of white and black students. Approximately 6 percent of the students are ELLs with many recent immigrants from China and Latin America and 60 percent of students receive free lunch at the school. There is also a small gender disparity favoring boys; however, traditionally the school has had an equal number of male and female students.

Academics:

J.P. Morgan Technical High School is in good standing; throughout its history it has maintained that status. As seen in Table 2, Morgan Tech has an average graduation rate compared to the other 4 schools that have graduated students, with more than 80 percent of graduates planning on attending 4 year colleges. In order to meet minimum graduation requirements, students must score at least 55 on certain regents examinations and in order to get a regents endorsed diploma, students must score at least a 65 on a certain number of regents exams. As seen in tables 3 and 4 compared to other schools in the sample, Morgan Tech has good to average results on the English regents with approximately 95 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the English regents exam and approximately 85 percent passing at the 65 level. The school also has good results on the Math A regents with 90 percent of students scoring at the 55 level or greater on the Math A regents exam nearly 75 percent getting a passing grade of 65 or

higher. In the school report card period following the field interviews, 95 percent of students met graduation requirements in Science, 75 percent of students met graduation requirements in Global History, and approximately 95 percent of students met graduation requirements in U.S. History. As seen in Table 5, compared to the high achieving schools in the sample, Morgan has some problems getting its students to attain Mastery in all of these subjects, with approximately 20 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the English regents, less than 10 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater on the Math A regents, approximately 25 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Global History regents, more than half of its students scoring 85 or greater in U.S. History, and approximately 25 percent of its students scoring 85 or greater in the Living Environment exam. Of the exams that are not required for graduation, nearly 80 percent of students score greater than 55 on the chemistry regents, with less than 40 percent passing at the 65 level and a very small percentage of students scoring above an 85 on the chemistry regents and approximately 70 percent score above a 55 on the Math B regents and 60 percent score above an 65 on the Math B regents and only about 10 percent of the students attaining mastery. Teachers feel that there is a very big mix of students in their classes, with some students able to compete with students at better high schools and other students being deprived of material and academic resources.

Mr. So, 35, Chemistry Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. So feels that the school is not as selective as it previously was.

Mr. So: Um, because if it is indeed that students are being kind of pushed though also, I've heard that in this school, some of the new students coming in have a different set of cultures because...like for example, I did a survey at the beginning of the year and I would ask them, "why did you choose to apply to this school?" What they would say is...you know, basically there is an application and some of those students actually applied for it out of junior high school because [of our school's theme]. Even last year when I did that I got a response of students applying and [a good number] of the students would say I didn't apply. My guidance counselor just filled out a form or I was placed here is another one. This year I've noticed I get a lot more of those responses. I don't teach freshman, but whenever I cover a freshman class, I'm sure to bring that thing in and I say I just want to learn your names, so why don't you fill this out? I found that a lot more percentage of students put that I was placed here. So I'm guessing that maybe that's what it is, that

they might want to do that in. It does affect it, and it's truly harder for me, because I look at the graduating senior class in AP chemistry, where they seriously they give Stuyvesant kids a run for their money, and one of the students, his older brother went to Stuyvesant, graduated in the top percent in his class and he's actually doing his brother's chemistry homework in college, because he knows it better than he does. So, some of the seniors are giving them a run for their money, but I have to say that there is a huge difference between the freshman and sophomore class and the junior and senior class.

Ms. Schmidt, 29, Math Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 4 years was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Ms. Schmidt feels that on average her students are not achieving at a high level.

Liguori: How would you rate the academic ability of your students on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being highly able?

Ms. Schmidt: It's a very difficult question, because the classes are not homogeneous at all. You have in every class a 1 and a 10. On average, they meet somewhere in the middle I would say, so about a 5.

School Administration:

The school does have a mission statement, which was crafted years ago by a previous school administration. The mission statement includes language referring to the theme the school is centered on and the partnerships it has in the community and the nation. Unlike other schools in the sample, the teachers seemed very aware of the school's mission, especially the emphasis of the school on its theme. The school's theme was important to the school and the teachers with many speaking about how these students can get employment once they leave the school and the technical knowledge about their field and networking that other people simply cannot get attending another school. The school calendar consists of 2 semesters that last 20 weeks. Students do not change teachers ever semester and meet each teacher every day; however, they do have one day a week where they have to meet with members in the field that their school's theme is centered on. Many students and teachers feel that this structured time is really good for the students and it gives them aspirations for when they graduate high school and potentially go to college.

Mr. Levy, 25, Math Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. This is his first year teaching. Mr. Levy is able to discuss the school's mission in detail.

Liguori: Does the principal have a well stated goal or mission statement for the school?

Mr. Levy: Yes.

Liguori: Approximately what is it?

Mr. Levy: Um, laughs, to prepare students for a better understanding [of the field our school's theme is centered on] and put them into a place that they can enter the [job] market responsible and educated.

Liguori: Do teachers stay true to that mission?

Mr. Levy: Yeah, I think that a lot of the school is centered around the financial understanding and they have this [institute]. Business leaders come in and give students....they volunteer and give the students a whole different perspective on different topics of [the theme our school is focused on] finance. So, it's, you know, integrated into the curriculum.

Ms. Moser, 44, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Moser feels that the school's theme is good and helpful to the students who care to take advantage of it.

Liguori: Were teachers involved in preparing that mission statement?

Ms. Moser: I believe so, I got word of it before I got here, but I would think so and there's certainly, I mean we have programs and we have students, not all students do take advantage of it, but I think that if you're a student who's interested in [the theme of the school], this school is going to give you opportunities that no other school in the country, probably in the world is going to give you, for a regular kid, not a superstar who's going to do well wherever, but a regular kid is going to go to the [large regulatory agency related to the theme of the school], is going to be able to have an internship at [Fortune 500 companies in the school's theme] or whatever. Those are life changing opportunities.

The current principal of the school, Mr. Gregory, has been the principal at Morgan for only 2 years and he was previously an AP at Morgan Tech. While the staff is used to seeing him in a supervisory position, not everyone is familiar with him and those who were familiar with him felt that their initial familiarity inhibits his performance.

Mr. So, 35, Chemistry Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. So has not spoken to his principal all year (the interview was conducted in June).

Liguori: How are your interactions with the principal?

Mr. So: Um, this year I've not talked to him at all this year, which is kind of different, so despite the fact that in the beginning of the year, the idea is that I'm supposed to because of an open door policy, it's been kind of hard to get a hold of him. Um, and you know, emails have gone unanswered, and that's all. At this point, I'm kind of guessing that other than my immediate APs, the other administrators are not really interested in what I'm doing.

Ms. Moser, 44, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Moser feels that the principal needs to “mark his territory” since he was an internal promotion.

Liguori: Do teachers have an effect on decisions that administrators make?

Ms. Moser: Pause. Um, I would say, I would say not this year just because it is a new principal and he didn’t come in from outside, and I think he just needs to kind of mark his territory, and I think that maybe once he settles into the job a little bit, then he’ll say “alright, let’s have dialogue” instead of “I will lecture you.”

Ms. Strauss, 41, Biology and Earth Science Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Strauss discusses her relationship with the principal.

Liguori: What about the principal, do you get along with the principal?

Ms. Strauss: Um, for the most part yes, he was the Asst. principal last year, and he’s kind of a hardass.

Liguori: Was he your AP?

Ms. Strauss: No, he was the APO. So he did that last year, and now he’s the principal this year, and back then, any little thing that you did, he was on you about and he was really tough and the way he talks to people, I know he has a good heart and I know that his intentions are good, but he has a funny way of talking to people. Even when he’s commending someone for something, his tone sounds scolding, I’ve come to understand his tone, but if you didn’t’ you might misconstrue his meaning of what he’s saying or his intentions. There have been a couple of instances where I don’t trust him and it’s involving the incident of my AP.

Besides the principal, there are several assistant principals. The principal and assistant principals work very closely together setting school policy; however, it is clear that the assistant principals have the strongest affect on the teachers and have the most impact on classroom decisions. The school is physically quite large and it is often very difficult for the principal to see everything that is going on within the building, therefore the APs do most of the internal supervisory work, while the principal does most of the external public work. Because of the facilities, it’s difficult for the APs to have a close eye on the teachers, this leads to a great deal of animosity and a breakdown of communication between teachers and APs especially on instructional issues.

Ms. Moser, 44, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Moser feels that the principal has become much more data driven.

Liguori: What is the job of an AP?

Ms. Moser: I think that job has also changed a lot, it used to be the AP supervision, used to be far more curriculum based and I think that it has become much more data driven. You know, how are these scores, how are these scores, how are these scores? And also because of the size of this school, his job is more humanistic as opposed to just dealing with one subject area, but I think that

that's become the movement in the system as a whole and even in larger schools, they're combining departments. There used to be a chairperson in every subject and that's no longer the case.

Liguori: How effective is he?

Ms. Moser: I think that he's good. I think that he's very forward. Again, there's a couple of teachers that he doesn't get along well with, but I think he knows the material, I think he has a sense of what's important so...

Ms. Strauss, 41, Biology and Earth Science Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Strauss feels that her AP has a strong effect on her day to day teaching.

Liguori: Do [administrators] decisions affect your teaching?

Ms. Strauss: My assistant principal put the earth science department and all the earth science teachers on an extremely rigid pacing calendar because one of the new earth science teachers this year was supposed to teach according to a list of subjects and she decided to switch topics just before the regents and she asked for permission to switch topics and was given permission by my AP, I Then discussed with my AP why it wouldn't work because we had a teacher leave unexpectedly and 2 biology teachers were taking over an earth science class, they couldn't teach...they were asked to teach astronomy before the midterm...how do you ask a biology to teach astronomy? Anybody can teach latitude and longitude, that was the next topic, so I told that to the AP, and she said, oh, yeah, you're right, we should teach latitude and longitude, so she told this teacher don't teach astronomy, we're going to switch, teach latitude and longitude, and I spoke with her and I said "Ok, I spoke to heather and we're not going to teach astronomy." Then when I made up the midterm, she said, "Oh, yeah, I didn't teach latitude and longitude, I taught astronomy anyway." So because of that... I was the course lead at the time, because of that we all were put on a strict pacing calendar and we are not allowed to deviate under any circumstances from the pacing calendar, and if you're absent, you make up a worksheet to give the kids to take home to learn that lesson, you just have to skip that one and move on to the next one. I have to teach Earth Science that way. A conceptual science.

Ms. So, 33, Special Education Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. She teaches mostly Social Studies. She has been teaching for 4 years. She was previously at a failing school. Ms. SO discusses the compartmentalization of the school departments and how there is little interaction between departments.

Liguori: How well do administrators and teachers interact?

Ms. So: Administrators, well, because we are sort of departmentalized, I think that for my department per se, I think that we get along with our administrator, He's flexible, he's very understanding. We're trying to help each other, I think that there are other concerns with other departments and their administrator, but I think in general teachers do not get along with the principal.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. So: There are a lot of...

Liguori: The major ones.

Ms. So: I guess there are a lot of things that many people feel. I personally feel that he doesn't communicate enough with the teachers, he doesn't really get feedback from them that he should that may really help the students in the long run, so communication is one thing, and I think that he is biased in the sense that he will listen to some teachers and not to others, so there's a fairness issue there, and those are the top two things.

Teaching Staff:

There are approximately 50 teachers at the school. Approximately 90 percent of teachers are fully licensed and permanently assigned to the school. Table 6 describes certain aspects of the teaching staff. Approximately 45 percent of teachers have their Masters degree plus 30 hours, which is the highest level on the pay scale in terms of education (the other determinant of pay is longevity). Approximately 20 percent of core classes are not taught by highly qualified teachers. Overall, the teaching staff is composed of a mix of new and experienced teachers with approximately 20 percent of teachers having fewer than 3 years experience teaching. The overall turnover rate for teachers is 10; however to many teachers in the school it seems like a much larger number as there is only one person who has been with the school for over 10 years.

Mr. Sanchez, 61, Foreign Language Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 18 years was previously assigned to a school that is now closing. Mr. Sanchez mentions that he is the only original teacher left at the school.

Liguori: How long have you been here?

Mr. Sanchez: 15 years. I was previously at [another school in the Bronx].

Liguori: So you've been here since the beginning.

Mr. Sanchez: Yes, I'm the only original teacher left.

Parental Involvement:

Because the school is no longer a new school, parental involvement has decreased from its heyday of more than a decade ago. Because of the size of the school, parents tend to be involved in the school; however, since students come from all over the city, parents may have a difficult time accessing school facilities. Another impediment to parental participation is language barriers.

Ms. Nowak, 32, Former Science Teacher, Assistant Principal, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been in education for 10 years and an administrator for 3 years. Ms. Nowak discusses the lack of parental involvement at the school.

Liguori: Are parents involved in this school?

Ms. Nowak: I feel that that's definitely a weakness of the school, that parents are not as involved as they should be.

Liguori: At your last school were they involved?

Ms. Nowak: No. About the same percentage and I still consider it to be really low, but I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that these are commuter schools, [My last school] was a commuter school, this is a big commuter school, and I think that that has a huge impact on parental involvement. We're not a neighborhood school, you can't just walk down the block, see your kid and come visit the teachers.

School Expenditures and Facilities:

The school spent approximately \$10,800 per pupil in 2004. This is significantly less than the \$11,300 per pupil average spent across New York City. Approximately 50 percent of the money was spent on classroom instruction, 18 percent was spent in supervisory support, and approximately 16 percent was spent on building services. The reason the school may pay more for building services than other schools is because the NYCDOE merely leases the property from another entity. This causes many normal tenant-landlord problems.

Ms. Moser, 44, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Moser feels that the school's layout makes it difficult for students to learn.

Liguori: Does having access to resources matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?

Ms. Moser: Definitely. Definitely. I think that having access to the computers. I do the stock market game with them and you can only play that with computers, so if you don't have them, I think that having access to books, making sure every kid has a book for home and there's a similar book that they can use in the classroom so that they're not lugging them back and forth and just the physical layout of the building, I mean we tell kids not to take the elevator, but then do we really want them carrying 40 lb book bags up and down 10 flights of stairs, that's not realistic.

Ms. Strauss, 41, Biology and Earth Science Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Strauss mentions her school's state of disrepair.

Liguori: How effective is your principal?

Ms. Strauss: Um, well, he used to manage the building, so I guess he's experienced with that and I know there have been major budget cuts and some of the things that he said were going to get one haven't gotten done, like new seats in our auditorium, which is horrible if you've seen it. The elevators are being repaired. He wanted to hire an elevator operator and we couldn't do that because we had budget cuts, but I do think as far as running the building that he's on top of that...

Rationale for choosing these particular schools

The principals' permission was required to obtain access to each of the field locations. In this era of increased accountability, many principals felt that they would rather their teachers focus on other matters such as test preparation, preparing lessons, and speaking to internal auditors rather than speaking to a social scientist that was not mandated by the NYCDOE. Furthermore, many principals would not allow access to their school site because they felt that it would be an unwarranted intrusion into the teachers' workspace and would not want them discussing anything that could potentially cause them harm. Therefore, one of the most important factors for determining the sample was the ease of access to the school locations. Demographic and performance issues were the other major determining factors for the school sample.

Because of Mayor Bloomberg's small school initiative and the federal NCLB act, a greater emphasis has been placed on newer smaller schools that can improve test scores quicker to take the place of larger failing schools. The study wanted to get the perspective of schools of varying sizes and levels of development. The sample included 3 small schools (David Dinkins, Atlantic and Parkview), 2 medium sized schools (Bay View and J.P. Morgan) and 2 large schools (Longshore and Basilone). These schools were selected for their geographic and racial/ethnic diversity. Included in the sample are schools of various sizes and age.

Another factor in determining the schools that were selected was the performance of the schools. The sample included schools that were high performing (Parkview and Bay View), medium performing (J.P. Morgan and Atlantic), and low performing (Longshore, Basilone and David Dinkins). While none of the schools were being closed,

two of the schools were given labels for failing to make AYP (Longshore and Basilone) and while David Dinkins was not labeled, it was replacing a closing school and was performing poorly on standardized tests. The schools that were low performing were chosen because they may one day be in danger of closing or are the results of school closing. NCLB and state guidelines have the most effect on these schools as they are trying to survive and keep their heads above water. The high performing schools were chosen because they tell a different story, where there may be increased accountability and pressure, but state guidelines and NCLB have little to no effect on their everyday practices and they compete with themselves in order to improve student performance. The medium performing schools were chosen because they were not in immediate danger of being closed, nor did they really know the consequences, but they still had to carry on within the new accountability framework in the NYCDOE.

Demographically, the schools were quite diverse and were representative of different types of neighborhoods and populations in the City of New York. Only two of the schools were comprised mainly of one racial/ethnic group and the rest were racially homogenous. Schools ranged from being overwhelmingly white (Bay View) to being overwhelmingly black (David Dinkins). Three of the schools were comprised of students mainly from minority populations (Atlantic, J.P. Morgan and Longshore High School), while two schools were almost evenly split among the four major racial/ethnic groups in the city (Basilone and Parkview). Combined, the schools had a smaller percentage of minorities than most city schools; despite that fact, the schools were more representative of the state as a whole. The schools also widely varied in the percentage of students receiving free lunch. Choosing such disparate school situations help make the

findings of the study a bit more applicable to various locations throughout the city and state.

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:
New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability

Chapter 3:

High Stakes Testing and the City of New York

Overview of No Child Left Behind and Teachers' Reactions

In 2001 the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandated states to improve standards and reporting for students in public schools in order to get federal funding. In order to get federal funding states had to include accountability measures in order to demonstrate that the additional funding was having the desired outcomes (U.S. Department of Education 2002). While there had been a realigning of national standards occurring at the state level since the introduction of minimum competency tests in the 1980s, the NCLB legislation has mandated states to test students annually from grade three through eight and has required states to take part in NAEP testing (Hamilton and Koretz 2002); furthermore, graduation and participation rates were to be reported and data had to be disaggregated in order to monitor the achievement of different student subgroups (Shaul and Ganson 2005).

In order to comply with NCLB some states have used or updated pre-existing exams and/or standards to satisfy the reporting requirements (Blumenthal 2006; Freeman and Riley 2005). This reporting has caused an increase in the reliance on statistical data for individual states and school districts (Goertz and Duffy 2003). Because New York was already in the middle of overhauling its high stakes testing regime when NCLB was passed, NCLB has had a great influence on New York State (NYS) testing standards (Hursh 2005). Because of the confluence of many different educational policies, there has been a lot of confusion among teachers as to the scope of NCLB and what its effects on instruction are.

In the interviews that were conducted, many teachers were not pleased with the overall legislation passed in the NCLB act. There are several reasons certain teachers

objected to NCLB. One of the main points that teachers opposed was the increased emphasis on testing. Many teachers felt that the law is too punitive to all schools and tends to scapegoat teachers in particular. One aspect of the law that some teachers addressed was that there is little monetary compensation for all the added oversight by the federal government. While NCLB forbids any unfunded mandates, Connecticut sued the Federal Government accusing the government of not funding certain mandates included in NCLB (Blumenthal 2006). While the case against the federal government was dismissed in 2008, many NYC teachers that were interviewed similarly felt that there was not enough funding for the mandates of NCLB and that tying federal funds to performance is a poor idea as it unduly burdens teachers and students in urban environments.

In accordance with NCLB legislation, New York State uses both English and Math Exams to determine whether a school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The process for determining AYP is different for both high schools and elementary/middle schools. In elementary and middle schools, there are three equal components used to determine AYP: scores on English assessments, scores on math assessments and scores on science assessments. In high schools, the data that is used to determine AYP are the school's performance on Math and English regents along with the school's graduation rate. In each of these instances the 3 pieces of data are given equal weight (New York State Education Department 2010).

New York City also has its own method of rating schools. This method includes assigning schools a grade from A-F. The largest component of this grade is student progress, where schools are judged on how well students are progressing toward earning

a high school diploma, which includes how many classes the students have passed and the regents exams students have passed in subjects required for graduation. The next largest component of the NYC school report card grade is student performance which includes data on 4 and 6-year graduation rates. The final component is the school environment which includes survey data from parents, teachers and students. Schools can also earn extra points if the school excels at closing the achievement gap by improving scores of certain subgroups (New York City Department of Education 2010). Unlike AYP status for the federal and state governments, the NYC school report grade is a relative grade where schools are judged against a peer horizon, a group of 20 schools that are similar to the school being judged. Other than specialized schools, no schools have identical peer horizons. One drawback of the NYC school report cards is that there is a tendency to give grades that are inflated to schools; for example in 2010, more than 40 percent of schools received As and less than 10 percent of schools received Ds and Fs (Otterman 2010).

The respondents who were in favor of the legislation seem to feel that it gives teachers some sort of guidance in doing their job. One aspect of NCLBs focus on data collection is that there is an increased emphasis on data analysis to drive instruction. Mabry and Margolis (2006) found that administrators tentatively supported data driven instruction; the same was found in administrator interviews in this study. Another effect of the NCLB act is that certain groups which have been traditionally underserved such as special education students, English Language Learners (ELLs), and members of minority groups, have received mandated attention since NCLB requires data to be disaggregated (U.S. Department of Education 2002; Shaul and Ganson 2005). Some teachers also feel

that the added guidelines are not an imposition and the NCLB guidelines are merely reflecting what is being done in the classroom.

Mr. Vito, 48, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. He has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Vito feels that NCLB is good because it holds teachers accountable for student performance.

Liguori: What is NCLB about?

Mr. Vito: Honestly, I'm not sure how to fix the schools. All I know is that there's funding, and schools are tied to performance, and there's a concerted effort from the government to make sure every student's needs are met.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure put on you because of NCLB?

Mr. Vito: No. Not at all.

Liguori: Do you feel that these laws are fair to teachers?

Mr. Vito: Yeah, I think that no accountability and no drive for increased performance is not a good thing, so if they somehow cause us to seek higher performance levels, I think that's a good thing.

Liguori: Do you feel that they help students?

Mr. Vito: Like everything in life, you could pick a negative and positive, so I'm sure there are cases where they help students, and I'm sure there are cases where they don't help students. So honestly I can't give a good answer to that question.

Liguori: Overall?

Mr. Vito: I think it does a great thing for students.

Ms. Stabinski, 54, Foreign Language Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 29 years and was previously an administrator in another state. Ms. Stabinski feels that NCLB helps prevent students from falling through the cracks.

Liguori: How would you describe NCLB?

Ms. Stabinski: I would say that we are finally trying to seal up the cracks, letting kids, like, slip through the cracks and students who are unable to read are being promoted, promoted, promoted to the point where now they're going to graduate high school and they're practically illiterate based on social promotion and things like that and...Finally, we are getting the services for the kids who are having difficulties at the right stages of their development. So, I know that that has impacted lots of schools and could possibly impact lower enrolled languages like [the one I teach] because funding is diverted sometimes to accommodate those needs. I know some programs have been cut to fund other remedial type programs.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Stabinski: No I don't really. Maybe because I'm teaching foreign language and obviously there's inclusion in the school that I was in in Connecticut, I had many students who were LD students who were enrolled in [the language I teach] and in some ways it impacted my teaching because I found that I was kind of having to teach to the middle rather than...because I had to accommodate with different methodologies those students who were having difficulty learning.

Liguori: Are these laws fair to teachers?

Ms. Stabinski: Well teachers here in the end are here to serve the kids, so I'd say, we'd have to consider them fair because we owe something to these kids that we educate them and obviously if kids need special attention we have to find a way to do it. I know elementary teachers must be

going nuts because they need to have some paras¹ in the classroom to meet all these needs for their students. I mean it's fair to teachers as long as they're given the support they need.

Liguori: Are they getting the support that they need?

Ms. Stabinski: I'm not sure how that is right now, I really don't have that much contact with some of those levels that are most affected.

Liguori: Do these laws help students?

Ms. Stabinski: Yes I do think so.

Liguori: Why do you feel that way?

Ms. Stabinski: Obviously if they're putting an end to social promotion and so forth in order to get kids to learn basic skills, then I think that's the best thing that could happen.

Liguori: Has this law changed or affected your teaching?

Ms. Stabinski: Well, only in that I've made accommodations to students who have special needs and so forth.

Liguori: Does it change your day to day?

Ms. Stabinski: Not really.

Ms. So, 33, Special Education Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. She teaches mostly Social Studies. She has been teaching for 4 years. Ms. So feels that NCLB helps special education students because it singles them out for aid.

Liguori: How would you describe NLCB?

Ms. So: That's a hard question, because I think that is a term that's thrown around so much and so...and so contorted that I think for me, the way that I would explain that objectively is the fact that we will try as a school system, as a district or a region, we'll try to have every student perform where they're supposed to be performing so they won't be left behind, or the flip side of it is that they shouldn't be promoted to the next level if they're not performing where they're supposed to be performing.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of NCLB?

Ms. So: I don't feel any extra pressure, but I am in a sense, because with the NCLB there did come a lot of, there are a lot of improvements that have come with special education, it's more recognized, there's more of an emphasis to hire more teachers who are qualified in special education and things like that, so I myself don't feel more pressure in terms of teaching or teaching style, or curriculum, that sort of thing, but I think that, you know, it's important to be there.

Liguori: Do they help children? How about your children?

Ms. So: I think they help my children because it helps them be more recognized about their disabilities or their abilities and it should theoretically get them more resources, yeah I think that it has helped them in the past, yes.

The driving force behind the Education Standards movement has been politicians and policymakers (Kornhaber and Orfield 2001; Natriello and Pallas 2001; Hursh 2005),

¹ Paraprofessional educator.

while teachers groups have become less influential (DeBray 2005). Some teachers that were interviewed felt that the legislation excluded teachers from the decision making and others wondered whether or not teachers were actually consulted in the drafting of the legislation, much like doctors and other health professionals would be consulted in drafting health care legislation. These teachers view their exclusion as an affront to their professionalism and expertise.

Mr. Ahmed, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 5 years. Mr. Ahmed feels that teachers, not lawyers, should be consulted in drafting education legislation.

Liguori: Do you think these laws are fair to teachers?

Mr. Ahmed: I was just wondering who wrote these laws, are they teachers, have they been in a classroom, and have they seen if these laws work. Are they teachers? I am very concerned. Anyone who puts anything for education, I think we don't need lawyers we need first teachers. When we put it into paper then we need the lawyers to rewrite it in a law. First the decision has to be made by teachers in the classroom. Not in the classroom 50 years ago this generation is changing.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino feels that teachers were not consulted sufficiently in drafting NCLB.

Liguori: Do you feel that laws like NCLB are fair to teachers?

Mr. Lomangino: No, No, I don't think so. Where are the teachers? There's a huge gap between the lawmakers and the policymakers and the teachers. Where it seems to me that teachers should be asked: "What do we need?" They should be asked what would help. Very often the decisions are made without consultation directly from teachers. Where are the people who are writing NCLB doing what you're doing right now, which is coming into a school building and interviewing teachers, interviewing parents and interviewing students? The city spent an enormous amount of money on this quality review, instead of a quality review, why not have a performance review, instead of a performance review, why not have a mission review, so I think there's a huge disconnect.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Shriver feels that NCLB insults her sense of professionalism.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Shriver: Um, I feel like my professionalism and my ability is not respected in that I am not able to make a lot of decisions for myself so again, I don't feel pressure like my kids might not do well, and that will reflect poorly on me, but I feel constrained that I went to school to be a teacher and I have experience as a teacher and yet that's not trusted, so there are always external guidelines, I'm not allowed to just say this is what I think is best, I know my students, I spent every day with them for 6 months, this is what they need and this is what's best for them.

Liguori: Are laws like NCLB fair to teachers?

Ms. Shriver: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. Shriver: I just feel teachers are the last group to have any sort of rights in the situation in NCLB. NCLB is advocating, is trying to advocate for the students and for the parent and it does at the expense a lot of time of the teachers. So, I feel like the way that it's implemented in school or the way that schools go about trying to do what that law requires often comes at the expense of teacher autonomy and independence, but at the same time I also know that there are a lot of really bad teachers out there so it does attempt to correct that a little.

Mr. Sullivan, 48, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Mr. Sullivan feels that NCLB's reliance on test scores invites fraud.

Liguori: How would you describe [NCLB]?

Mr. Sullivan: NCLB is an attempt by the federal government to force the states to um, encourage states, let's put it, to increase their standards, but it's done in a way that is a fraud, because it's based on test scores and it encourages all sorts of manipulation, and fraud is a strong word, but quasi fraud on the part of the states in order to live up to these imposed standards so they can continue to get the funding. I think it's a classic example of a law of unintended consequences.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of NCLB?

Mr. Sullivan: Well, not specifically, but NCLB creates an environment, a national environment that's based upon scores. And no one can be immune from that, so the...it's become an unfriendly teaching environment, the feeling that the administration, the politicians, are going to be judged on the basis of test scores and ultimately we are the ones who are going to be blamed for that and so yes from that point of view, but specifically in this school, no.

Liguori: Do you feel that these laws are fair to teachers?

Mr. Sullivan: No.

Liguori: Why?

Mr. Sullivan: You know, when the Bronx burned in the 1980s, we didn't blame the firefighters for that and in some ways the schools are burning and we are blaming the teachers, the problems, and if you look across the country, all sorts of different methods are being tried to raise scores and the scores are not being raised and whose fault is that? The teacher's fault? Teachers' unions fault? It seems to be that we have a whole host of problems in the country and I'm not quite sure why teachers are being held to account.

Teachers' Misconceptions about NCLB

As seen above, some teachers have a strong dislike for NCLB. Because of the backlash against NCLB, NCLB is misunderstood. Previous studies have found that NCLB is misunderstood by teachers (Mabry and Margolis 2006). This study found that some teachers state that they are completely against NCLB despite agreeing in principal to the underlying premises of the legislation. This may be because of some misconceptions surrounding NCLB. Some misconceptions include believing that NCLB promotes social promotion as if the term "Left Behind" refers to being held back a grade. Other teachers feel that NCLB only applies to students in lower grades and that high

schools are exempt for the provisions in the law or that the law only applies to failing schools.

Ms. Stein, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Stein was confused and thought NCLB encouraged social promotion.

Liguori: Just in general laws like no child left behind, do you feel those laws are fair to teachers?

Ms. Stein: Not in high school... There's no such thing as no child left behind. Maybe that... I don't know...that may apply in middle school, not in high school. You don't pass your class you can't graduate. There are kids sitting in this building who've been here 6 years. So, NCLB doesn't apply.

Liguori: Well, increasing the number of tests and all that stuff and making certain students pass tests, do you feel that is fair to teachers.

Ms. Stein: No, I don't, I don't believe we have NCLB. Kids aren't just graduating because they hit a certain age.

Liguori: [explanation of NCLB]

Ms. Stein: I thought NCLB is that a kid is not left behind. You mean like a kid is a ninth grade the kid will move on to 10th grade.

Ms. Russell, 49, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Russell believed that NCLB encouraged social promotion and social promotion put more pressure on her as a teacher.

Liguori: Are you familiar with new federal laws like NCLB?

Ms. Russell: Yes.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure put on you [by NCLB]?

Ms. Russell: You feel more pressure with NCLB. I guess certain kids when they don't meet certain standards, they should be left behind. Why should they move on with social promotion and they're not ready and mature or the academical [sic] they're not really, they don't have the basic skills, why should they be pushed to another grade and they can't push through.

Liguori: Do you feel these laws are fair to teachers?

Ms. Russell: No, they're not fair to teachers. Because you have a kid if you're a teacher in an elementary school and this kid's in the 6th grade and they don't pass these standards and they don't pass the exam, why do they pass these kids that can't meet any standards can't pass any tests, don't have basic skills, why pass them along when they don't have basic skills. Now, if they sent them to a summer program and retested kids, that's different they meet the challenge.

Liguori: For example with NCLB, it does....

Ms. Russell: Push the kids along.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Ivy League graduate, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz did not know much about NCLB.

Liguori: How would you describe NCLB?

Mr. Arnaz: It seems like... [hesitant].

Liguori: Just the basic tenets.

Mr. Arnaz: It seems like I did teach before in this program and I know in the past we had, I guess, more children literally left back, the fear that teachers had when it was being implemented is about social promotion, I think this speaks to [the underperforming school that I was at before], but it would be really tough to take a student who didn't necessarily pass a standardized test or didn't necessarily pass regular marks for their report cards, and try to find ways to give them the credit to move on to the next grade. So, it's a big push on teachers to literally not have any students left back, and I know that from ed classes...did I get it wrong, what NCLB is you can tell me later, I think the rationale is that statistically the more times you leave a child back, it's almost exponential their likelihood to drop out, so I do appreciate the need to keep kids moving from grade to grade, but at the cost of standards, I don't know, at the cost of learning, I'm not sure. I got it totally wrong didn't I?

Ms. Woods, 55, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 27 years. Ms. Woods felt that NCLB was instituted to give students more opportunities to pass their classes.

Liguori: How would you explain NCLB?

Ms. Woods: You know, I'm not really sure I'm that clear on it. I think that...I'm not sure. Children have to be given the opportunity...every opportunity to be able to pass the grade so they can move on. I don't think they're being held back. I'm not really sure because we don't really deal with that here. So I think it's more of the elementary school level, I'm not really quite sure how that works to tell you the truth.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. Ms. Rapetti felt that the goal of NCLB was to move kids along.

Liguori: If you were to explain NCLB, how would you do it?

Ms. Rapetti: Um, basically that it's representative, you want to do everything in your power to move the kids along.

Liguori: What are some of the tenets of it and how is it implemented? What are the nuts and bolts pretty much?

Ms. Rapetti: You know, there's such an emphasis on Special Education and making sure that they don't want to hold kids back any more, so making sure that there's making sure that there are services for everyone and backup plans for everyone and programs and plans, and...

Ms. Rosario, 25, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 3 years. M. Rosario felt that NCLB entailed social promotion.

Liguori: How would you describe NCLB objectively?

Ms. Rosario: I don't think I could do it objectively. It's very difficult. So it's promoting students, like a social promotion, meeting students at their needs, but moving them along, not leaving any children behind, giving added resources to have them meet the standards.

Liguori: How is social promotion part of it?

Ms. Rosario: I think it's part of the concept of not leaving them behind, like you're not leaving them behind for academic reasons, but also because it's better to have them moving up with their peer set as opposed to having like an 18 year old Freshman in your 4th period.

Liguori: Do you feel like laws like NCLB help students?

Ms. Rosario: No, I don't think so, if you move a kid up that's not ready to move up, I don't understand what school's preparing him for.

Ms. Santini, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Ms. Santini thought that NCLB meant that students could not be left back a grade.

Liguori: How would you describe NCLB?

Ms. Santini: That kids can't be left back because most kids are kept going forward.

Because not all teachers are well informed about NCLB, some teachers tend to blame NCLB for many things that are outside the scope of the legislation. While some teachers are aware that their colleagues are misinformed, they still may have misconceptions about NCLB. Others perpetuate myths and rumors that are told to them by their coworkers.

Mr. So, 35, Chemistry Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. So feels that teachers blame all the school's problems on NCLB regardless of the nature of the problem.

Liguori: Have you heard of NCLB?

Mr. So: Yes.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure because of NCLB?

Mr. So: I think so, although right now the problem with NCLB is that when you talk to anybody, be it faculty or administrators, they're all too busy badmouthing NCLB and they don't talk about it. Once again, I'm new to the system, I don't really know what it was like before NCLB. But, I'm a little confused because I got teachers going about blaming everything on NCLB. Like if a student decides that they're going to put graffiti on the walls, they start saying stuff like "Damn NCLB!" How is that related? Right?

Liguori: Are these laws fair to teachers?

Mr. So: I don't think so.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. So: Um, because if it is indeed that students are being kind of pushed through also, I've heard that in this school, some of the new students coming in have a different set of cultures because...like for example, I did a survey at the beginning of the year and I would ask them, "why did you choose to apply to this school?" What they would say is...you know, basically there is an application and some of those students actually applied for it out of Junior high school because it [matched their interests]. Even last year when I did that I got a response of students applying and about 12 of the students would say I didn't apply. My guidance counselor just filled out a form or I was placed here is another one. This year I've noticed I get a lot more of those responses ... I have to say that there is a huge difference between the freshman and sophomore class and the Junior and Senior class.

Ms. Baez, 46, Foreign Language Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 13 years. Ms. Baez blames NCLB for administrators not reporting to teachers that a student in the school is a parolee.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of NCLB?

Ms. Baez: Yes.

Liguori: Why?

Ms. Baez: Because sometimes they pressure us to give them these bad grades or because of their abilities or something like that and they take them to another room and they come out with the test and they get better grades because they are not with me (special education students). Then if they fail, I get pressure about it, they need these requirements and they need to pass, so it's kind of...I don't know if you know what happened here with the NCLB situation last week?

Liguori: No, I wasn't here last week.

Ms. Baez: So, NCLB, that law, I don't feel secure [in] this school anymore because of NCLB.

Liguori: What happened?

Ms. Baez: One of our students, you know, was on parole and nobody knew that.

Liguori: Did he bring in anything?

Ms. Baez: No, he, well, he tried to kill somebody outside and then they found that gun and he gave it to his friend and then shot the other guy and so he's like a murderer now. He was our student, and nobody knew that, nobody knew that he was on parole because of gun stuff. So he might have brought a gun here and nobody would know and then we had a meeting and in the meeting and they say that they didn't know that he was on parole, so I don't know, I don't understand, students or not.

Liguori: How does that connect to NCLB?

Ms. Baez: Because that's what they told us. "How come you don't know this information?" So, they say "it's because of the law NCLB, we cannot get rid of him because of the law, we need to accept him here." But this school has no metal detectors or anything, so how come they're going to send a student here on parole that had guns and I felt really, like insecure, that's the only thing about the law. It's hard for everybody. That student because of the law, so NCLB protected him, so there is another NCLB law because he is special ed, so we don't know what NCLB is, what is it about? Even criminals are protected about it. That's what I don't like about it.

Disparate Impact of NCLB on Higher SES Schools

While NCLB may have a disparate impact on failing schools and students in lower grades (Hursh 2005; Crocco and Costigan 2007), NCLB applies to all children in public schools from kindergarten to 12th grade (United States Department of Education 2002). However, some teachers feel that if their schools are performing at a high level the schools are exempt from NCLB. Others feel that the law only applies to elementary and middle schools, while not affecting high schools at all. These teachers seem to try to

minimize the impact that the law has on them, possibly, in order to assert their own agency within the school system and assert dominance in their classroom as they are used to “having their own way in the classroom and their attitude toward the administration is usually ambivalent” (Waller 1961).

Ms. Wechsler, 58, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching 15 years and recently completed a doctorate from a prestigious university. Ms. Wechsler feels that NCLB has no impact on her teaching whatsoever.

Liguori: If you were to describe NCLB to someone, how would you describe what it does?

Ms. Wechsler: What it’s supposed to do originally, and I think the notion, and again it’s not applicable to high schools, it’s applicable to lower grades, it’s applicable to the notion that reading is a scientifically, should be scientifically based, and the federal government provided funds to schools that went into scientifically based instruction of reading, that was the core base ideas and the people who worked with the president and Senator Kennedy. That is at the heart of it.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Wechsler: None. Zero whatsoever.

Liguori: Do you feel that these laws, or laws like it, are they fair to teachers?

Ms. Wechsler: NCLB some people argue that...again it doesn’t affect our school, what’s unfair to teachers is top down, bureaucratic, politically motivated ideas about education that have no scientific backing, that affects teachers tremendously. I mean programs like balanced literacy, reading writing workshops, they’re all generated from schools of education like [the elite school that I just received a doctorate from] that have nothing to do with practical practices that teachers encounter every day. If you talk to teachers, they hate all these things. But any prescribed program from above with one size fits all is bad. I don’t care what it is.

Ms. Gonzalez, 61, Biology Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching 27 years, was formerly an administrator. Ms. Gonzalez feels that NCLB is not implemented in her school because it is not needed.

Liguori: How would you explain NCLB?

Ms. Gonzalez: Some children have difficult learning or they’re underachievers and they need extra help, so this is a program designed to give them extra time, either after school or during school or on Saturdays and there are some schools that have Saturday classes to give those kids the opportunities to achieve just as well as the others.

Liguori: How is it implemented?

Ms. Gonzalez: It’s not implemented here because we don’t need it.

Liguori: What about nationwide?

Ms. Gonzalez: Nationwide, I’m not sure. Citywide I’m not sure really because I’ve been out of that really... I’ve been out of that for 5 years. But they do have after school programs. I’m not sure if the kids are required to stay or if it’s a choice.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Gonzalez: Not here.

Compulsory school attendance laws have their origin in controlling poor and immigrant youth in urban centers (Tyack 1974). Unlike private schools, which can be more selective, public schools must accept all students within the school district. Furthermore, mandatory attendance laws ensure that all children attend school up until a certain age. While having private schools as a competitive option does improve certain public school outcomes (Greene and Kang 2003), urban private schools do a more effective job getting results than their private school counterparts (Hoffer, Greeley and Coleman 1985). Much of the private school effect is due to the higher demands that are placed on students in private schools, enhancing their preparation for further schooling. Also, teachers in public schools have little or no say as to which students are to be placed in their classes. This means that students that may be ill prepared for a particular class they are enrolled in. Many teachers complained about NCLB holding teachers accountable for their student's performance even though NCLB did not likewise hold students and parents accountable for their efforts.

Mr. Burns, 24, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. This is his first year teaching. Mr. Burns feels that NCLB will not succeed because it puts much of the burden on teachers and none on the students.

Liguori: How would you explain NCLB?

Mr. Burns: I would say that it was an initiative set up to add accountability to the public school system and then I would go on to say that accountability is maybe not the problem. It adds accountability by supposing that performance on high stakes tests correlates with teaching ability and the school's ability and I would point out that unlike, so setting up a free market sort of system almost, but unlike a free market system, teachers cannot reject the raw materials, if you're making boxes and you get a bunch of corrugated cardboard that's not corrugated, you send it back to the person who sent you the corrugated cardboard, and you say "no, I want something else." But you definitely cannot send the students back and say, no I'm not going to teach you.

Liguori: Do[es NCLB] help students?

Mr. Burns: I don't really think so, because I don't think that the problem with the school system is lazy teachers, certainly there are some. But I think what it does is that it directs what the students will be studying, what is the student going to learn in high school, that's not more specific than it was before.

Mr. Klein, 27, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Klein feels that NCLB is unfair to teachers because it focuses blame for poor achievement onto teachers while parents do not have these pressures placed on them.

Liguori: If you were to describe [NCLB], how would you do so?

Mr. Klein: I would say that it sounds great on paper, this idea that we want every child to move ahead and that all students are created equally and all this stuff, the reality of it is quite the opposite, the NCLB act operates under false pretenses and I feel like a broken record, it operates under a false pretense that all children are created equally in that under the same guidelines, under the same rules and tests and regulations, we can give the students everything they need to pass, but in actuality, students need different things and unless different students are offered different things, it's kind of going to be a broken system, it also runs schools as if it's a business, which is why Bloomberg is so good at it, or so good at pushing it, because it implies that school is a business and once you start... if [the] NCLB act is a business, then students are sort of disposable employees, and that's sort of how I see it.

Liguori: Is it fair to teachers?

Mr. Klein: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Klein: Because it doesn't put any pressure on the parents or on the students, it puts it all on the teachers back, like you have to make sure your students pass. Parents don't have to do Sh...tuff. The kids it doesn't matter what the kids do, you have to make sure. It's on you. If you don't do it, you're going to get fired, if you don't do it, you're not going to get tenured, that's what it's like. If you don't do it, you're school's going to close down. The onus is on you and not the student and parent.

Mr. Laufer, 26, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years.

Liguori: Do you feel that laws like NCLB are fair to teachers?

Mr. Laufer: No. Because so many...a teacher really can make a big impact even with an extremely harsh student, someone who's a masterful teacher could probably work with even the worst in the hardest luck of students, but no, it's not fair, because it puts most of the pressure right on the teacher. In fact it's quite blatant about it, it puts no blame on the student at all. As anyone who's taught knows, it's like there's only so much you really can do.

Ms. Hamilton, 50, Science Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Ms. Hamilton feels that NCLB makes teachers into scapegoats.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure put on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Hamilton: Yeah, because what they're doing, what I find what I think, they're looking for a scapegoat and for whatever the reason is, they want to say, the kids aren't doing well because of you, let's see, I'm here on time, I've taught in several places and kids have done good and kids have done lousy, Hmm, I'm consistent, I really don't change, but I got kids whose purpose was to disrupt to class, their purpose was they can't read. Their thing was to stroll in late, walk the halls, curse at you, throw the table across the room. Literally I have given out a test where one girl was throwing the table across the room, one boy was cursing at her, can you get me the dean please and I'm not losing another day because of behavior (laughs).

Ms. Oxford, 43, Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. A former Math Teacher, she has been in education for 21 years and an administrator for 8 years. She was previously an administrator at a closing school. Ms. Oxford believes that while a school can fail a student a student can also fail his school.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Oxford: Oh, please, yes. You know why? Because I think in terms of the tag and the label, it's more hype than it is. And I am a firm believe that no child should be left behind, but in terms of the rollout and the bells and whistles, I understand that it means that a school can fail a kid, you know, by its administrative practices, but kids can also can fail a school, I think it works both ways so if a kid gets a choice to leave a school because a school is not doing well, then the school should have the right to get rid of the kid, with the same ease, no holds barred, you failed me, so you know what, you need to go somewhere else. And it's not a 2 way street, not a 2 way street, you know I've received kids who are NCLB, and you are really pulling us down and we had one kid, he was our poster boy last year, but when those social elements and home structures radically take a nose dive, it affects your ability to be a productive kid and he was immensely destructive to our entire building, had to make some decisions about him, and we were able to get him in a place where now he's thriving, but the other piece of the equation is his home life was able to settle and it has been a hit or miss with us.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci feels that NCLB siphons off money from most students and directs it only to failing students.

Liguori: How is it implemented?

Mr. Matucci: I think the more NCLB is actually taking funds from the kids that are actually...and a lot of things are being used and in most cases wasted on the kids that fall through the cracks, but not for reasons of the schooling. I think that the related stool we were talking about earlier [where parents, administrators and teachers were each supporting legs], I think that's more why they're being left behind, it's because one of those 3 systems is not in place, either the school, the teacher, the parent, the student.

Liguori: Do you feel these laws are fair to teachers?

Mr. Matucci: They're fair in the sense that if I'm teaching in a very high risk area that I'm going to get the funding that I need. I take that back, I'm going to get a little bit more additional funding, not what I need, just to, kind of, compensate for that. I really don't think it's fair for us. Because even the high achieving schools are not getting, when they divide the funds up, it has to come from somewhere. Even the high achieving schools, it comes from somewhere, and usually that's from teacher budgets, and school budgets that we could be using to help further and help the kids but those funds are being dispersed everywhere. So I don't think it really helps the teachers cause, because my morale is going to be hurt by that. The empty seat that's going to hurt me in a way that I'm going to have to panic and be concerned about that empty seat when I have 28 full seats. But yet I have to take my time and my effort for that empty seat away from the kids that are here.

Liguori: Do you feel that these laws put pressure on you as a teacher?

Mr. Matucci: Because they hold me accountable for an empty seat that I can't possibly fill. I can't. Two other legs are unwilling to work with us, then that seat is empty then I am still accountable for that. I have to then change my hat to parenting and make sure that...not even just parenting, parent counseling. To where I'm not just responsible for the kid whose parents are responsible for the kid, now I have to be responsible for the parents not getting the child into the seat. It's a little convoluted, but that's how we're feeling. You know, in an ideal world, no child is left behind, yeah, great, beautiful, works awesome, let's go with it. But the reality of it is throughout history there are some kids that are just not made for school. Just not. But yet, I'm still responsible for them even though I have no communication with them, there's kids not so much here, but there are kids on my lists in other schools that I have never, ever, ever, seen, heard, spoke to. I've never had a chance to be a force in their life. If they would show up, that's a different story. But I'm still accountable for that? I don't agree with that.

While NCLB itself does not deem schools as failing, there are related laws at the state level that can have a school deemed as failing, and it can deem that schools are

failing to make AYP (Hursh 2005; Shaul and Ganson 2005). Being deemed a failing school can have a profound impact on a school and its students (Fine 1991; Valenzuela 1999). Within the purview of NCLB, students can opt out of attending a school that is not making AYP (U.S. Department of Education 2002), possibly allowing a brain drain to occur at the school, where the more talented students transfer out, leaving behind students who may not be as academically motivated as their fleeing peers. Furthermore, schools that are not making AYP by NCLB standards can be closed down by state authorities for failing to meet state standards, with principals and teachers being forced into different jobs. The administrators and teachers are sometimes stigmatized by their peers because of the failing label placed on their school. Some teachers feel that there is unfairness in the system with low performing schools being penalized more, which can cause there to be less teacher autonomy in these lower performing schools (Crocco and Costigan 2007).

Ms. Kent, 25, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Kent feels that NCLB helps schools out but only in a very limited way.

Liguori: Have you heard of NCLB? How would you describe it to me in 3-4 sentences?

Ms. Kent: From my perception of what I know about NCLB is that it focuses a lot on literacy and math scores because those are the things that are being measured in NCLB a lot of schools tend to forget about other subject areas such as Social Studies, and I know it's also increased things like social promotion indirectly, it's obviously not meant to do that, but overall it has improved what it measures as far literacy and Math scores.

Liguori: It's about literacy and math scores, What's the teeth in it for example?

Ms. Kent: It's always about the Benjamins, right, isn't it always the money (laughs).

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you because of laws like NCLB?

Ms. Kent: No, not at this school.

Liguori: Do they help students?

Ms. Kent: In the very narrow focus that they have, yes. But inadvertently they're missing out on additional subject areas. I know for instance my former roommate teaching in the Rockaways in an Elementary school, she teaches 1st grade, since NCLB, her Social studies curriculum is basically non-existent, she teaches literacy and math. That's basically all she has time for and if she gets to social studies at 2 PM on a Friday, oh, look, we have 5 minutes of social studies, so that's about it.

Mr. Laufer, 26, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years. Mr. Laufer feels no pressure from NCLB because he feels his school is performing well enough already so it flies under the radar.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of NCLB?

Mr. Laufer: Yes.

Liguori: How would you explain to me what it's about?

Mr. Laufer: I think that program was designed if you get a school that's failing, I guess school are awarded with financial funds I forget exactly how this system works, but basically I think your passing and failing rates are tied to federal funding and if a school isn't working, they have to close it down and restart it or something like that. I'm not exactly sure of the nuances of the system. Meeting certain benchmarks for the students.

Liguori: DO you feel more pressure on you because of NCLB?

Mr. Laufer: Again, it's the same thing, it doesn't so much affect this school, because we're not threatened. But if I was at my old school, you would definitely be aware of it, because the laws directly threatening your livelihood in the school itself.

Liguori: Does NCLB change your teaching?

Mr. Laufer: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Laufer: Because again, there's no pressure to make my students pass exams. I mean there's pressure to get a certain mastery level, but this school can't get closed down for only having 82 vs. 85 percent mastery. That's not a problem.

Overview of the New York State Regents

The State of New York has used the regents exams for over a century (Beadie 1999; Bishop, Moriarty and Mane 1999; Folts 1996). The exams began as an exam used to guarantee entrance to public high schools and later on transformed into standardized exams that were used to distinguish elite students in the state (Beadie 1999; Johnson 2010; New York State Education Department 1987; Folts 1996). For many years there were no standardized examinations required to graduate from high school in NYS. Local school boards had the authority to confer diplomas without having to administer state exams until the 1980s (Johnson 2010; Natriello and Pallas 2001). In the 1980s, New York State required students to take a high stakes minimum competency exam, the Regents Competency Exams (RCTs), in order to graduate high school (Natriello and

Pallas 2001). In the mid-1990s, foreshadowing requirements from the federal government and NCLB, New York had changed graduation requirements throughout the state requiring all students to take a minimum of 5 regents exams² in order to graduate high school. This change had made the previously elite regents diplomas compulsory for all students³.

In the transitioning to all regents curricula, many teachers that were interviewed have supported the change. One factor in the support that they lend to the transition to all regents diplomas is the history of testing in the State of New York, also a feeling of pride that the New York State regents was a pioneer country as a curricular high stakes exam, which is intended to be taught as opposed to the SAT-I which was originally designed to be an exam, which measured innate ability (Lemann 1999). Another factor in support of these exams is that the exam requirements are not tremendously onerous and a feeling that almost all students should be able to pass the exams required for graduation without much difficulty. Some teachers also feel that the regents is something that keeps other teachers task oriented and focused on the children and their learning.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn feels that the regents is fair in the sense that many of her students will pass it, but she feels that they are unable to perform well on it.

Ms. Penn: Do I feel that they're fair tests? Umm, long pause, so this is... Certainly students who come from well-privileged backgrounds have quite an advantage on regents exams, and I guess in some sense that makes them unfair. But in terms of the way that they're used, which is basically like you're either passing or not passing and that's all that counts for graduation, I do think that the way that they're set up um, almost every student that I've worked with has a fair shot, if they study hard, at passing the test. So in that sense they are fair.

Liguori: You said most Basilone students are from a particular class background, so is it fair to Basilone students?

Ms. Penn: So again, I don't know that I think that it's set up in a way that allows Basilone students to perform exceptionally well on it. Like I think that it might be difficult for Basilone students to get high scores on. But in terms of how difficult it is for them to pass it, I think that

² New York State requires high school graduates to pass an examination in Math, English, Science, Global History, and American History.

³ While the regents diploma is compulsory, there are currently advanced distinctions for elite students.

most Basilone students um who put in at least a decent amount of work have a real fair chance at passing it.

Mr. Gottfried, 53, Former Science teacher, Principal, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. He has been in education for 30 years and has been an administrator for 8 years. Mr. Gottfried feels that the regents is a fair test that is written well.

Liguori: Are the regents fair tests?

Mr. Gottfried: Yeah.

Liguori: What makes them fair?

Mr. Gottfried: Regents tests. Pause. Regents are supposed to test the minimum ability of the student, what the student learned. It's not meant to test like an SAT I don't think. It's meant to test what a student learned within the course. I think it tests it very well. I think they're fair because they test what the student learned in the course of the year. If the students did all their work and read the book and were doing well during the course of the year, there's no reason to believe that the students shouldn't pass the test, which I think is fair and square.

Liguori: Do you feel that the regents exam measures student performance?

Mr. Gottfried: Yes. If you break it down, the regents exams do measure student performance. They're set up in such a way that there's number of question in this topic, a certain number of questions in this topic, the questions are written by teachers, the teachers are familiar with the course, they know all the ins and outs of the course, so I don't think... they're written pretty well.

Ms. Stabinski, 54, Foreign Language Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 29 years and was previously an administrator in another state. Ms. Stabinski feels that the regents keeps teachers focused on the curriculum.

Liguori: What are your opinions concerning the regents?

Ms. Stabinski: I think they're a good thing. I think that they are an assessment that not only assesses the achievement of a student, but I think they serve as something that makes teachers accountable, and I firmly believe that if the regents weren't in place, I think that in the city, in the state of NY, I think that teaching might not be as effective. I honestly think that it's something that prods people.

Ms. Kent, 25, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Kent feels that the regents is a fair measure of student ability.

Liguori: Should all students be required to take and pass a certain amount of regents exams (in this school)?

Ms. Kent: Yeah, I mean in this school it's not a problem, again it comes down to being a problem with standardized testing in general, as far as is that a true and accurate test of what the student knows, yes I think that students should be held accountable, and should have to meet certain standards in order to achieve graduation, is the regents exam a measure of that, in some cases yes, in some cases no. Could the state possibly come up with a different type of assessment or maybe just approve individual local assessments to do the same thing, I think that might work a little bit better.

Liguori: What about other students, in general ed?

Ms. Kent: I think the current system does a fairly well job in, a really good in making sure that students have achieved a certain level before they are able to graduate, are those exams a true measure of knowledge in a subject area, I'm not so sure about that. But as a basis for graduation I would say it does holds students to a certain level, which seems to be higher than a lot of other states, so it seems to be that, at least from what I know about other states and other state assessments and states that don't even have assessments, it seems that NYS assessments are some of the more challenging ones, at least that I know of. So I guess that is good. Maybe having a

choice, more of a choice, more specialized test may be another way instead of having an entire test for world history, more similar to the way the APs are structured, so like European Civ. or non-western, so that way they can have more specific knowledge, that might be also be an option.

Liguori: Is it a fair test?

Ms. Kent: Yeah, I think it would be a, it's a pretty fair assessment for what it's looking for, for as far as being able to as an assessment based on knowledge and not necessarily strict memorization, but knowledge of a certain field of material and then being able to apply that material to certain things, it is a good measure, but I think the amount of material that's included on the test I think is a little ridiculous, laughs.

Liguori: How well does the regents exam measure student performance?

Ms. Kent: ... As far as a measure of ability, since they're all around the same level, they do all achieve the same score essentially on the regents exam. So as far as a measure of ability I think it's pretty accurate, but not a measure of effort. Laughs

Demographic and Performance Data for NYS, NYC and Target Schools

The largest school district in the country is the School District of the City of New York, which is administered by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). There are over a million students and 1600 public schools spanning grades k-12 and approximately 400 high schools in the NYCDOE (New York City Department of Education 2010). The transition to all regents curricula started in New York City (NYC) in 1994, two years sooner than in the rest of the state (Bishop and Mane 2001). Using data obtained from the New York State Education Department (NYSED), comparisons have been made between NYC high schools, non-NYC high schools and the seven target schools. Paired t-tests were done to compare the means of all high schools in NYS. T-test comparisons were done to compare NYS/NYC schools, NYS/Target schools, NYC/Target schools, non-NYC/Target schools demographics and regents performance in the 2008-2009 school year.

Table 1 compares the means for all high schools in NYC compared to the rest of the state. Demographically, schools in the NYCDOE are significantly different from the rest of the state. High schools in the NYCDOE have higher percentages of blacks, Hispanics, Asians, students receiving free school lunches, and Limited English

Proficiency Students (LEPS) and fewer whites; furthermore, NYCDOE high schools have fewer white students than high schools in the rest of New York State. Table 2 compares the seven target schools to the non-NYC parts of NYS. The seven target schools have higher percentages of blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and LEPS and fewer whites; however, the number of students receiving free school lunches while higher, is not statistically different from high schools in the non-NYC part of the state. Table 3 compares the seven target schools to high schools in the rest of NYC. Compared to the rest of NYC, the seven target schools have a smaller percentage of students receiving free lunch, and fewer Hispanics; there is also a statistically significant greater percentage of white and Asian students. While the schools in NYC have a larger percentage of black and LEP students the seven target schools are not significantly different along those dimensions. Table 4 compares the seven target schools to all public schools in NYC and NYS. The schools are not significantly different except that the target schools have a higher percentage of Asian students than the rest of the city and state. The schools being so similar to the rest of the state make them a microcosm of what is happening throughout the state and city.

While the NYCDOE was among the first districts in the state to switch to an all regents curriculum, its performance on the regents exams generally lags behind the rest of the state in most measures of academic performance. While passing percentages of NYC high schools and other high schools in the state are similar, schools in the NYCDOE have a lower percentage of students that perform at the mastery level.⁴ Furthermore, schools in the NYCDOE have higher rates of students that have not achieved a minimum score of

⁴ While a score of 65 is needed to pass the regents, NYS deems a score of 85 to be a mastery score on the regents and a score of 55 enough to have an “RCT credit” that can be used toward a local diploma.

55 or achieved a score between 55 and 64. Table 5 shows that NYC lags behind the rest of the state by having higher rates of failure and lower rates of passing at every level in every exam. Table 6 compares the target schools to the non-NYC part of the state. The differences between the seven target schools and high schools in the non-NYC part of the state is much less stark than the NYC/NYS comparison, with there being slightly better NYS performance in Global History, Living Environment and Chemistry. Table 7 shows that the seven target schools have higher percentages of passing and lower failure rates than the rest of NYC in every regents except for chemistry. Table 8 compares the seven target schools all other public high schools in NYC and NYS in regents performance. The seven target schools are not significantly different from the rest of the state in any performance category other than having a higher percentage of students failing the Chemistry regents with less than a 55. Again, the schools being so similar to the rest of the state make them a good middle ground between the city and the rest of the state.

Potential Racial Biases on the Regents Exams

Since NYC lags behind the rest of NYS in regents performance (Hursh 2005). Claims that the regents exams are racially biased are common especially since regions scores lag in the same regions where high schools have a higher proportion of black and Hispanic students. Concerns that suburban/rural, white, middle class values are emphasized in a state exam whose target audience contains mostly urban students were echoed through many of the interviews. Language barriers are also cited in many teachers feeling that the regents are unfair. Many teachers felt that a lack of resources put their students at a disadvantage when compared to the rest of the state. Many teachers

commented on student's lack of preparation in earlier grades, which impacted their regents passing percentage.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien feels that some of the language on the regents may be racially biased.

Liguori: Is it a fair test?

Mr. O'Brien: It's ok. I think it does its best to try and be fair, but you know, you get the things like, I remember, there was a test that mentioned a schooner.

Liguori: Schooner?

Mr. O'Brien: Schooner, Yeah. For children from upstate or Long Island, they might be much more familiar with what that is than an inner city kid. So, it kind of just in, within the passages themselves, you get these things where the students you know they can use the extra background knowledge, and since it's the whole state not all of them actually have it, so it becomes more of the student in Long Island would have a better chance at that question than one of my kids. So...

Liguori: Is it racially biased?

Mr. O'Brien: I think English Education is kind of racially biased in itself with the canon of what we read pretty much. Even though that started to change a little bit more, it's still pretty, you know, old, white, men centered.

Liguori: So the regents is also racially biased?

Mr. O'Brien: Yeah, it kind of just carries on the same.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. He formerly taught at a failing school. Mr. Brannigan claims the exams have biases in them.

Liguori: Are they fair exams?

Mr. Brannigan: I'm not sure if I would say they're fair or unfair, It's really hard to say and again, now we're generalizing all of the exams. The physics exams used to have all these bizarre problems, they asked you to determine in meters the size of a dinner plate. That's great if you're in a family where you sit at home and June Cleaver cooks you a dinner and puts a standard size dinner plate in front of you every night. Then they changed it to the diameter of a baseball, well that's great if you had the opportunity to hold a baseball. Well, I have 3 daughters my girls have held a baseball, but there are girls in this city who have never held a baseball, I'm sure of it. There are kids that come into this country that didn't grow up playing baseball, maybe they grew up playing cricket or some other sport, so there are some biases on those exams no matter what. They try to make them fair for everybody, but in doing so they don't make them fair. They try to make them reach everybody, but now with the mandated labs, ok, you made these labs mandated, but it's really not fair to my kids, because now they have to go through the monotony of doing these labs it frustrates my teachers the kids never take it seriously, this is not challenging.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz claims that the exams are not relevant to students because they do not discuss urban ecosystems, they only discuss rural ecosystems.

Liguori: Is it a fair exam?

Mr. Arnaz: No. I think there's a degree of cultural bias. A classic ecology example, as ecology seems to make up a pretty big part of the exam these days, are based on ecosystems that are rural and all of my students are from an urban environment and many of them have little exposure so

classically they'll do ecological succession and they'll talk about deer and mountain lions, well, when I look around the streets of Manhattan, I don't see many deer and Mountain lions. I would love to see some rat and roach questions pop in. That's always bothered me.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. MS. Shriver claims that he exams are culturally biased in favor of non-immigrants.

Liguori: Is it a fair test?

Ms. Shriver: No... Because I still think that there is cultural biases. I think that last year, there was some sort of reference to a vending machine or something and I had a student who just arrived from Trinidad and like I wasn't really sure he would be able to understand a certain situation involving a vending machine. When I taught sixth grade exams on the sixth grade ELA exams, I remember a passage about riding a horse, or training a horse, breaking a horse. Again, these are NYC kids, I had 10 kids who raised their hands to ask what a saddle was. So I still think that there are certain times where it's disconnected to students experiences.

Mr. Ben Zion, 31, Math Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Ben Zion compares Bay View to his previous school, where there was less expected of students.

Liguori: Are the regents fair tests?

Mr. Ben Zion: Again you're looking at 2 different tests. [Math] A, is, I think...How do you want to judge fair, if it's so easy that everyone can do well on it, is that fair? What do you think?

Liguori: What do you think?

Mr. Ben Zion: I guess it's fair to a student in [the failing school I was previously assigned to], yes. They can pass it, it's not hard, and [they] can graduate, it's not going to hold [them] back from where [they] want to go, assuming [they] want to go somewhere. It's not fair for a student here, because a student here can breeze through it, make one little mistake on that get a 97, 96, while a student who sat around year round didn't do any homework or anything, could get the same 96, 97, because it's not a hard exam, so it's not fair to students, except maybe at [the failing school I was previously assigned to], it's helpful.

Liguori: What about Math B?

Mr. Ben Zion: Fair for a student here, because it's rigorous, not fair for a student over there.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Ben Zion: First of all, we don't require for a student to take it, it's only for those going for a[n advanced] regents diploma, so we're not going to torture those who are really struggling who just need the Math A to graduate and there you just don't have the time, we're limited on time, you're spending more time on classroom management, you're spending more time on issues outside the room, you're spending more time just getting them to do homework. [At this school] you come in and they do homework, there's 1 or 2 who don't do HW. It's just a quicker flow. It allows you to really..you say to them to go home and do 10 regents problem and they do it. [At the failing school I was previously assigned to] they're not going to do it, so where do you go, what do you do. There's only so much can you do in the classroom.

Liguori: How well does the regents measure student performance, I know you said the [Math] A doesn't measure it well at all...

Liguori: At [the failing school you were previously assigned to], when were you able to get an idea of [how well they were going to do on the Math regents]?

Mr. Ben Zion: It was tough, it was tough for them, there were kids that you would think that they did well in class, and they would definitely do well on the regents and they bombed the regents, 20s, 30s, and I'm like there's no way. It was a harder judgment there.

Ms. Bales, 26, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Bales feels that many of her students are at a disadvantage because they did not learn English as a first language.

Liguori: What are your opinions concerning the regents exams?

Ms. Bales: OMG, do you have all day? First of all they're unfair with what they test and the wording and the way that they test to culturally and economically deprived children, especially urban ones. Not specific to NY, just in the country, the wording assumes a background knowledge that these kids don't have and they don't really test... We're forced to differentiate in the classroom and in the regents... then sit them down for 3 hours in a test that's not even remotely differentiated. It doesn't really show their abilities, it doesn't really show what they know, it just shows how well they're able to produce what a grader wants and that's not just it, but yeah, the expectation I think not is too high, I just don't like what is being expected.

Liguori: Do you believe that all students should be required to take and pass a regents in order to graduate?

Ms. Bales: No. Not at all.

Liguori: What about all general ed students?

Ms. Bales: I feel...No. I don't. I don't think they should be required to either, there's so many kids who come here in their freshman year of high school from another country and I'm told that they can't they have never spoken English before and they can't graduate unless they can pass a ridiculous exams.

Liguori: Is it a fair test?

Ms. Bales: No, it's not fair at all. Again to just the wording and the expectation of...it's much easier for a child with a economically privileged...kids who have grown up hearing vocabulary words like this, it's a lot more beneficial to them and it's a lot more reflective of where they come from than anything of these urban students see.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned to a school that has now been closed. Ms. Likins claims that even phrases like "mow the lawn" are difficult for her students, who mostly live in apartment buildings, to understand.

Liguori: What are your opinions concerning the regents exam?

Ms. Likins: Sighs. Of course will kids pass them? Because unfortunately that's how schools are judged. I think that NYS has some of the stiffest requirements for graduation, sometimes it's very unfair for instance if a kid passes every single class but fails one regents exam, he can't graduate. You know, and I think that's unfair, I think that sometimes the test, you just don't know what you're going to get. You really have no clue. I remember one kid, he's sitting in, he has his living environment regents exam and he has a regents passage on there and I'm like come on you can do it. And he's like "I can't get through this, I don't even know what it means." I'm reading the question and the question was something about the food chain, but it read if "Mr. So and So mowed the lawn." He didn't know what it meant to mow the lawn because [he lives] in Crown Heights where there are no lawns that are being mowed. I said [Franck],⁵ it means to cut the grass. "That's it?" "Yeah, it just means to cut the grass bro." Kids sometimes the test, it doesn't test what you know, it tests how you think and unfortunately you kids don't have critical thinking skills so they're not going to do very well sometimes.

Liguori: Are there any racial biases in them?

Ms. Likins: I think so, I think so, and that goes back to that child who is a kid from Crown Heights. You don't know what it means to mow the lawn simply because that's not in your

⁵ Different name being used.

everyday common vocabulary, like you don't talk about mowing the lawn. You may talk about taking the trash to the incinerator, but you will never see that on the regents exam.

Mr. McPherson, 46, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 22 years. Mr. McPherson mentions that the test may be culturally biased against immigrants as it sometimes mentions country music.

Liguori: Is [the American History regents] a fair test?

Mr. McPherson: With the exception of an occasional question that I feel is a little too bit of a rogue, offbeat type question, I think it's relatively fair, I rarely see a question on there...well actually I shouldn't say not rarely, but you generally in every exam, I will find maybe 1 or 2 multiple choice questions that might be a little too difficult for the students to answer, but I think with good reasoning skills they could probably figure it out. I remember very distinctly a number of years ago, they asked an essay question asking what students knew about Bob Dylan, well, it was a list asking kids to comments and pick 3 people, it was Bob Dylan, Bob [John] Denver, and Elvis Presley, I said Ok, Elvis Presley, I think most teachers I think would mention Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, if you're doing the 60s, maybe, but John Denver? So I say sometimes they really have to think about who's taking these exams. If I was living in the Midwest or somewhere where they really love country music, it's totally relevant, but if I were a Mexican Immigrant, what do you know about John Denver.

The Need for Safety Nets

Because of the new laws that took place in the late 1990s that mandated that all students needed to earn regents diplomas by the mid 2000s (Bishop and Mane 2001), many respondents were skeptical about this new system where all students were required to earn a regents diploma. While some in the literature predicted that there would be an initial decrease in graduation rates that would eventually increase student achievement (Bishop 2000; Bishop and Mane 2001; Bishop Moriarty and Mane 2000), some teachers and administrators that were interviewed felt that this new system eliminated the safety nets that were previously in place where students were able to earn local diplomas by taking the less rigorous RCTs. Some teachers also felt that this renewed emphasis on academic standards diminished the role of vocational tracks that they felt some students direly needed.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal of a Large Comprehensive High School. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Mr. Schwartz feels that the current system is in need of safety nets in case students do not pass the regents exams.

Liguori: What are your general opinions concerning the regents exams?

Mr. Schwartz: I think New York City has always had these types of examinations. I don't have any different than I have in the past. It's important to have a standardized exam. There are, (pause) there had been sections where students, um, with more limited abilities had taken the RCTs and they were able to graduate and such. I think what has happened though, unfortunately, 65 passing, 65 percent passing is a good thing, but it has taken away certain safety nets for students. I feel that at-risk students, and you don't have to be an IEP student (or special Ed Student) that are required by law that you do have a safety net of RCTs, but there are other students who may not have been identified, but still have related types of issues. There could be anxiety issues about testing. And, you know, to me that becomes unfair without a safety net. ELL students are also at a disadvantage with regards to regents testing, and again, it's not a one size fits all, but they have made it a one size fits all. But I feel that standardized testing is important. Like it has been.

Liguori: So you don't feel that all students should be required to take and pass regents exams at the 65 level?

Mr. Schwartz: I think maybe they should, but there should be a safety net that at a certain point if they've taken it twice and are not receiving IEP services, that maybe that there be that catch exam. You've given them the chance, you've given them the opportunities, but for some reason they don't do it.

Ms. Goldfarb, 51, Special Education Assistant Principal, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been in education 28 years and an administrator for 15 years. Ms. Goldfarb discusses how she met fierce resistance from special education teachers in implementing an all regents curriculum.

Liguori: No you say you've been here for 15 years. So you've seen how it's changed to all regents.

Ms. Goldfarb: I was in a transition part. When I first came here it was pretty much all RCTs and the occasional kid would take the regents. Then it was awful beyond when we had to all of a sudden. It was back in 1996 when we had to take the English regents in 1997 we added the social...the math regents in 1998 you added. So every kid coming in had a different requirement as to what exam. And then our kids had to take the RCTs as well. My teachers had tremendous fights and arguments about that, because they felt that our kids should not be forced to take a regents. How are we going to get these kids to pass the regents. And I had to because these are coming down from the state this is the requirements, we have no choice in the matter, you have to do it. So you might as well let's try to do it as best we can and I got a lot of resistance. Especially in that time, now it's moving better, faster but initially, a ton of resistance, our kids should not have to take these exams, it's not fair to them, I had somebody who was a coordinator at the time who quit the job because he said he doesn't respect you anymore because you're making these kids take these tests. I said "I'm not making the kids take these tests" it's the law, we have to do it. You have no choice, you have no choice, he ended up going back to teaching you know rather than being like a coordinator doing some programming for the kids. I mean that hurt me terribly, but you have to do what you have to do. So that was the pressure for me, but slowly, when they got more familiar with the exam and teachers felt more comfortable with the exams. We're getting a lot more kids passing the exam. Then we thought probably, god that's like 10 years ago...ooh, probably they thought we never would be able to do it. And I think it's because they umm got more familiar with the exams some of the kids we learned all of these ways to help them find... I hate to say teach to the exam...but in essence you do teach to the exams because most of the kids won't pass. In fact some of the social studies regents would be easier than the RCTs...But the language that they use, if they put it in simpler terms my kids would understand it and know what to do. But I think they have some of the information, but they don't know what to do.

Liguori: Do you think the change was for the better or the worse for Basilone?

Ms. Goldfarb: I don't think it's a bad move, but I would like to see choices for other kids, and not just one thing. You have to remember they want everybody to be taught on their own level and differentiated instruction, but they only have one test. You can't have it both ways. There has to be something else besides the regents for the kids in high school. That's what I feel.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan feels that Vocational school should be emphasized for some students as viable alternatives to the regents.

Liguori: Should special ed kids be required to take and pass regents exams in order to graduate?

Mr. Brannigan: I don't and I think this all or nothing kind of attitude that we've kind of taken in is really short sighted. I think very much in NYS and for the most part in the country, the idea and the notion of vocational education has gone out the window. As a culture and a society we've kind of come to this decision that every kid has to go to college. Every kid is not cut out to go to college. Not every kid can afford to college. Not every kid wants to go to college. I guess the regents exams and the way we set up things are really designed to push them to that level, but I know what it costs me if I have to call a plumber on a Sunday, so great, you got an advanced regents diploma with honors and your going off to college. But you know what, I could have set someone up, maybe a different child up in a vocational program that would have trained them as an auto mechanic. These are still valuable skilled trades and we've kind of undervalued them and there are no alternatives for students on that level. I mean the concept that all kids can take these exams and pass these and have the focus and the interest in this, it's just not true. I experienced it a lot when I was teaching in downtown Brooklyn working with on a much different level, great kids, and they were smart and savvy in their own regard, they were not [reading] classical literature and philosophy, but they had a different understanding of the world. They grew up in Brooklyn and I gave them a living environment class and we talked about an earthworm, some of them had never seen an earthworm before, that's great if you're in upstate NY looking at an earthworm, that's wonderful, you'd probably dig up earthworms in your backyard, if you grew up in an apartment building in Brooklyn, you have a different experience. If your dad was a carpenter and you want to be a carpenter, who's to say that you need to pass a US history exam.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino laments there not being a greater emphasis on vocational studies.

Liguori: Should all students be required to take and pass the regents?

Mr. Lomangino: No. Not at all. I've taught students at the very high level for a while now, and I've also taught students at the very low level who were in an alternative setting where these students have had to leave high school for different reasons and were coming back, it's not a GED program, it's students who have enough credits where they can come back to a program at night and finish off their credits. I've got family member and neighbors who have students of all different levels and my neighbor's a carpenter, and he could walk into my house and he could do things that I can't do. And, my best friend is a mechanic, and he can do things that I can't even begin to think about doing. I think that our system has gotten away from what the real purpose of education is, and I don't think that it's an appropriate education to be walking in lockstep, to the same exact standards. I think that you have gifted and talented students who should be given academic challenges that go well beyond the regents exams and I think there are students who have academic issues, challenges, or learning disabilities, or multiple talents, they have talents in different areas, and the system currently does not recognize them. Most of the vocational programs that were in the city have dried up and disappeared in favor of a regents based approach, and I think it's a tragedy the way we have students who are forced into one track, this one track fits all model, where they begin to hate education and hate school because they don't fit into that model and there are very few if any alternative ideas for them. What's wrong with learning vocation, I don't understand why we've gotten away from that as a system.

Ms. Hamilton, 50, Science Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Ms. Hamilton feels that vocational education should be reintroduced to the city system.

Liguori: Are you aware of NCLB?

Ms. Hamilton: It's crap.

Liguori: If you were to explain it somebody?

Ms. Hamilton: It means that any kid can be in the classes that he shouldn't be in, because everybody has to be academic and they've taken...I mean you don't know how many kids I've had

at [my old school] saying they wish they could take automotive, they wish they could have taken something else.

Liguori: Does it help students?

Ms. Hamilton: No. I mean if the kid isn't academically ready, then they shouldn't be pushed into these hard subjects.

The Lowering of Standards

Even though respondents may want graduation requirements to be lowered or modified, they feel that the watering down of the regents curriculum is a step too far. Because the regents exams have been a part of the state educational landscape spanning three centuries (Beadie 1999; Bishop, Moriarty, and Mane 2000; Folts 1996) and are a source of pride for the citizens of New York (Bishop and Mane 2001), any change in the regents exams bring out many emotional responses from respondents. While the move to all regents curricula should have led to an increase in state standards (Bishop 2000; Bishop and Mane 2001; Bishop, Moriarty, and Mane 2000), since the move to all regents curricula, many teachers feel that the move has led to a watered down curriculum in their subject and less difficult exams. The feeling that the regents have become easier can be seen more frequently in the math and science exams that are required for graduation. According to some respondents, the exams that are required for graduation have become easier, while the exams that are not required for graduation have either stayed the same or become more difficult. Teachers criticize this move as a gimmick to raise graduation rates in order to make it appear that education reforms are working. This leads many to criticize the new testing regime as lowering standards for most students instead of raising standards. Some teachers support the easier exams because they make it easier for at risk students to graduate high school; however, other teachers deride them as taking prestige

away from the regents exams and pandering to the less able students on what they feel should be an elite exam.

Mr. Ahmed, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 5 years. Mr. Ahmed compares the difficulty level of both math regents exams.

Liguori: ...Just in General, in Math A or in Math B, would you say that those are good tests?

Mr. Ahmed: Math B I think is a good test, because it's really testing them, if they really know the stuff and if they're going to go to college or not. Math A is, I call Math A an easy test, easy mathematics. You have multiple [choice] questions, you only need to get 13 of them right by luck, forget about the other ones, and you pass the Math A regents. Now we have the students who come into Math B not knowing anything because they pass the Math A regents. You know honestly, I have students who couldn't do it. Honestly students that passed the math A regents that couldn't tell me anything. "Mr. Ahmed I passed the Math A regents. How? I don't know?" Because of the multiple choices. There is no...there's thirty multiple choices 13 of them right you pass the Math A regents. Then the students feel like "oh, I guess I'm a mathematician now, I didn't even know. But I'm good now. So I'm going to Math B." Then math B is where they... smaller group. Smaller group.

Liguori: Do you feel that those tests in Math A or in Math B are they fair for the students?

Mr. Ahmed: I think Math B is fair. Math B the students have difficulties in passing in the Math B but I think it's fair because they need to know their stuff that's it. Math A I don't think it's fair. Why don't I think it's fair: Because it's just by luck. You're not testing them. You're lying to the kids. We talk about students, Students talk about us. And they say listen don't worry you're going to pass the Math A regents because everybody's passing the Math A regents passing the Math A regents is not very hard. Everybody passes the Math A regents the one that doesn't pass it don't come and take it. I'm serious because of the multiple choices. The state put it in a way that...One time they put a real Math A test, I think in June 2003, and then the pass[ing percentage] went crazy. And then they said "oh, ok let them in, we're going to make it really easy for you guys to pass." So they changed it to 30 multiple questions, and then you get 13 you're good to go. Everybody is passing the Math A regents. Parents are happy, students are happy, and in the end they don't know the Math, just by luck.

Liguori: Do they ever pressure you about the grade in the class?

Mr. Ahmed: Oh, that's a good one. You see the Math A is the easy class, so everyone passes, sometimes open school comes and sometimes you know the student is not strong, but he passed the Math A regents. So now you have parents telling you, my concern as a teacher, I want to send that students to Math B, forget about the regents, I want to send that student to Math B with a foundation. Claps hands. Now, the parents calling and telling me you failed my son. Yeah I failed your son because I feel that he needs to go over the material one more time because this is a very serious material that he will need to succeed in Math B. But he took the math A and he got 66. He took the Math A and he got a 66 because he got some questions right by luck. Oh yes, I understand perfectly he passed the Math A regents sir, that's one he took care of it. He needs to work on these topics one more time...But how do you, if the regents, the state gave him the regents test and he passed it, I don't understand how he failed your class. The state said he's a genius...you don't like my son? Then we go into a different issue, this is not about your son. I got to the point where I called the parents, and said your child is not ready for B some parents are nice, the majority don't want to know they say 'put them in Math B now.' The parents don't understand what is really going on and the state, the state is not good to me, because the state put me in a position where...listen the child took a state test. The state said the child is a genius, he passed the Math A we need to put him in the Math B and keep quiet. Who are you telling me? If I did not know the game myself, believe me as a parent I would be so pissed, As a parent I would do the same thing. I would go to the school and forget about the teacher, forget about the AP, I need to talk to the principal, the state said the guys a genius and your teacher's failing him. No, I don't buy this. They make sense out of this, but in reality you need 13 to pass. They're not ready. It doesn't test anything the Math A regents.

Mr. Klein, 27, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Klein does not believe in testing but feels that at least the regents allows for most all students to pass.

Liguori: Would you say it's a fair test?

Mr. Klein: I would say that it's an easy test. I would say that it tries to ensure that 90 percent of the students pass. That's what its goal is, to get the numbers higher.

Liguori: Is that fair?

Mr. Klein: I actually think, in a weird way I think it is fair, because of how ridiculous I think the test is in its own right and how I think the teachers should kind of be in charge of what the last assessment should be, but if you're going to do this, if you're going to have to make them, if they're going to have to pass, the test should err to the easier side.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino feels the regents exams have been watered down.

Liguori: What is your opinion concerning the regents exam?

Mr. Lomangino: When I was a student, the global regents exam was one of the most feared exams in New York State. It has since become a washed out, fluff of an exam. Now I say that knowing full well that my students will pretty much ace the test, and some of my colleagues in other buildings, who work just as hard as I do, or in some ways are more talented have students who struggle tremendously with the exam. But I still think that they've added components to the exam, which have really watered it down tremendously, and yet, there's an incredible pressure to pass it, to do well on it, but without a lot of regard as to how that should be done. The global history curriculum in New York is excellent, I think it's top rate, the test itself has major flaws, last year the entire system saw a dip in the grades in the global history exam, because the Document based question essay in my opinion had some flawed pieces to it, then you get the grading chart that you're supposed to use and there's 8 ways to get a 90, and then you grade a few days later the American history exam, and there's 15 ways to get a 90. So the chart itself made it easier to do better on the American History than it did to in the global history. These things, these inconsistencies, I find to be infuriating, the test themselves are not necessarily awful. In a school like this the students are fairly smart, they know they're going to pass the exams, so there's not a tremendous amount of motivation for them to study extra hard for one of those exams, so that creates problems for us also, because we're being graded right now by the city, not just the students are being graded, but we are being graded on how many of our students perform at the highest level.

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez feels that the regents is an unfair test because it is too easy.

Liguori: Do you believe that the regents exam is a fair test?

Mr. Lopez: Given everything that I've said I guess that's leading me in the direction to say no, it's not a fair test. I think the standards of the regents are kind of low, especially with the essay part, I mean you could pretty much just write any old gobbled gook and maybe get 3 out of 5 on the scoring, so in that respect, I think and over the years, I think the standards have become lower and lower and lower and I guess that's just so politicians can say that schools are getting better and there are statistics to hold up and say "test scores are rising" or whatever, in that regard I think it's fair if you can call it fair, I would just call it social promotion, but I guess in that way you can call it fair, but not in any historical or contentwise way. It's not fair at all.

Ms. Stone, 42, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 15 years, Was formerly assigned to a school that has been closed. Ms. Stone feels that students can easily be coached to pass the exam.

Liguori: Is it a fair test?

Ms. Stone: No. I think it's only fair to people who prepped and if you prepped you will pass it. You can't fail it, it's impossible to fail and it is so complex in the way that it is graded especially

with the curve and I don't know...the grading and the curving there's something that no newspaper front page could expose how easy it is to pass. And I almost feel that's on purpose. But of course I don't really think that. Um, but I think that's just unfair. But, um, I do think that it's possible to condense the skills being tested. I think there could be one nonfiction and one fiction and um, I think they give you 2 nonfiction ones, which can be put together into one. Kids who have trouble making it to school often take 1 day off or don't make it the second day especially with the kids I used to teach. So many of them would fail because they couldn't make it a second day. Of in real life you're going to have to show up two days in a row, but is this about real life right now or is about passing a test.

Ms. Vincent, 33, Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 7 years was previously at a school that has since closed. Ms. Vincent feels that the Math A exam is too easy in comparison to the Math B exam.

Liguori: Is the math regents a good test?

Ms. Vincent: The Math A regents, honestly for what we have to teach, it's pure and utter garbage, it's crap...

Liguori: The Math A test...

Ms. Vincent: It's garbage.

Liguori: Why would you say that?

Ms. Vincent: Just in the way it's formatted, the test is 30 multiple choice questions make up 60 points and 9 part 2, 3 and 4 questions make up an additional 24 points. Usually a kid can get 18 multiple choice right, done nothing on the back and garnered a 65 on that test. Now multiple choice really you can close your eyes and kind of play around and figure out and pass that test, so how is that getting 18 multiple choice right really judging what a kid knows in a year and a half of those 30 maybe 20 of them are coming from the first term of the curriculum.

Liguori: Is it too easy, too hard?

Ms. Vincent: Well, I guess because it's on a phase out, they have dummed it down a lot, because when I started, I was teaching in the year that they kind of really screwed it up and I guess in trying to compensate, they've overcompensated and made it much, much, much, much easier. I think in some ways the tests in what I think a child really needs to know is fair, but what you're required for them to learn in preparation for the test does not match what the test is. Then the scoring rubric that goes along with the test makes absolutely no test and that what makes the test unclear.

Liguori: How well does the regents measure student performance?

Ms. Vincent: The good student, I guess when you look at the rates, any kid that gets above an 80 you can say he or she knows something. But a kid that gets a 65, which I think the last time was, I think, uh, 35 points, which is 18 multiple choice questions right, they really don't know anything. They can guess and then what happens, what happens is they end up at the next level and they know NOTHING (emphasis), they're gone with nothing, so the teacher now who's preparing them for Math B, which is where you go after Math A, struggles with this kid because they might know the basic foundation, they can't solve a simple equation, so it's a big problem for teachers, that teach at the next level.

Ms. Mendelson, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. MS. Mendelson feels that the exam is so poorly written that many students who pass the Math A regents know very little about Mathematics.

Liguori: How well does the regents exam measure performance?

Ms. Mendelson: I think because they, for the exam in Math A, they have to achieve a 35 or 37, that's the rubric, it's not a test out of 100, I think that kids could pass the Math A regents and not be proficient Mathematically; however, because they lowered it so much to get more kids to pass, so in terms of the Math A, I think it's not a good indication of what kids can do, because I've had kids

who didn't attend class and then passed the Math A, just by choosing the right combination in the multiple choice, they lucked out and they passed the Math A. The Math B, you need to have more knowledge in. I don't think you can do that per se in the math B. So, I don't think...because a lot of the Math A kids passed the Math A regents and failed the class should not be moved on but they were. So I don't think that's...to the B I think it is, the B is a good exam.

Ms. Santini, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years She was previously assigned to a failing school. Ms. Santini feels that a poor student can get a passing grade on the Math A regents.

Liguori: Do you feel that the Math A exam is a good test?

Ms. Santini: It's not a bad test, it's an ok test, but the grading is ridiculous, it's not based on 100 points, it adds up to 85, and then there's a proportion, and um, each year they tell us what a 65 is equivalent to, so they could lower the grade and...or higher it, you know, they decide what the proportion is, which is also ridiculous, why can't you just make it based on 100, and 65 is passing.

Liguori: How well do the regents exams measure student performance?

Ms. Santini: Because of the way it's graded, I want to say not well. Because like if you get a 65 on the Math A test, you would think, ok, you know, 65 percent of the work, but that's not how it works. It's not done that way. You could be a very poor student and still get a 65.

Conclusions:

NCLB has been very important within the national debate on high stakes tests and educational policy. Individual states have used different exams to comply with NCLB standards by either updating pre-existing exams or adding new testing regimes. Within New York State, the regents exams, which have been around since the 19th century have been revamped in order to comply with the growing demands of the educational standards movement of the late 1990s and early 2000s. The education standards movement, which occurred nationwide at the state level, predates NCLB and was a major impetus for its enactment.

Among the respondents who showed support for NCLB, their support was directed at the focus NCLB had on data collection and the attention that was given to underrepresented groups such as minorities, special education students and LEPS; however, NCLB has a lack of support among many of teachers who were interviewed. Much of the lack of support stems from an aversion to high stakes tests that are mandated

by NCLB. Furthermore, teachers feel that politicians wrote NCLB without consulting teachers, which undermines teachers' professionalism. One recommendation that would be made to future educational reform plans would be to respect the role of teachers in the classroom and to consult them on major issues that affect classrooms. Including teachers in a more transparent way would be one way to get teachers to buy into educational reform making it more successful.

Teachers that were interviewed had a lack of knowledge concerning NCLB. The misunderstanding surrounded what was actually mandated by NCLB. Some teachers felt that "No Child Left Behind" simply meant that all children would be promoted to the next grade regardless of classroom performance. Also, some teachers felt that only children that were in grades K-8 were subject to NCLB or that NCLB did not apply to high performing schools. Again, by having teachers' groups involved in the drafting of legislation, teachers may feel they have a stake in the legislation and learn more about the intricacies of a program that affects them. Furthermore, teachers' publications such as union newspapers may be more likely to give complete coverage of issues surrounding education reform and have a less adversarial role in discussing educational reform.

The NYCDOE is the largest school district in the United States. It has over 1600 schools throughout the city. New York City high schools are quite distinct from the rest of the state. On average the high schools in New York have a higher percentage of minorities, receiving free lunch, and LEPS and a smaller percentage of white students. Schools in the NYCDOE also underperform the rest of the state on every regents exam with the city schools having a higher percentage of students who are failing (under 65) and a smaller percentage of students who are passing (above 65) and achieving mastery

(above 85). While the seven schools that were targeted for this study, are quite different from both the city and the rest of the state in their demographics and regents performance, when they are compared to the entire state (including the city), their differences in performance and demographics are not statistically significant from the state as a whole except that there are significantly more Asian students and there is a slightly poorer performance on the chemistry regents, a regents exam not required for graduation.

With regards to the regents requirements, many teachers were much better informed; however, there was still an aversion to mandatory high stakes testing for every student. Many teachers that were interviewed did not agree with requiring all students have a regents diploma. While there was general support for the regents exams, the regents were criticized as racially or class biased. The lack of a safety net or other type of diploma for students who passed the class but did not pass the exam troubled many teachers as these safety nets would help make up for potential biases in the exams. Furthermore, many teachers felt that by requiring all students to take the exams, the exams became much easier and no longer the elite exams that they used to be, which had the unintended consequence of lowering standards. There are several ways that NYS can still comply with NCLB and have safety nets for students that do not pass the regents exams; furthermore, the regents exams should be made to reflect the same standards that they did before the move to all regents exams was instituted several years ago.

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:
New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability
Chapter 4:
Teachers and Administrators Under Pressure to Perform

Literature on the Pressures Faced by Teachers and Administrators

Within schools in the United States, school administrators and teachers face many pressures for their students to perform well. These pressures come from many different sources and come from all different directions. Administrators face pressures from superintendents, parents, voters, teachers, and in the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) they have incentive bonuses that add to their pay if their schools meet certain performance targets and can be reassigned or terminated if they fail to meet certain performance goals in as few as 2 years (Valenzuela 1999; Shipp and White 2009). Teachers face pressures from the superintendent's office, administrators, parents, students, politicians to perform (Hursh 2005). Both groups also face an internal pressure and desire to have their students perform at a high level (Waller 1961; Valenzuela 1999; McNeill and Valenzuela 2001; Tyack and Cuban 2001; Carver 2008; Bryant 2010). These pressures have increased over the last two decades with state and federal legislation demanding greater accountability on schools (Hamilton and Koretz 2002; Hamilton 2003; Sipple, Killeen and Monk 2004; Crocco and Costigan 2007) and the greater reliance of federal, state and local governments on high stakes tests to gauge progress (Heubert and Hauser 1999; Heubert 2001; Jacob 2002; U.S. Department of Education 2002; Goertz and Duffy 2003). The mechanism in which these pressures are placed on these actors can vary. Much of the variation can be explained by the characteristics of the school (Gamoran, Secada and Marrett 2000; Sipple and Killeen 2004) and the needs of the school and community (Valenzuela 1999). While the focus on educational standards have existed for many decades, the most recent pressures stem from the accountability movement in education (U.S. Department of Education 2002).

The accountability movement began in the late 1990s and continues to the present day. The movement is a nationwide movement that began at the state level in various states and motivated by the 1983 Reagan administration report *A Nation at Risk* (Kornhaber and Orfield 2001; Hamilton 2003). In New York State (NYS) one early outcome of the movement was the raising of regents requirements in New York City (NYC) in the mid 1990s, which was later implemented throughout the state (Bishop and Mane 2001). These changes were typical of what was happening in different states throughout the 1990s (McNeill and Valenzuela 2001; Jacob 2002; Hursh 2005). At the federal level this movement culminated in the bipartisan passage of NCLB in 2002 and continues to this day with the United States Department of Education giving grants in a program called “Race to the Top” (Hamilton and Koretz 2002; Goldhaber and Hannaway 2004; Darling-Hammond 2010; Pilotin 2010). These laws have been both lauded and derided because of their focus on standardized tests (Hamilton 2003; Sloan and Kelly 2003).

One major aspect of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (NCLB) is its reliance on standardized tests in order to student and school progress. High Stakes Tests (HSTs) are tests that are used in tracking, promotion, and graduation statistics (Heubert and Hauser 1999). Even before NCLB, administrators have been putting pressure on academic departments and individual teachers to raise grades on HSTs (Smith 1991). The mandated testing regime of NCLB coupled with state level accountability movements have led to an increase in the use of HSTs to determine not only student outcomes, but school outcomes as well where schools can be closed and administrators removed if schools fail to make certain targets on these tests (Valenzuela 1999; Shipps

and White 2009). Because of the way HSTs are used, this has led to increased pressures on students, parents, teachers and administrators where all parties are clamoring to raise scores on HSTs (Bishop and Mane 2001; Crocco and Costigan 2007; Natriello and Pallas 2001; Sloane and Kelly 2003; Warren, Jenkins and Kulick 2006).

NCLB dictates that school districts and states collect information on different subgroup populations (U.S. Department of Education 2002). This has increased pressures on teachers and administrators to raise the graduation rates, class grades, and standardized test score achievement of different subgroups of students whether it is by race/ethnicity, sex, special education status, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status, or poverty status (Mabry and Margolis 2006; Shaul and Ganson 2005). Schools that do not comply with these regulations are subject to funding cuts, removal of administrators, being labeled as a failing school and even school closures (Hamilton and Koretz 2002; U.S. Department of Education 2002).

In NYS, the regents exams are used in order to fulfill the requirements set forth at the high school level for NCLB. Before NCLB was enacted NYS raised the requirements for high school students statewide, where the regents exams were made mandatory for all students (Bishop and Mane 2001; Hursh 2005; Natriello and Pallas 2001). The regents exams, and regents diplomas, were once considered within reach of only elite students (Bishop and Mane 2001; Hursh 2005; Natriello and Pallas 2001; Sipple, Killeen and Monk 2004). Making the regents exams compulsory has increased the pressures on teachers and administrators who are now trying to get previously disenfranchised populations to pass these exams in order to keep their schools open (Crocco and Castigan 2007; Hursh 2005; Sipple, Killeen and Monk 2004; Killeen and Sipple 2005). Also,

because of the nature of the accountability movement and NCLB, certain departments within the school may be performing adequately while other departments may not be making AYP, which could cause a school closure. This can put disproportionate pressure on certain departments that are failing and unduly punish certain departments that are succeeding.

Parents are one of the many actors that increase administrative and teacher pressure. In private schools, it is easier for parents to pressure teachers and administrators because the parents pay tuition and would want the highest return on their investment (Bryk, Lee and Holland 1993). Administrators respond to the parental pressure because parents can take their children out of the school, which will present difficulties for the administration. Teachers respond to parental pressure for much of the same reason. In the public sector, parents put pressure on schools to produce higher passing percentages for many of the same reasons. While parents do not pay tuition directly, schools are supported by local tax dollars and the control of local school boards are controlled by voters giving parents a strong say in education matters (Kozol 1991). At the state and national level, voters affect change on education policy. While, parents in the public sector do not always have the option to take their children out of the public school system, with NCLB, parents have the option of taking their children out of failing schools and into schools that are not labeled as failing (U.S. Department of Education 2002). While the incentives to not be deemed a failing school are apparent, there is a lot of pressure put on schools that are receiving high marks due to the political pressure that parents put on the schools to maintain those scores or even better them.

Teachers and administrators differ in the pressures that they face. In the NYCDOE, teachers that have less than 3 years of experience do not have tenure and the protections that it entails. They are probationary teachers and can be removed with cause at any time during their probation. In the NYCDOE, teachers attain tenure after 3 years of probationary service and are difficult to remove from their jobs once they attain tenure (Medina 2010a); however, if an administrator really wanted to force a tenured teacher out of her/his school, there are methods to get the teacher to resign or switch schools. In order to get tenured teachers to leave their schools principals have been known to give them poor schedules, the least desirable students or unsatisfactory lesson and/or end of the year ratings. Even though teachers may be tenured, with sufficient unsatisfactory end of year ratings, the teacher may be subjected to removal under Section 3020a of the New York State Education Law, as amended by Chapter 691 of the Laws of 1994 (New York State Education Department 2010). While a Section 3020a hearing may be difficult for the principal to win, because teachers can be stripped of their teaching licenses, many teachers would rather leave the school than put in a situation where they may eventually face a Section 3020a hearing.

Principals under the Bloomberg administration have seen pay increases and performance bonuses added to their contracts (Herszenhorn 2007; Shipps and White 2009). In New York City, administrators also have a situation where they have tenure in their schools as administrators after serving 5 years in their post (School Administrators Association of New York State). In order to be removed as an administrator, tenured administrators would also be subjected to a Section 3020a hearing. Even though there are tenure provisions set out for principals, many principals are newer principals because

of the small schools movement in the NYCDOE and the NYC Leadership Academy's Aspiring Principals Program (Principals' Academy) created under the Bloomberg administration. Because many of the vacancies are in schools that have been created to fill the void left by larger schools closed due to performance issues, many new principals are faced with harsh working conditions. The influx of smaller schools has led to more new principals, which has led to a smaller percentage of tenured principals and increased pressures on principals in order to have their schools achieving at high levels.

One aspect of recent educational policy in the NYCDOE that has affected both teachers and administrators is the current system where the Mayor is in charge of the school system; this is part of a nationwide urban trend where mayors of large cities have taken control of the school systems (Wong 2006; Wong and Shen 2007). Mayoral control of the school system was won in 2002 and renewed in 2009 (Medina 2009). With the Mayor gaining control of schools in NYC, the NYCDOE was put in charge of the schools rather than the loosely controlled 32 regional school districts. This has led to a greater devolution of power to the school principals, who now feel more direct pressure from the NYCDOE and the role of district superintendents, while still strong, have diminished. This devolution of power to principals has made principals more accountable, and has led principals to increase the pressures on teachers in their schools. Evidence of the increased powers of principals' is found in the recent surge of teachers receiving unsatisfactory end of year ratings (Medina 2010b).

Pressures Faced by Administrators in a High Stakes Testing Environment

Despite the increased accountability standards, due to the restructuring of the NYCDOE in the Accountability Era, there has been a vacuum of power in the hierarchy

between school administrators and the Chancellor's office Caused by the Reorganization of the NYCDOE. This has led to greater pressures on Principals in a new business-like, data-driven, approach to schools instituted by the Bloomberg Administration (Traver 2006). In interviews with administrators, respondents mentioned the lack of oversight from their superintendents. While services are being provided to the principals, there seems to be little direct involvement of superintendents in the schools themselves and some confusion as to the new role superintendents play in the NYCDOE in the era of Mayoral control. Some principals see their superintendent as little more than a rating officer who is detached from actual conditions in the school.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal of a Large Comprehensive High School. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Claims that since the reorganization of schools it is difficult to determine who he must report to causing confusion for him and those in other organizations.

Liguori: Now what about your effect on the superintendent? Do you feel that you have say in the same manner, for example, in the Superintendent's office?

Mr. Schwartz: It's tough to answer that question because they are going through another reorganization. So I don't even know who my bosses are. I found out the other day that a (pause) Social Worker from a children's aid society thought she was my boss. It's just a strange world where everybody wants to be a boss. Uh, with the new structure there are the support group organizations that are there to support what you need, and to make recommendations, if they see that a recommendation that is warranted. Then there is to be a superintendent who has not been named yet this year, and they are to be the rating officers. Uh, I am still unclear because in years past you knew who people were, you knew who the assistants were. You knew where to go if necessary AND if there were concerns or questions, you knew whom to talk with. Um, it really is a tough one to answer at the moment because certain roles have been shifted and changed in a certain way. But, I do expect that the same relationship that we have here in our building among our group that we would have with the superintendency. I felt I did not have that over the past several years when we had the regions. High Schools were along the lines of being step-children. The professional development sessions were set up for elementary schools. The people who were in charge and the support specialists for the most part were elementary and junior high trained. They couldn't really offer much to us and when we voiced our opinions they weren't listened to. So, I began to experience first handedly that everybody's opinion doesn't count and doesn't matter. And that is not nice it's refreshing to see that sometimes, you know what, they could slam the door in your face, yet it gives you a dose of reality and you come back and make sure that you establish more of a type of community which you realized you had each other and needed each other and had to depend upon each other. You couldn't depend upon the region or superintendency.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan claims he does not speak to his superintendent regularly about his school and the superintendent is little more than a signature in the current system.

Liguori: Do you feel that you have an effect on the decisions the superintendent makes?

Mr. Brannigan: In the current system, there's almost no superintendent, I do have a superintendent in name, she's actually someone I worked with. But in a lot of levels, she's just a

signature, I will occasionally talk to her, but she doesn't actually make any decisions for the school.

Liguori: Who do you report to?

Mr. Brannigan: That's a hard question for me to answer at this point in all fairness, I think I'm most answerable to my students, my staff, and the parents of our students. It's not that I have a superintendent telling me what to do. I have the CEO of [the group that my school belongs to], but it's not like he calls you up and says you need to do with this with your budget, or you need to hire more teachers or you need to run more art classes. I don't get that. That's more of the structure now that's in place. So, the superintendents really don't have a lot of power, I can't say much for, there's different persons, there's the Learning support organizations, there are empowered schools, and there's one more, pause. One is you have what traditionally were superintendents and they have groups of schools, and they were self selected by the individual schools. You have community organizations like CUNY, I think Fordham has another group, they are among the support organizations out there, but again they are not the superintendents to make an outside decision to say "you must do the following." They don't have that authority.

Liguori: Does anyone have that authority?

Mr. Brannigan: Um, I suppose if a principal was doing something that was inappropriate they could get in trouble. Officially I still have a rating officer who's a superintendent. But I haven't seen her yet this year. I spoke to her on the phone, but that was usually when I reached out and asked her for advice and she was helpful when I called and I emailed her a couple of things, I mean officially I have to put things like vacation days through her. So, if I want to use a vacation day I have to get her approval. I mean if I have students on a trip, I can sign off on my students going out of states and all of their reimbursement forms, but if I want to go, she has to sign, but she's never of the dozen times or probably fewer, she's never denied a request I had a vacation day left over, I wanted to take it, she wrote back to me and said "yeah take it, who's your second in command? If something happens in the building who's responsible?" so I gave her my chain of command, and I told her who's in charge of the building when I'm out and she said ok. Just the other day.

Liguori: How would you describe the job of the superintendent?

Mr. Brannigan: At this point, it's kind of not essential?

Liguori: How effective is your superintendent?

Mr. Brannigan: I get along with my superintendent and I respect her, and that's probably why I have called her a few times and gotten advice from her this year. If I had made the decision on my own, the outcome would have been sooner, but at some point, when I make a decision I want a second set of eyes, so in regards to being helpful when I need her, she's been helpful, so she's been effective in that regard, I guess it's a little bit like the whole concept of advice, unsolicited advice is not worth much, but when I needed advice, she was someone I could go to and get that, there's a little bit of support if things go badly, I can honestly say "look, I didn't know what to do, I spoke to the superintendent, we worked on it together, and this is what we came up with and this is what we did." So on that level she's been helpful.

Liguori: What is her job?

Mr. Brannigan: A lot of it is just a signature, it's an approval whether it be my goals and objectives for the year for the school, I did submit them to her, we did have a dialogue and she did approve them, she didn't make any corrections, she didn't make any suggestions, she said ok, these look like reasonable goals, and good luck with them, if you want advice or help call me. I haven't had to, so in a lot of regards she is signing the paperwork that I don't have the authority to do. We haven't done an international trip, but that's one of the things that needs the superintendent's signature. Anything in terms of things that I can't self approve. I haven't done it, but if I took any per session it would have to get it approved by her first. If I go on a trip that's school related, she has to sign off on it. That's really about it. It's interesting that they created a dual role for some of the superintendents, they're also the senior achievement facilitator for other schools. So I have a senior achievement facilitator, who is a superintendent for other schools, but I work with him more

with my student outcomes and achievements and my data, so although he's not my superintendent, a lot of times I get the curricular pieces that you used to deal with the superintendent on, I deal with him, but he is not in a supervisory role to me, he is in more of a consultative role, he is not my rating officer, so it's a much different dynamic, there's still a component of that? Yes. And I met with Rich a couple of dozen times and he's been up to the school. It's interesting that they kind of split the roles of what a superintendent used to do, but I guess they also limited some of their power, my achievement facilitator can't come in here and say you know what I don't like the way you're teaching that English class, change the curriculum. He doesn't have that authority. He doesn't call me up and says your numbers dipped. He doesn't call me up and say I noticed a four percent dip on your attendance last month, what are you doing to fix it, it's not that kind of a role any more.

Liguori: Does anyone have that role?

Mr. Brannigan: Again, it's not someone who's a rating officer who does that who has that role. I have a network team that actually works for me, so I have a network manager, I have a business manager, I have an achievement, they have all these titles, so occasionally I'll get a call for one of them, but it's a much different call, these are people, I've sat on their hiring committee, so when we built our empowerment network almost 3 years ago, they interviewed before me, in many levels and many respects they work for me and at least 21 other schools in the network if the schools in the network decide that they're not doing their job, I could be one of the 21 people saying "Ok, it's time to go, you actually have been effectively fired." So it's a different type of call. They might call and say [Mr. Dugan] do you need help, we noticed a dip in your attendance. It's interesting it's one of the things as a group we just started to look at. It's much more of a support system now. We started to look at it as a group to help some of the principals in our network that are struggling occasionally with their attendance, is there something that we can suggest or offer that could help them. So again, there's no, I don't have a superintendent that calls me up and yells at me that I'm not doing my job.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins claims that the function of the superintendent's office has been whittled away to be nearly meaningless

Liguori: What is the job of a NYC Superintendent?

Ms. Likins: To allow Klein to steal money...no. Laughs. Or Bloomberg to take everybody's budgets away. Laughs. Well, it has definitely changed, it is kind of a gray area because you go from districts and district superintendents, which are state mandated laws to now that we are a department as opposed to a board, the city kind of controls us and Bloomberg has had the ability to do anything he really wants and you don't know who your superintendent is sometimes. It depends, today you pick up the phone, it's somebody and tomorrow, you pick up the phone and it's somebody else, and I think that schools work a lot of times really autonomously. So what the role of a superintendent is say hi.

Mr. Walsh, 49, Principal, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Former Math Teacher, has been in education for 28 years and has been an administrator for 11 years. Mr. Walsh is unsure as to whether or not Superintendents are allowed inside the school buildings without an invitation.

Liguori: Other than being a rating officer, what is [the superintendent's] role?

Mr. Walsh: It's a rating officer, that's it.

Liguori: Does she do anything else for you guys?

Mr. Walsh: No, I don't think they're allowed to with the present system. I think ... our support organization, has a superintendent assigned to help. But their organization doesn't use that, so basically [the superintendent] is my rating officer and then other than that the only time I think she's allowed in the school is if I invite her in.

Liguori: She's not even allowed to come in?

Mr. Walsh: That's what I've heard, I haven't heard that from her, but other people have said that.

Despite the lack of oversight from district superintendents, principals feel that they are under tremendous pressure to get their students to pass at higher levels. The pressures come directly from the mayor's office and the NYCDOE with the school report cards and quality reviews that they publish (Traver 2006). In essence the job of the superintendents has been usurped by the quality reviews and statistical analyses produced by the city. The pressures placed on the principals center on improving test scores and other statistics in their schools. In larger schools, there is a great pressure placed on the principals as their schools are in danger of being closed and replaced by smaller schools, while in smaller schools principals are generally newer principals fresh out of the Principals' Academy, they are more prone to feel the pressures of the job since they don't have tenure or other protections.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal of a Large Comprehensive High School. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Mr. Schwartz discusses how progress on the school report cards are determined and the possible repercussions for principals.

Liguori: Now, you mentioned before penalties. What kind of penalties might there be?

Mr. Schwartz: There seems to be something built into this progress report formula that if your students don't take the exam on time when they should, you lose points. That's my interpretation of it. So, if students should have taken Global history at the end of their sophomore year and you may have 800 kids that should and only half of them do. Again using their numbers they use their numerators and their denominators that the kid didn't take it so you don't score points, didn't take it when he should have, so you don't score points, other schools where more of the kids took the exam then they're getting points because their kids took the exam. So, in a way it's penalizing yet, maybe the kid didn't complete the courses or the coursework, so you offer summer classes. The thing is certain summer credits don't count in the data until the following year. So to me that's a penalty because the summer really is an extension of the school year before the next year begins. So, if you get more kids to take the exam on time at their appropriate grade level you score where you should; otherwise, you are lagging behind.

Liguori: Now you had mentioned before to me these points. How does that filter down to you because that sounds very abstract.

Mr. Schwartz: Because now they have this report card that they generate from their progress reports, so they have different aspects: environment, progress, and another area, each with a percentile built in. Each with separate lines given the data. Each of them are weighted to a certain degree and then they factor all of this together they come out with a number, a decimal. Based upon the grouping the city has placed a school in, there are 41 schools in a ranking, your school being in the middle, 20 schools above, 20 schools below based upon 8th grade ELA and Math Scores average. That becomes their level 1,2, 3, 4,...level 1.5, 2.7,... then at the end when you

have the decimal figures to the thousandths place, they see how you compare to the other 41 schools. And if a school with 400 kids, or 200 kids move further, then you move backwards. Because they have either leaped over you and then they look and they say “well since you haven’t moved as far as the other schools they are getting As and Bs your getting Cs and Ds.” So, now the school gets a report card grade. It will be a letter grade. That becomes public knowledge. And now, if you’re a parent, or you’re a teacher, or you’re a student looking for schools and you see a school that has a D, it doesn’t mean the school is bad, but it means that school has not progressed as far as these 40 other schools within your grouping. And I think as the years progress, they’ll have abandoned this because they realize they are really hurting the big schools.

Liguori: As for not advancing, are there penalties other than just having a bad report card...

Mr. Schwartz: Well, they could fire, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, there is something in there that you know staff could be removed, principals primarily Assistant Principals don’t know at the moment. Then they’re also talking about rewarding schools for progressing to a certain point. You know can a large comprehensive high school progress beyond a small school? ...They understand mathematics in terms of numbers, they don’t know the process of the application of the math such as inertia. Um, maybe they should hire more physicists. They’ll say, the numbers are great, but it doesn’t pan out here. So there are some rewards built in, it becomes public knowledge. This quality review that they instituted this past year that becomes a factor, so you have the progress report, the movement of students, you have progression of lower end students achieving higher. You are awarded points, additional points, to get lower end students to the benchmark, quality review, which takes a look not for the hard data, but the soft data; looking at the community, looking at the interaction, looking at the professionalism, looking at the respect factor, looking at what makes a school a school. To me it’s all about the culture, if you look at the school’s culture. A number is a number. And as a statistician, you can skew numbers any which way you want.

Liguori: Oh, definitely, Now you mentioned before parents that they see these grades. Do existing parents form the school right now, do they put pressure on you in your office to raise passing percentage.

Mr. Schwartz: Not as much, because we succeed. We need to do better. There is always room to do better. We’ve sent out forms and surveys asking these types of questions. I think the return factor, and you can check, the return factor is like less than 5 percent return of parents. OK, maybe the issue should be how do you educate parents to be more involved in their education. There are parents unfortunately, because they don’t want them to go to other schools in the neighborhood (gesturing over to Kosciusko High School) and in doing so, the unfortunate part is that kid is a truant. It’s easy to be a truant here at Basilone, it’s a college environment. It’s called responsibility, if you can’t be accountable for your actions, you can’t be responsible for your education, you’re not going to succeed. Well, I wanted them here, I didn’t want them there and that’s not a reason to send them to Basilone. Too many parents have been opting for Basilone. As schools have been closing across the Borough, parents have more liberty to send their kids elsewhere. Making the 2 hour trek isn’t the easy thing, and some parents and students found out the hard way. Uh, where they wanted to leave their community, but they did not want to come here for the right reason. And many students have felt that. Also, we have been overcrowded we are about 300 higher, students higher, then we had been about 5-6 years ago. And, again that was with the new school movement and the waves. Because you take a neighborhood school that is shutting down. They took in an incoming class of 800 or 1000 kids into their freshman class. Now you start 4 small schools, each school could take a maximum of 108 students. So that’s 420 students, 430 students

Liguori: Times 4?

Mr. Schwartz: No, 108 times 4 is 430 students compared with the 1000 students that they would have taken. Where are those 600 kids going to go. So, they ended up going to [large comprehensive high schools in the area], and all of a sudden incidences started rising, passing percentages started lowering, uh, the absent rate and truancy started increasing. And all of a sudden now that they look at the big high schools and they say they are not working anymore. Well, why aren’t they working huh?

Mr. Gottfried, 53, Former Science teacher, Principal, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. He has been in education for 30 years and has been an administrator for 8 years. Mr. Gottfried discusses the pressures he is under for his school to earn a high mark on the school report card. He discusses the possibility that he could be terminated if he does not have his school perform at a high level.

Liguori: Where does the pressure come from and how does it manifest itself?

Mr. Gottfried: The pressure comes from report cards. From the progress reports and the quality review and from all the accountability measures that are in place now. Sure. They're everywhere. Not only that, you want to see the kids do well. That's on the other side of the coin. One side of the coin is the pressure, the other side of the coin is you're dealing with kids and you want to see the kids do well. You deal directly with the kids. People who are making these accountability tests, these accountability reports, they don't see the kids, we see the kids.

Liguori: What pressures are placed on you by the superintendent to raise passing percentage?

Mr. Gottfried: There's no direct pressure, it's just the way the system is set up. The only thing that would have a direct effect from the superintendent's office would be the principal's performance review, Which is done in terms of my performance based on the goals that were put together with the superintendent.

Liguori: How much of that is tied to the regents? Is a lot of it tied to the regents?

Mr. Gottfried: Yes, it's tied to the regents, it's tied to assessment, it's tied to the everyday running of the school.

Liguori: What happens if you fail to do what they feel needs to be done?

Mr. Gottfried: What they feel. I get fired. Let's not beat around the bush. If you're not meeting your goals, and you're not seeing any improvement in the school, they're going to fire you. I guess I'll go back to teaching.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School, a school that has since been closed down due to poor performance. Ms. Likins discusses the irony of poor administrators losing their jobs and being reassigned to other schools where they would still be poor administrators.

Liguori: So you feel a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage on the regents in this school?

Ms. Likins: If I like being employed (laughs). To be honest because that's what's always, you know, it's not for me, I think from an administrative end and even from a teaching end, the regents exam is for the carrot in front of the kid. Your job is the carrot in front of the teacher or the administrator. Because if your kids are failing the exams, what do they do, move the administrator, they don't remove the test, they don't change the test, they don't change the demographics of the building, they don't do anything, they just move the leadership.

Liguori: What would happen if you guys don't meet your goals?

Ms. Likins: We could be placed...

Liguori: You as an individual?

Ms. Likins: Me as an individual, I can be placed in another school as an assistant principal, which is retarded. If I didn't get it done here, why would you put me someplace else to destroy more kids, or I could be demoted back to a teacher.

Liguori: Where do these pressures come from? [Your] network?

Ms. Likins: Retarded NCLB.

Liguori: I know you mentioned that you bring up the regents 181 days, is that a high pressure situation for your teachers here would you say?

Ms. Likins: Yes. Yep. Because I think a lot of times regardless of the reason why you're an educator, the whole idea that your names are attached to this. And damn my kids failed, my kids bombed, and there's that state of embarrassment and you kind of internalize it like I failed you know, you didn't sit there and take the test and literally fail, but if your kids fail, you kind of internalize it I think so I don't think anybody wants to be a failure.

Because the pressure to increase scores is so great, many have called for incentive pay in education (Gratz 2005). Incentive pay has become so politically important that states competing for "Race to the Top" grants were required to evaluate teachers and administrators based on data regarding student growth (Smarick 2010); however, NYC has resisted pressures from instituting pay for performance schemes for individual teachers instead opting for collective bonuses to schools (Buck and Greene 2010; Goodman and Turner 2010) and incentive pay schemes for principals and administrators (Medina 2009; Otterman 2009); however, not all principals were completely aware of how the bonuses were distributed. This may indicate that because of the complicated nature of the incentives, the incentives in place may not always have their intended consequences.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan despite formerly being involved in the Teachers' Union and knowing a lot about the principals' contract is still unsure how the pay for performance bonuses will be meted out and the size of his bonus.

Liguori: You mentioned performance pay for administrators?

Mr. Brannigan: No one knows. It seems to be random, they seem to give bonuses to principals they like, they have actually publically somewhere it discusses how principals will get these bonuses. I seem to be a lock for some bonus, because I got the A and well developed, so I should be a lock for some bonus, which I don't know when I'm going to get it or how I'm going to get it, and they have created these other parts to which it's undefined and it doesn't quite make sense. I know I'm getting a bonus, I don't know if I'm getting a high medium or the low, I don't even know if there's anything I can do to change the outcome, now that I've had the progress report and the quality review, I don't know that I can really change the outcome.

Liguori: Do you like the system of bonuses?

Mr. Brannigan: I mean it gives me something to strive for, I don't know if financial rewards are the way we want to do things. I've never, if you look at levels of motivation, and strategies for education, bribery comes in number six at the bottom, fear and punishment are the lowest level of motivation, just above that is bribery. Some of the messages that are sent by the current city administration doesn't make any sense to me. They tell you that kids can't have cell phones in schools, but about a month ago they introduced a program that kids have good grades, they would

give them a prepaid cell phone. I don't know if it's still up on the DoE website. The idea of merit pay has always had problems because it's not fair and it's not equitable. I certainly wouldn't want to leave this school where I'm at a huge advantage to getting bonus money because it's based on performance data. Why would I want to go to another school where they take in very low performing students with interrupted formal education and non English speakers. Why would I want to be the principal of that school, when I know I'm never getting the bonus or at the best that I could ever do is possibly get the low bonus. Why would I want to take on that task

Pressures Faced by Teachers in a High Stakes Testing Environment

While there is great pressure and strain placed on administrators to have their schools perform well on high stakes exams, teachers are the individuals that have to carry out the policies set forth by administrators and have actual face-to-face contact with students on a regular basis. The pressures placed on teachers also come from a different set of actors as they are at a different position in the school hierarchy; administrators, parents and students all place pressures on teachers for individual students to pass high stakes exams. During the interviews, teachers revealed that these pressures come from all different directions. Some teachers claim that the pressure for their students to pass high stakes exams is internal, other teachers claim that the pressure is placed on them directly from their supervisors, other teachers feel that the pressure comes directly from the city, state and/or federal governments bypassing the school administration, then there are the teachers who feel no pressure on them at all.

Most teachers claim that the pressure comes straight from school administrators who want higher test scores for a wide variety of reasons. The pressure that teachers feel in this scenario follows a chain of command that comes down from the district superintendents through the principals and down to teachers and students. While the teachers in this scenario may not be aware totally of the declining influence of school superintendents, they feel that the pressures placed on the principals are coming from above whether it be from the NYCDOE directly or through the superintendent's office.

Ms. Gogol, 29, Chemistry Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her second year teaching. Ms. Gogol discusses the unrealistic pressures that were placed upon her by her Assistant Principal to get her students to pass the Chemistry regents. When she did not produce the intended results, she felt devastated and brought to tears, only later when speaking with colleagues did she realize that the benchmark that was set by her AP was unrealistic.

Liguori: Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Gogol: There was last year. Like, last year they honestly thought I was going to get 75-80 percent passing on the chem regents. I was a 1st year teacher that did not go to school in the state, at least for high school. I thought that's what my students were going to get. Because I was, you know, just a little bit clueless and then, when they found out that I only got 25, my AP seemed really upset. And he's like why only 25 percent passing? And he's like why did this happen? I just felt like blame came on me. I was so upset I cried (nervous laughter) while I was grading them. I was just like, I can't believe that this many kids are failing. But then when I started talking to other [Teaching F]ellows who were teaching chemistry, just sort of finding out at their schools, I was like "did I do really poorly?" and they were like "no, most of our students got between 20 and 25; most schools here, most chemistry classes in our school, it's about that percentage." I just didn't feel that they made any kind of effort to tell me this. It's not that, I kind of understand in one regard, that they didn't want to be like, "you're only going to get 25 percent, so don't try." But I just wish they would have been a little more realistic with me as a first year teacher. Because I am still pushing my kids as hard as I can. Expecting, I would love for these kids this year to be at least 40 or 50 percent passing, I could make that more realistic.

Liguori: What kind of pressure did they put on you last year?

Ms. Gogol: I think it was just them constantly asking about regents scores and they'd be like "oh, you're going to get 75 percent, right? Right?" I don't know that they really knew anything about the chemistry regents because they were both living environment people, but I was like it's 2 very different tests. It was like "yeah most kids can pass the living environment regents, but chemistry isn't like that." I don't think they took that into consideration. Maybe it was like there was a lot of pressure I was putting on myself as well. So this year, they've backed off a lot, I haven't felt the pressure from them, at least not yet. We'll see what happens in June.

Liguori: What pressures were placed by your principal in particular?

Ms. Gogol: It wasn't so much him, it was the AP where it was coming from. Again going back to the AP just kind of runs things here. It's not so much my principal. So I didn't really get a lot of pressure from him. He was the one who actually talked to me when he saw how upset I was getting and he was the one who said "don't worry about this so much, you're a first year teacher." So he was the one who was definitely more empathetic than my AP. Pressure came from my AP.

Liguori: What did he do?

Ms. Gogol: It wasn't just, again, like him, it wasn't more than him just constantly on me and asking me about my percentage passing and him asking why didn't you get it. Why didn't you reach that, what needs to be done, I think this year though he's become more realistic about it. We got a bunch of new science people on board. You need to be realistic about this. If you want 75 percent passing, you have to do chemistry honors, where not everyone is taking the regents. Like that's the reality of it. You know, I don't know.

Mr. Hanratty, 28, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 5th year teaching. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Mr. Hanratty feels that high stakes pressures filter down from the principal to the assistant principal to him. Mr. Hanratty does not necessarily feel that the pressure is bad.

Liguori: Are there any pressures from the principal in particular?

Mr. Hanratty: No, not directly, Mr. Lescher I think, I think a lot of Mr. Gottfried wants filters down to Mr. Lescher and Mr. Lescher is kind of like the deliverer of his information. So I actually never know what it is that Mr. Gottfried wants and what it is Mr. Lescher wants because everything comes from Mr. Lescher.

Liguori: What does Mr. Lescher do?

Mr. Hanratty: He'll make. He'll ask me, I mean, he'll be direct, He'll come and ask me how many kids I think are going to pass; if I say 80 percent, he'll kind of make a snide remark, and say "we want 95." In a joke, but it's not really a joke. It's kind of a veiled statement about what he really wants.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. He was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School, which was closed down due to poor performance. Dr. Wang discusses how the administration threatens teachers with reassignment if significant progress is not made on the regents.

Liguori: How do they put the pressure on you for example? What might they say or do?

Dr. Wang: Between the lectures that we get during professional development, we get letters in our mailboxes, we are told that we have to have regents preparation. We are told if it doesn't happen it's going to affect who stays next year and who goes because if there's a large number of math classes needed and there's not a lot of English classes needed based on who passes or fails, some people gotta go and some people can stay.

Ms. Mendelson, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ms. Mendelson discusses how the pressures to raise regents scores come indirectly from the principal and directly from her department chair.

Liguori: Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise the regents passing percentage in your subject.

Ms. Mendelson: Yes.

Liguori: Who puts that pressure on you?

Ms. Mendelson: APs, Principals.

Liguori: How do they do it?

Ms. Mendelson: They, um, let's look at what I got in the mail today. We get lists of targets students and then they give us information and they write down what can we do to help them along, what do we think they need to pass the class, what do you think they need to do this, and then they suggest that we give them additional coursework to assist them in passing, etc.

Liguori: Who is it coming from?

Ms. Mendelson: It's coming directly from [Mr. Walsh] . From [Ms. DiMaggio] . From [Ms. Dimaggio] from [Mr. Walsh] together.

Liguori: Is it coming from him or her?

Ms. Mendelson: I think it's a combination, it's probably a policy that they decided.

Liguori: Who do you feel it more from?

Ms. Mendelson: Well, obviously from Ms. DiMaggio because she's my direct representative.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell discusses the pressures on her to raise regents passing percentage in her classes and how the pressure is mainly for her studies to pass the regents.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage?

Ms. Campbell: Absolutely.

Liguori: What kind?

Ms. Campbell: Numbers, Numbers, Numbers, you will be held accountable, they're going to be looking at this, I need percentages individually from each person.

Liguori: Who puts this pressure on you?

Ms. Campbell: I would argue it's all filtered down. I would say it comes from my AP, my principal, but it also comes from Dept. of Education. I mean, you have....it's also internal, because we're a school that's struggling to attract good students, I think if we can raise these numbers, we can bring in better kids, I shouldn't say better, I should say....I guess that's a kind of bad term to use. I would say kids that are better equipped to succeed, you know what I'm saying, coming in with the right tools and the right reading levels, stuff like that, not that they're better, they're just better adapted at this point.

Teachers also have claimed that the pressures come directly from the NYCDOE itself bypassing the school administration. Unlike the teachers that feel that the pressure to raise scores is internal, they feel that the pressure to raise scores is placed on them by external factors. The pressure for these teachers is not an internal pressure, it is exerted from the hierarchical nature of the NYCDOE; however, it does not originate from within the schools. These teachers seem to have a more isolated view of the classroom and their role as teachers.

Mr. Diamond, 55, Chemistry Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, school. He has been teaching for 4 years. Mr. Diamond explains how the pressure he feels comes from the NYCDOE because he wants his school to have a good school report card and how he commiserates with his principal about their desire to have higher regents passing percentages.

Liguori: You mentioned before there was pressure on you, is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in chemistry?

Mr. Diamond: No. I don't think there's any direct pressure, I might even be creating some of it myself, but just knowing a little bit of how the system works and the fact that at the beginning of the year, I was given the percent mastery level and the percent passing levels of chemistry versus all the other sciences and ours stood out as being by far the weakest, I think that the administration's going to look and see how well they work particularly with the way that the school report card is done based upon improvement over the previous year, and if we have 100 percent mastery on math level A there's not much room for improvement there, the place that presents the best opportunity for improvement is chemistry.

Liguori: Has the principal ever mentioned anything to you in any manner?

Mr. Diamond: No, not directly, but I've commiserated with him, or shared my concerns with him and said that "oh gee, maybe what I need to do is dilute this curriculum back down into a more regents level and spend more time on it." And he sort of agrees with me that that's not a bad idea to do, or might be along the lines of what he's thinking of in case results don't get better, but he hasn't put any pressure on me yet at this point.

Liguori: Do you feel it's coming?

Mr. Diamond: I think it's going to come if our performance is similar to last summer's and it looks to me that that's what it's going to be.

Ms. Kent, 25, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school (A small high achieving school). Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Kent describes how the pressure emanating from the NYCDOE for her students to succeed directly affect her.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the mastery percentage in your subject area?

Ms. Kent: Yes. Definitely. I mean not as much this year, since we met our 85 at 85 kind of quota if you will. So we have surpassed the bare minimum, it's not really a minimum, the goal that the school has set for us; however, due to these new assessments like the school report card and the quality review, I know the school report card if you have the highest mastery percentage, you get bonus points and these other things. So there is pressure to consistently increase the mastery percentage.

Liguori: Where does this pressure come from?

Ms. Kent: It originates obviously with the board of ed., providing incentives for the schools to improve.

Liguori: On you?

Ms. Kent: On me? It's probably, partially from the principal and AP, but it's more self driven more than anything else I think because I know that's what they're expecting. Neither the principal or the AP has told me you have to do this or you have to change the way that you're teaching in order to achieve this, or you have to start reviewing right now and this is how you have to review. They've never done that, but I think there is that kind of, you know everyone knows in the background what you should be doing.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. Ms. Rapetti, who formerly taught at a school in upstate NY, discusses the pressures that she feels comes directly from the NYCDOE as she felt she had few pressures in Upstate NY.

Liguori: Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to get a high passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: Um, yeah, they've got the new incentives.

Liguori: Where do you feel the pressure from?

Ms. Rapetti: Uh, just from, I wouldn't even say the school, because I think it's just a NYC Board of Ed thing. I mean I didn't feel that way when I was upstate, it was much more of a whole education, it was like a process and that the students were the learner and kids like to do Extracurricular activities, are like "Ok, we'll have a Spanish club be so awesome." Not like "ech" So now trying to get, I guess I was working with different students, different education systems, that's more of a push and a pressure because you have that low student that you're trying to move ahead and that's fighting you to move ahead.

Liguori: Does the principal here put more pressure on you for a higher passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: No. No I wouldn't say so

Liguori: Does she put any pressure on you for a higher passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: Well, since I am the only Spanish teacher, it all reflects back on me, so I gotta put the pressure on myself more than she puts it on me. She really hasn't had the conversation with me like "oh, you need to..." But she did have the conversation with me as "only sit the kids who are going to pass, because anyone else there's no need for them to sit."

Liguori: Do you feel that there was another motive other than we don't want the kid to feel bad?

Ms. Rapetti: Oh, no no.

Liguori: Like I don't want it to look bad on my record sheet?

Ms. Rapetti: Possibly, you know. I don't really think so though. To me it just sounds like "there's no reason, let's not even think about it, it's just another thing, if they're not going to pass, just don't really..."

Liguori: Is there any pressure on you from the AP to raise regents scores?

Ms. Rapetti: No.

The teachers who claim that the pressure to have students succeed is an internal pressure seem to be more likely to buy into high stakes testing by claiming that the tests are good tests and valid predictors of success in the subject or feel that the tests are a necessary evil in getting their students to reach their ultimate goal of finishing high school and possibly going on to college. These teachers may be more likely to claim that they feel the internal pressure because they are looking out for their students' best interest. Teachers who make this claim may subscribe to a model of school structure where there is a constant feedback between teachers and their higher ups as to the needs of the school. Then there are teachers who feel no pressure to raise test scores. These teachers may feel that they are acting solely in the best interest of the children acting as independent operators from the state and that the state's logic is flawed in determining what the best course of action for their students.

Mr. Franklin, 32, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. He has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Franklin feels that a lot of the high stakes testing pressure he experiences is internal and that the pressures administrators face are of their own making, forcing unprepared students into higher level classes.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure from the administration to raise the passing percentage on the regents?

Mr. Franklin: No, because I put that pressure on myself.

Liguori: Does the principal ever put any pressure on you to raise your regents passing percentage?

Mr. Franklin: No. I put enough pressure on myself to do that. I think it's my Jewish grandmother who did that to me. That guilt. No, I put the pressure on myself, because I want them all to pass. These are the kids that are not even...like I mentioned before, the ESL students. I want them to pass. I think I can get them to pass.

Liguori: What about from the AP. Does he put any pressure on you?

Mr. Franklin: No.

Liguori: What about the staff in general?

Mr. Franklin: On the staff in general? There are times, yes, there can be pressure that they put. But it's their own making I think. The administration is making the pressure. You can't put students that aren't ready to take physics or chemistry into those classes and get ready to take a regents. You're just setting yourself up for failure. You don't do that

Ms. Stein, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Stein discusses how she feels that the pressure is internal to have her students do well on the exams because it is an "accomplishment," and maintains that she has high standards and would not feel pressured to pass students who do not do their work and wind up failing her class.

Liguori: Just some questions about your administrators' expectations. Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise passing percentage in your particular classes?

Ms. Stein: Do you mean report cards?

Liguori: No, the regents.

Ms. Stein: Oh, the regents. I do it probably for myself. Ehh, I do it for myself. I really want the kids to pass. It's like an accomplishment. Do I take pressure from the administration? No, because you know it's not really in my control. Because, you know, as long you do your work and they know you're doing your work, I mean, I can't follow them home, I can't buy them the books, the review books. It's just for myself for my students.

Liguori: You mentioned passing percentage in class, do you feel any pressure with that

Ms. Stein: Thinks...no, no, if everybody fails, I just fail them all. I mean if they're all...but you know what, you have to learn to give your tests according to the class. I mean it's very easy to get the whole class and I could get them to fail all of them. I could give them a test that is almost impossible to pass. So, no, you have to, your teaching methods, your testing, everything has to be geared according to the class. Every class is different, every capability is different. That's something I learned as a teacher.

Ms. Stabinski, 54, Foreign Language Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 29 years and was previously an administrator in another state. Ms. Stabinski feels that the pressure for her students to succeed is internally driven and that the administration does not pressure her because her subject's regents is not required for graduation. Despite her striving for excellence, she feels to some extent ignored by the administration.

Liguori: Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in your subject area?

Ms. Stabinski: I feel pressure and no one's ever said it to me. I put the pressure on myself mainly because I see how other areas of the school are under pressure and I say that because we're foreign language and unfortunately we don't feel that we count because we're told that for example this year the regents exam is on the same day as graduation. I have several senior who are in my regents level class and I'm like "well, it's in the afternoon;" "well, the regents ends at 4:15 and graduation is 4:30." So I'm like "how's that going to work?" And it's like (changes voice) "well, they don't really have to pass the regents in foreign language." I've seen however, the results for the English and the math and how they're published each year and how if you go up and down, not down of course, so I put pressure on myself because I want our department to also have a good showing. Our results are not however published for this school, only the things that count the Math and the English are published and we're sort of left off the list. But I'm not bitter (laughs).

Liguori: Does the principal mention to you your percent passing?

Ms. Stabinski: No.

Liguori: It's never even...

Ms. Stabinski: No, although I send emails saying last year our percentage was this, this year our percentage was that, we went up by this percentage and pretty much alert him to that, and...

Liguori: Does he answer back?

Ms. Stabinski: He'll answer back good job or something like that.

Liguori: What about your AP, does he put pressure on you?

Ms. Stabinski: Um, no, not in terms of levels of achievement no.

Liguori: Never mentioned in a staff meeting or anything?

Ms. Stabinski: No, but I do think that we're well thought of by our AP and I think he knows that we're working very hard and I don't think he feels the need to put any pressure on us honestly.

Pressures From Parents on Administrators and Teachers Based on Parental SES

While schools within the city of New York get funded from the same source, there are sometimes higher per-pupil expenditures based upon different factors. Furthermore, the student bodies of the schools are different because some schools are in areas that have been traditionally wealthy or poor. One main difference between the schools with wealthier parents and the schools with poorer parents was the level of parental involvement in the schools and the amount of pressures they put on teachers. This is consistent with much of the literature regarding the effects of Socio-Economic Status (SES) on schooling (Lareau 1987).

While all the schools had students of varied backgrounds, there were great differences in the average parental SES of the schools. The schools that had higher levels of parental SES were Bay View and Parkview High Schools. The schools with medium levels of average parental SES were Atlantic, Longshore and Packer Technical High Schools. The schools with low average parental SES were Basilone High School and David Dinkins Academy. The differences in the pressures placed on the teachers and administrators were different in each of the 3 school groups.

The schools with high average parental SES had high levels of parental pressure on both teachers and administrators. While there was a high level of parental pressure, there seemed to be lower levels of pressure from the NYCDOE. The pressures from the administrators on teachers were to have more students scoring mastery on the regents exams and the emphasis from parents was SAT scores/preparation and higher class grades in order to get their children into good colleges.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz mentions that because it's his first year at Parkview, he intentionally inflates his grades in order to appease the parents at the school.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in biology?

Mr. Arnaz: Oh, Definitely. In my previous high school teaching, which was at a non specialized type of high school in NYC, I was aware of personally, and made aware of my passing rate by my admin. But no one even talked about mastery before, but now it's very clear, the whole science staff was informed of what the previous year's and my predecessor's mastery rates were, it was 35%, which I guess is fortunate for me, because I feel it's something I can work on and improve hopefully. So my goal for this year is 50% and yeah, I feel like a lot of my success or failure for my instruction for the year would be based on that.

Liguori: [Where did you teach previously]?

Mr. Arnaz: ... I did my last 3 years in [a] school that had phased out.

Liguori: Who makes you aware of the mastery?

Mr. Arnaz: My Assistant Principal, and Principal as well, but yes, it was discussed one time, but very clearly somewhere in the first half of the year at one of our PD sessions.

Liguori: Was it to everyone or to you?

Mr. Arnaz: It was the whole staff, I think it was couched in the context of things like the school report card and the quality review, that this is a major measuring stick, especially for upper echelon high schools like ours, and we want to do our best.

Liguori: Does the AP say things throughout?

Mr. Arnaz: I mean, No, both he and the principal have been just very supportive, the thing that they would check in most is not for me to make crystal ball predictions, but to just ask me if there are any other resources that I think the kids would benefit from. They're very supportive of that, but it's clear what the goal is. Laughs.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Mr. Arnaz: I do get email from parents, I feel like the most important thing for me to disseminate to them was when the regents is and what kind of reviews we're doing at the end of the year. I'm going to offer some non mandatory, but highly encouraged review sessions, so I'm going to send a letter home to parents and having their involvement making sure their kids are studying for the test making sure their kids get a good night's sleep and are ready to come in early the next day.

Liguori: Do parents ever put pressure on you to raise grades?

Mr. Arnaz: To be fair this is only my first year here, I haven't had too much of it yet, but I do wonder what might happen after the scores come back in June.

Liguori: What about the report cards?

Mr. Arnaz: Since this is highly confidential I can just tell you, I think also because this is my first year here I wasn't quite sure what the lay of the land was, I know my grades have been pretty inflated this year and it's not an accident, part of my motivation is to keep the parents at bay. I'm pretty sure by giving fairly good report grades across the board that it will diminish the amount of negative parental feedback.

Liguori: Do you feel pressures from parents on the regents?

Mr. Arnaz: Surprisingly little to not at all, which I guess if I had to stop and think about it is not so surprising—I'm teaching freshman, so a lot of these kids might have taken a Math regents or an Earth Science regents in Middle school, but it was such an optional honors activity, it's not something that was on the radar for a lot of parents, but now when they're in high school, it's much more of a requisite, this is the first time that's the case, so I actually find myself happily being the person to make the parents aware, and I think that's fine.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Shriver discusses how parents at her school do not worry about the regents; parents instead focus on SATs and class grades in order to get their children into competitive colleges.

Liguori: What is the role of parents in this school?

Ms. Shriver: Our parents are really active, most of our parents are professionals, a lot of our parents have Masters degrees, we have some professors with PhDs, so parents are really active, but their goal is using our school as a step into a great college and a step into scholarships and so they're really active. It's weird, because there's this push to have our scores really high and to have our kids perform well on exams from parents, but then there's also a push to not have our school be as rigorous or demanding in regards to "oh, our school gives too much homework;" "oh, our teachers expect too much;" "oh, this book's too hard, I didn't read that until I was in college" so I think we get both responses from parents.

Liguori: So they want it both ways, they want you guys to maintain high standards, but they want you to take it easy on their kids?

Ms. Shriver: Exactly. Exactly.

Liguori: Do you ever feel pressure from parents to raise the grades of their children?

Ms. Shriver: Yes. Yes.

Liguori: How so?

Ms. Shriver: Like at parent teacher conference and a parent tells me "Oh, I read my son's essay and I thought definitely that was definitely not less than an 87, and yet you gave him an 82, so can you explain that?" or "isn't there any extra work that he could do, isn't there any extra...can you give him an extra assignment or can he just make this assignment up so his grade can be higher?" "what can we do to get that grade higher?" or "in all of his other classes this is his score, so shouldn't his score in this class also be that way?" I've never been to PTA meetings because the teachers I do know who have been there say that they seem to be aggressive, hostile, meetings and that the parents seem to be really demanding of the school and the teachers, which is fine, totally fine, but there is this sort of pressure to give it to them both ways.

Liguori: Do they ever mention regents exams, like I want my kid to get mastery on the regents?

Ms. Shriver: No. Never regents exams, SATs yes, but never regents.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino discusses the pressures parents place on him in order to raise class grades.

Liguori: What's the role of parents in this school?

Mr. Lomangino: Very involved.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you to raise class grades of their children?

Mr. Lomangino: Always.

Liguori: How so?

Mr. Lomangino: They come out and directly ask you for it, they ask you how you got your grade as a way of trying to argue that you're not doing it their way. It's not so bad, what happens is that you know that the parents want high grades, the students want high grades, it's very grade driven here and they do exert their pressure sometimes indirectly and sometimes very directly.

Liguori: Do they ever put pressure on you with the regents? Like they want their child to do well on the regents?

Mr. Lomangino: No, it's more about the class grades.

The schools with low and medium parental SES had low levels of parental pressure on teachers and administrators. While there was low parental pressure, there were higher pressures from the NYCDOE. Teachers and administrators felt that the pressures from the NYCDOE were not centered on class grades of students but test scores; however, teachers felt that administrators placed a high premium on students passing their classes rather than the regents. This may be due to the students requiring a certain amount of credits in order to graduate and administrators not wanting to lose sight of graduation rate, an important component of the school report cards and AYP status.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci discusses the level of expectations that parents have in different parts of the state.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on you to raise the class grades of students?

Mr. Matucci: No, I've never gotten pressure from a parent to change a grade or anything. When I was upstate, yes, not in the city. You know sometimes that would actually show that parents cared a little bit about the performance of the students. I mean the city, "you're giving my child a 65, oh, terrific." It's a 65, a 65 is I'm barely, minimally passing.

Mr. Walsh, 49, Principal, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Former Math Teacher, has been in education for 28 years and has been an administrator for 11 years. Mr. Walsh discusses how parents at his school do not have high expectations for their children.

Liguori: Do you feel that there's pressure from the parents for you to raise regents scores or raise test performance?

Mr. Walsh: No.

Liguori: Are parents involved in this school?

Mr. Walsh: I would say limited, I would like them to be more, but I think in this particular school, and several schools [in this borough] is the dynamic that parents have low expectations.

Liguori: Do parents put pressure on teachers for example to raise class grades of students? Like “Why did you fail my kid?”

Mr. Walsh: Well, I think that’s...That’s not uncommon, but I think that’s more when they feel that there is a sense of unfairness, and I would say 75 percent of the time when they get all of the information they have a better understanding as to why a grade is....they’re not looking for artificially inflated grades.

Mr. So, 35, Chemistry Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. So discusses parents’ unrealistic expectations for class grades and their lack of attention to regents scores.

Liguori: Do you feel pressured by parents on the regents?

Mr. So: Not as much as I feel like I should.

Liguori: Do parents ever put pressure on you to raise the class grades of their children?

Mr. So: Yes, I’ve actually had a parent who for no reason told me that they think their kid deserves an A, despite the fact that the student didn’t pass the midterm, they have no justification. I feel like the parent population, most of the parents don’t really understand why they need the good grades. They just realize that they need good grades because they need to succeed and that’s the mark of success. So, they don’t really seem to understand that they can’t really put 2 and 2 together that hard work, the work and everything is related.

Mr. Ramnauth, 36, Math Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Ramnauth attributes the lack of parental attention to working parents.

Liguori: Do parents put any pressure on the school to raise regents results?

Mr. Ramnauth: Um, our school as I mentioned, we are not in that category for parents to pressure the school, not that we’re a low functioning place. Every regents we have good results here, over 90 percent.

Liguori: Are parents really involved here?

Mr. Ramnauth: Not really (laughs). Not really. I’m telling you, we had this program, basic computer program for parents and their response on my door was not great, and that’s because a lot of parents are working, a lot of parents have 2 jobs, they’re struggling in the city.

Liguori: Do the parents call and ask why you failed their child?

Mr. Ramnauth: That is once in a blue moon (laughs). That’s from my point of view again, different teachers might have different opinions.

How Have The Small School and Accountability Movements Increased High Stakes Testing Pressure

Like many urban districts, the NYCDOE has recently added many smaller schools in order to replace larger failing schools. This is the third wave of small schools being

added to the NYCDOE, the first wave occurred in the 1980s, the second wave occurred in the mid 1990s and the current wave started in 2003 and continues to the present day. Since the 1990s, the number of students has remained the same, but the number of high schools has doubled and the average enrollment has fallen from 2,179 to 1,220 (Iatarola, Schwartz, Stiefel and Chellman 2008). Many times these schools meet at the campuses of larger schools that were closed down and have larger per pupil expenditures (Iatarola et al. 2008; Kafka 2008). The small schools movement has its ideological roots in the works of John Dewey (Kafka 2008; Semel and Sadovnik 2008) and has widespread support from municipal and private funding sources (Kafka 2008). One reason these schools were created was in order to have schools more responsive to the needs of the students. These schools were also designed to have students interact more with their teachers. Teachers have a more intimate relationship with the students as they usually teach them for a whole year instead of just one semester. There is also a smaller amount of bureaucracy in these schools. Instead of having a principal, several assistant principals, department chairs, and deans, these schools have a principal and few assistant principals.

While there is no evidence of “cream skimming,” where smaller schools take the most talented students, the small schools movement has led to resources being diverted from larger schools leading to overcrowding and potential violence at larger schools that have to absorb the excess students from schools that were closed due to the small schools movement (Iatarola et al. 2008). This has led to greater pressures on principal and teachers in larger schools. Even though there are more resources being diverted to smaller schools, there are also still potential problems for smaller schools. In smaller

schools, teachers may feel more pressure put on them by the higher-ranking administrators, students and parents. As mentioned previously, larger schools feel much pressure from these smaller schools, but these small schools also feel pressure especially since there are fewer students and a few students can influence the passing percentage of a much larger group. Also, even though there is much more collegiality between the faculty and administrators, there can be friction when the directives from up above can affect the nature of the teacher-administrator interaction in small schools.

Mr. McCormick, 43, Physics Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. He has been teaching for 13 years. Mr. McCormick like many other teachers felt that teacher-administrator tension arises mostly from enforcing NYCDOE rules and directives.

Liguori: How well do teachers and administrators get along?

Mr. McCormick: Great. Pretty well.

Liguori: What's the nature of that interaction?

Mr. McCormick: Well, it's a very small school with a staff of you know 3 ½ dozen and the nature of the interaction is casual and collegial and pretty much cooperative. I think whatever friction occurs primarily occurs at times when the principal is acting as an instrument of the department of education as opposed to the leader of this group of teachers. When he's enforcing other people's rules, that's when there's going to be friction.

Another pressure that is placed on schools is the labeling of schools as failing by the state. When schools attain the failing label by the state, it is very difficult for that label to be removed and often the schools will undergo a process where they will be closed and the teachers and administrators would be reassigned. Many teachers openly feared their schools one day being labeled as failing; in fact, many teachers had previously been assigned to failing schools and did not like the stigma attached to having worked at a failing school.

Mr. Hanratty, 28, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 5th year teaching. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School, a school that is being phased out due to poor performance. Mr. Hanratty feels that the pressure at his old school was greater because there were more people observing him while he was doing his job.

Liguori: I know you came from [Kosciusko, a failing school labeled as a SURR]. Is this a SURR School?

Mr. Hanratty: No, it's not.

Liguori: Does not being at a SURR school influence your teaching style any?

Mr. Hanratty: When I was at Kosciusko, there were a lot more mandates, and there were a lot more visitations and I was sent on a lot more professional developments where we had to buy into certain teaching styles, like ramp up, which is something that I was sent to learn how to teach. So, I was expected to run proper ramp up classrooms, which is something that I really don't have to do here. I didn't completely buy into the whole ramp up curriculum, I mean there were certain nuggets of information that I took that I still use, but no, I tend to, I don't get those same pressures here. So I get pretty much to get to do what I want.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease?

Mr. Hanratty: Yes.

Liguori: How so?

Mr. Hanratty: I think one of the major issues is that I don't have people looking over my shoulder constantly at every little thing I'm doing. I tend to be a lot more relaxed. Being where I was before where we were constantly under review, that kind of helped mold the way I taught then so now it's kind of natural almost part of my nature to super prepare and everything. I think it actually helped in a way.

Ms. Oxford, 43, Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. A former Math Teacher, she has been in education for 21 years and an administrator for 8 years. She was previously an administrator at James Buchanan High School. Ms. Oxford discusses how she did not ever want to work in another failing school again and that it motivated her in doing her job at David Dinkins Academy.

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Ms. Oxford: No. and not trying to be ever.

Liguori: Were you previously at a SURR school?

Ms. Oxford: No, I was at a school, where I did my administration that got the label SURR.

Liguori: Was it while you were and administrator there?

Ms. Oxford: It was in the closing of my administration.

Liguori: Wow.

Ms. Oxford: So in terms of, um, the principal that hired me, a lot of it is, was, being a product of that environment, you know where a school in a poor community, we're hard to staff, I mean really get quality teachers and then for the surrounding middle school, which is your biggest feeder, kids are just really weak, because schools where there are troubles academically in the neighborhood, you don't draw the best teachers, and it's a bad combination and being flooded with a barrage of issues, the teachers who were there were committed, but hard to change the psychology of a lot of families and survive through that and we started to make some headroads as it related to English and Mathematics, because there a number of staff members who were saddled with the status quo, it's a regents class, but you know what these kids are not going to college, and the level of expectation was extremely low, and you have to change that before kids move and even when I look at my first class here, as we pushed and prodded, some kids have taken advantage of that, and others...but looking at my incoming freshman, have really jumped in and have absorbed a lot where, kids make each other better.

Liguori: Does not being in a SURR school influence your leadership style?

Ms. Oxford: Um, long pause. I think because I don't ever want to be a SURR school, influences my leadership style, because I know once you're labeled with that, hard to shake, hard to shake, because now you don't get a draw of those kinds of kids, so for me my pressures are how do I bring programs in to keep us from being SURR. Kids, who I get by default and via selection are not necessarily kids I would have picked to go to Cornell, but ok, you picked me so you're here. How do I in 4 years get you ready so if you want to be on the path, Cornell can look at your application and go, hmm, this can be a consideration as opposed to "you've gotta be kidding me." You know, so in terms of helping the school get the labels that would draw the kind of Cornell kids like has been really the other mantle. So in terms of being able to, um, be part of the AVID program, which is a national program to help kids make their own determinations for success, we're providing protocols for teachers. How do I train kids to be thinkers and progressive academicians? And it is a psychology, but it's also skills and training so that kids know how to take notes, if you want for a 6th grade teacher that taught s dictation, going to Cornell or being able to sit in a AP class or college level writing in house would have been very difficult because it was the everyday training of how do you take notes, how do I just get the fine points so that it becomes automatic.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease because you're not in a SURR school?

Ms. Oxford: Yeah, right now, but the pressure's heating up, because this is my first graduating class, and data is driven off of what they do.

Liguori: Were you under a lot of pressure when you were at a SURR school?

Ms. Oxford: You know, for me, because it was always about what do I contribute to the bottom line, it is important for me, the school may be labeled a SURR, but the math department is the department of scholarship. You know, the English department when my colleague was there, was the department of scholarship and when that AP left, things began to crumble and I think what it taught me is how do I build capacity from within. So, I really began to notice I needed to share processes with just some core people you know where I had a lead math teacher who was able to ok, you be the eyes for me as it relates to instruction in training you, and he was really a teacher's teacher. And he was good and teachers wanted to be like him, so they worked harder, where I can now work on the administration of leading math, so in terms of really being able to build capacity, the same thing here, where you get your stripes and feathers, is not what you do while you're here is can it sustain itself when you're not here and I think that comes from really trusting and building a capacity from within.

Despite the pressures that are placed on closing schools and the constant monitoring of everything that transpires in those schools, some teachers felt that there was less pressure at failing schools. At failing schools there is also sense of futility, where teachers are helpless and nothing they do will improve the status of the school, where in non-failing schools there is constant pressure to improve or maintain standards. Some teachers felt that there were such low expectations of the teachers and students at failing schools that it was in a sense liberating and reduced the amount of pressure placed on them.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz feels that there was less pressure at his old school because there were low expectations for his students.

Liguori: Do you know what a SURR school is?

Mr. Arnaz: Yes Absolutely. Laughs.

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Mr. Arnaz: No. This is not a SURR school. Laughs. I've worked in SURR schools, I've worked in corrective action.

Liguori: Does not being in a SURR school, does it change your teaching style?

Mr. Arnaz: Even when I was in a SURR school, I think even the chapter leaders, or maybe just the fact that I was a new teacher, a lot of that pressure, I never felt it very personally. So, Ironically, I probably feel more pressure on me individually now that I'm in a specialized high school as I did in a general ed school.

Liguori: Would you say that you're more at ease because you're not closing down?

Mr. Arnaz: No no no, it's almost the opposite, this is what I'm telling you, in a school that has a lot of problems already, it gives you a certain cushion, whereas now, when you're in a school that's doing well, and you really feel the pressure to maintain and improve that standing. Maybe it's just me.

Liguori: It's like having a crappy house..

Mr. Arnaz: I don't have to paint it this year, if everyone else's house on your block is painted, you better paint your house.

Ms. Likins, 31, Former Social Studies Teacher, Assistant Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been in education for 9 years, this is her first year as an administrator. She was previously assigned as a teacher to James Buchanan High School. Ms. Likins feels that she felt less pressure at her old school because its fate was decided and there was nothing she could do about it.

Liguori: Is this a SURR school?

Ms. Likins: No.

Liguori: Were you previously at a SURR school?

Ms. Likins: Buchanan was considered a SURR school.

Liguori: Does not being in a SURR school change your teaching or your leadership style?

Ms. Likins: No, because I don't want to be SURR. Laughs.

Liguori: Like being here for example does that change anything?

Ms. Likins: I really had to calm down a lot and just the demographics, still predominantly black, but I have more boys less girls, at School name, there were more girls less boys even though the ratio was pretty much the same. Girls are more catty, just by nature. Boys if there's not girls around there's nobody to show off for. So my conversations with the boys have changed, the same as my conversations with the girls. In terms of just being a leader had to change, but my teaching style stayed the same.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease being at a school that is not a SURR school?

Ms. Likins: Nope, because our standards are so high, we just had our quality review last week, I was like damn, you know, I gotta make sure we get through this and do really, really, well, because it's published results on us, the standards were high and we did very well, and I feel like if I ease, everybody else will ease and then we'll end up being SURR.

Liguori: Did you feel more pressure at a SURR school?

Ms. Likins: Nope.

Liguori: Did you feel less pressure?

Ms. Likins: Yes.

Liguori: Why is that?

Ms. Likins: The nail was already in the coffin. You know, once you get a negative title, you really take that on, like there's nothing we can do, it's over now, you know as opposed to c'mon guys let's roll up your sleeves and jump in.

Literature on the Organization of Schooling and Examples of School Structures Found in the Sample

The modern concept of schools evolved from and is based on urban schools that flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Tyack 1974); however, there is much debate as to how the actual learning takes place within schools, which has led to many different competing models in the organization of schools. The factors that are taken into account are whether or not teachers react quickly to administrative pressures, how teachers react to the social class backgrounds of their students and how the staffing of a school affects the way teachers and administrators relate to one another. Because these models discuss the pathways of student learning, they are also germane to the discussions of the pathways of high stakes pressures on teachers and students. In discussions with teachers, it was found that the pressures exerted on teachers did follow previously described models of school organization; however, teachers who may have subscribed to one view of school organization for student learning may have subscribed to a competing view of school organization for high stakes testing pressure. This could indicate that there are different pathways for student learning and high stakes pressures on teachers and students. Gamoran, Secada and Marrett (2000) summarize four basic organizational frameworks for schools that have been proposed over the past 40 years: the input-output

model, the nested layers model, the loose coupling model, and the dynamic, multidirectional model.

Coleman and his research on equality of educational opportunity exemplifies the input-output model of school organization and student learning (Gamoran et al. 2000). In this model, organizational resources are seen as directly affecting student learning. What goes on inside the school is a black box and the interactions between students, teachers, and administrators inside the school are not observed. If teachers or administrators were to subscribe to this model of school organization, they would discount the effect teachers and good teaching have on student learning. Schools would succeed and fail based solely upon the socioeconomic characteristics of the students and the economic resources available to the school. Acceptance of this model was observed with some teachers and administrators especially at high performing schools where some teachers and administrators felt that students were largely talented and were able to learn the material on their own. This phenomenon was also observed with teachers of lower performing students where there was little expectation of passing and teachers felt that despite their best efforts certain students were unreachable.

Mr. Yao, 26, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing high school. He has been teaching for 3 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Yao discusses how the teachers role is sometimes minimized in schools and the quality of the students determine school performance.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure put on you because of NCLB.

Mr. Yao: Well, I've never taught under an environment that didn't have NCLB, so I don't really have a lot of things to compare it to. One thing is that I don't think that my personal performance even at this small school really affects or has a large effect on whether or not this school is high performing or not. I think that even if I had a bad year, it's not like the entire school had a bad year. And really for the most part, whether or not our school succeeds or fails, I think it's largely due to the students. I remember that one of my... I had a teacher from high school that I kept in touch with and he had a son that was about my age and went through [a highly competitive high school] and he saw the staff there turn over 2 or three times at least the staff that his son had turned over two or three times while his son was there while his son was there over the span of 4 years so it was like, but the school is still very high performing regardless of whether teachers come and go, so even whether administrators or principals come and go so I think it's the quality of the students that determine the performance of the school.

Liguori: So what do teachers account for?

Mr. Yao: I think...

Liguori: Are you meaningless?

Mr. Yao: Am I meaningless, I definitely mean less than I think my students and the parents of my students here give credit for or blame me for. I think I'm there to establish motivation, I'm there to establish guidelines and guidance for this is the path you take to learn a particular subject and for each teacher, they bring in kind of their own perspective of how a certain topic should be taught, like what topic follow what other topics and then feed back if student had no feedback there would be no learning. Probably not part of the official job description, I'm there in terms of motivation, in terms of relating to my students if they are already highly motivated, getting them to seek out larger challenges, if they're not motivated at all, give them incentive to actually push through and learn the material.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan, who deals with mostly Special Education students, feels that most of his students will fail the regents and that there is little he could do to improve the fate of his students.

Liguori: If for example, your school was under real, real scrutiny from the supe[rintendent]'s office, like you're about to be closed, like Kosciusko, would that influence your teaching style?

Mr. Sagan: No, because that wouldn't be my fault. I'm a good teacher, I do my best. I don't phone it in. I don't show movies everyday, I don't not care, I care, so I don't think it has anything to do with me, it's not my kids.

Liguori: Do you feel more at ease because you're not like Kosciusko, about to close?

Mr. Sagan: I feel being special ed, I'm at ease, because there's not a... Special ed, I'm at ease because my regents record is really not as important as it is upstairs...and even if I was Jesus of teaching, I would maybe get 3 more [kids to pass the regents].

Ms. Leka, 26, Special Education Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 5 years. Ms. Leka discusses that although she works hard teaching her students that for some students there is almost no chance of passing the regents.

Liguori: Do you feel more pressure on you to raise the regents passing percentage?

Ms. Leka: Sometimes, but most of the time no, I think mostly because I feel like the regents is designed in such a ways that it doesn't even include my students, and I can honestly say from day one, in September, I'm always teaching, I always have a lesson, I'm never unprepared, I know this information, but some of the kids cannot get it into their head.

The nested layers model of school organization and student learning is more complex than the input-output model and elaborates on the role of teachers within the school. Barr and Dreeben (1983) discuss the linkages between organizational resources, teachers and student learning, where there is a flow of resources from the school to the classroom, from the classroom to the instructional group, and from the instructional group to the student. Empirical support for this model could be found in Chubb and Moe's (1990) study, where it was found that principals in effective schools have different

goals and priorities than teachers in less effective schools. Swanson (2005) looked at how different policies enacted at the national level are implemented at the state level. It was found that there is a level of coordination between the two actors. This project noted that many teachers who subscribed to the nested layers model felt that there was great coordination between national and state departments of education and that their direction emanated with NCLB, which in turn directed their state department of education to enact guidelines that were followed by the NYCDOE, which made their way into the respondents' schools. Teachers and administrators that subscribe to the nested layers model see teachers and schools as getting their direction from the Chancellor's office, which has an indirect and obvious effect on the policies that are implemented in their classrooms including their pedagogical techniques, which have a direct effect on student learning.

Ms. Goldfarb, 51, Special Education Assistant Principal, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been in education 28 years and an administrator for 15 years. Ms. Goldfarb discusses how many of her directives come directly from the state bureaucracy.

Liguori: Oh yeah. The decisions for example, how do the decisions you make as an administrator affect teachers or what happens?

Ms. Goldfarb: Well, a lot some comes from the state, so I have to use what their you know, the decisions there and I try to give it to my department telling them what the state's requirements are and how we come up together how we could make the best possible thing for our kids to be more successful. Some things I have to explain if it's more organizational, I have to then just tell the teachers this is the best efficient, cleanest way to do it. But it's after usually as we talk about it (pause) within the department. In terms of the whole entire school, I'm sure a lot the departments do something similar. They know the requirements and then in the cabinet we sometimes look at the requirements and we tell our teachers at the department level.

Ms. Russell, 49, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Ms. Russell discusses how many of her administrators goals are set by the state.

Liguori: Just in general a couple of questions about expectations that administrators might have for you. Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise or to raise or to maintain the passing percentage in your subject area?

Ms. Russell: No, not at all, to maintain a certain score, maintain a certain kids are passing I think comes from the state. No, it comes from the superintendents office and it's filtered to the principal and I think that's where it comes from, it's not they're in charge. There's pressure on the principal to maintain a certain kids that are passing as opposed to failing. A certain amount of kids that you know are achieving certain exams or goals.

Liguori: And does that filter down to you?

Ms. Russell: It filters down to everybody.

Liguori: It filters down to everybody. OK. So the principal...what might happen?

Ms. Russell: It's expected from the principal I think. And it's through administration, our APs, that pressure is put on them. They get the pressure from the top and I think it goes to the principal and then it goes to administrators/APs and they filter it until the teachers put their expectations higher. So we put the expectations high on the students also. And I think once you have that standard of expectations the kids know what to expect and this is what is required.

The loose coupling model of school organization and student learning addresses some of the deficiencies of the nested layers approach. The loose coupling model addresses the detachment of the administrative functions of a school and teaching and teaching and student learning. Weick (1976) used the term loose coupling in order to describe the relationships between students, teachers and administrators in the American educational system. In this model, administrators have authority in personnel decisions, physical environment and curricular materials, which all affect student learning, but bureaucratic controls are loosened to give teachers more control of their classrooms (Gamoran and Dreeben 1986). The advantage of loose coupling in the education system is that the system does not have to respond to every little change that may occur. Furthermore, there are more opportunities for self-determination by actors within a system. Drawbacks of a loosely coupled system would be that the efficiency of such a system could be hampered. In relation to high stakes tests, teachers may be slow to adopt all of the recommendations of their superiors because of this loose coupling. While this may be seen as a drawback, it could also be helpful during periods when student requirements are not yet clearly defined. Loose coupling also allows teachers to act as autonomous or semi-autonomous actors when responding to new testing regimes. The loose coupling model may also lead to a view of principal leadership where effective schools have administrators that set out general common goals for the staff to work

toward (Gamoran et al 2000). The only factor that impacts teaching practices directly is teacher training and socialization. In this model, administrators may indicate that the school should be committed to raising test scores; however, the specific teacher behaviors to reach that goal would arise from teacher socialization.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn discusses how her principal has never seen her teach and on classroom matters there is little interaction between her and her supervisors.

Liguori: Do you feel if [the mission statement] were well stated that teachers would stay true to it?

Ms. Penn: Hmm, I don't know about that. I think it would have to be more than just being well stated, that they would have to deal with the culture of teachers in their message. But just based on what I know about the culture, I don't know that I think, just that in that a lot of teachers seem that there doesn't seem to be a lot of...Hmm...How do you explain this....that teachers seem to do whatever they say they want to do in a way.

Liguori: Regardless of what's being said in the main office?

Ms. Penn: Right.

Liguori: Do you feel that maybe if the teachers aren't staying true or doing whatever they want, what about the students would it ever filter down to the students?

Ms. Penn: Umm. I think that the only way that it would get to the students is through the teachers and so if the teacher doesn't want to, then.

Liguori: Another question about your opinions regarding school organization. How well do administrators interact with the teachers?

Ms. Penn: Um. So it depends on the level that you're talking about. The principal here is very hands off. So I don't think he's ever seen me teach, in the year and a half that I've been here. He doesn't really walk around or come into teacher's classrooms, which is something that I have experienced at the other school that I was at. My assistant principal is also probably a little bit more hands off than the AP of the school that I was before this. But he definitely has seen me teach several times and generally I feel like I had a fairly good relationship with the department chair. But it's difficult, it depends I think a lot on...so this is something that I found actually working with the fellows this summer, is that the people who I thought were doing a real good job and who I gave lots of positive feedback thought that I was a good supervisor and the people who thought that I were not doing such a good job and who I was critical of in my feedback no matter how nicely I worded that thought that I was a really bad supervisor, and I feel like I see the same thing in my department here. The people who generally the assistant principal is supportive and say she's doing a good job, say oh yeah, he's a nice guy, he's a great AP, and the people who he's more critical think he's not as good.

Liguori: Do you feel he's more critical of you? Which camp would you fall into?

Ms. Penn: I would definitely fall into the former camp. He in fact, more than I think I deserved he'd only seen me teach 2 or 3 times ever, he seemed to have this impression that I was a very qualified teacher (laughs), and that actually was a little unfounded. (Laughing) Yeah, you're a great teacher, and he would send other teachers to my room to watch me teach, um the typical response was "I hear you're a good teacher, and I was send to watch you."... I think that [administrators] have a very hard time monitoring what a teacher does in the classroom and especially if [they're] not there every day it makes it tough. Even if [they] try every so often I am not sure even those teachers who my AP really tried to actively get them to change their style, um

by meeting with them several times, by having them observe other teachers, I am not sure that I saw any difference in their teaching.

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez discusses the great deal of autonomy that is granted to teachers who have experience.

Liguori: Do the decisions made by administrators affect your teaching?

Mr. Lopez: No, not generally.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Lopez: Uh, because this is a school where if you're an experienced teacher, you have a lot of leeway to do what you want and if you are effective in that, they generally don't question it. It's only if they start to hear things that you know, you may not be effective, you may not have control you're not preparing your kids right then they may step in and try to change the way you teach, but otherwise you're pretty other than some administrative stuff, you're pretty clear.

Ms. Stabinski, 54, Foreign Language Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 29 years and was previously an administrator in another state. Ms. Stabinski discusses how the administrators' role is to facilitate Professional Development and how their classroom observations have little effect on her teaching.

Liguori: Do the decisions made by administrators affect your teaching?

Ms. Stabinski: Well, (Pause), well, obviously when the administration decides for example to fund a trip for the foreign language teachers to the annual conference, um, their decision to fund that obviously has an impact on my teaching, because it really has broadened me and even though I have been teaching for many years, I still always learn a lot of new things from that kind of an experience. So those kinds of decisions obviously affect my teaching. Obviously things like the observations that are done periodically, I tend to overwork and I tend to be a perfectionist, so I don't necessarily feel that it affects my teaching as much as it might affect someone else's teaching, knowing that they're going to be observed might spark in them some fervor to improve, I have a lot to learn as anybody does, but I do feel that I put a lot into my teaching to begin with, so knowing that I'm observed X number of times a year doesn't really affect or change my teaching.

The dynamic, multidirectional model of school organization and student learning addresses the unidirectional nature of the nested layers model. In this model, the practices of teachers in the classroom impacts not only student learning, but also the school itself. There is a two-way interaction between teachers and administrators, where teachers give feedback to their superiors who in turn change teaching practices directly and via professional development. The relationship between the school and teachers can also shift over time. Teachers and administrators that subscribe to this model would more likely feel that the administration is responsive to teacher requests and behaviors. Much of the success of Catholic schools can be attributed to the successful

implementation of this model, where teachers feel administrators listen to them and respond their needs (Bryk, Lee and Holland1993). In the sample, the teachers who were more likely to support the multidirectional model were older teachers and/or had a position of respect within the school; they felt that they had an impact on the schools direction whether it was because they were at a small school where they have an open door to the principal's office, are part of a small cadre of teachers who have a large amount of input into the school's direction or have a supervisor that elicits their opinions and brings it to the principal, who then in turn acts on it.

Mr. Ahmed, 40, Math Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 5 years. Mr. Ahmed discusses how the principal involved the teachers in a big decision that would impact the whole school

Liguori: The direction of the school and the mission statement. Were teachers involved in the direction of the school?

Mr. Ahmed: Yeah. We're always having meetings. We're always talking. And one of those management meetings, I hear about when they met with the AP they went to the Principal. I did not go to this meeting to be honest with you. But I know they do get involved. One thing just to show you how the meetings of the school that we always attend. We were supposed to pick something, the new thing that the board of ed had coming up. And He, He made it clear that it was up to him. There's three things that he had to decide. So he made it clear that he was not making the decision by himself. It was going to be a decision from the other teachers. I don't remember what it was, It was something with the board of ed, I think he had to pick something, a company that was going to work with them.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. Was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School. Dr. Wang discusses how teachers who were involved with the founding of the school have more input into the direction of the school.

Liguori: Do teachers have an effect on the decisions administrators make?

Dr. Wang: Pause. Sigh. Sometimes, it depends on the teacher. I've been consulted a number of times, I'm on the student leadership team, and since I was one of the core members in the beginning, there are times within the year where we go on a retreat and we try to hammer out what's our next plan just because she knows that the core members are the ones that have survived the longest, and so that gives us some credibility that we're in it for the long haul.

Liguori: Will she listen to your opinion?

Dr. Wang: She'll listen to the advice, whether or not she takes it and implements it is a totally different story, because for sometimes she already has a set idea of what should happen and if your argument is not clearly overpowering in its logic, then what she has in her, then she's going to take hers over yours. But if you can really make a solid case as to why it can't be this way, then she would highly consider it.

Ms. Osman, 36, Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Osman, who has an administrative license that she does not use, is involved in school cabinet meetings and has an impact on school decisions.

Liguori: Do you have any effect on the decisions that the administrators make?

Ms. Osman: Um, yes I do, not all teachers, because I am part of the cabinet and we do collaborate, we do confer with each other, we hold regular meetings to discuss the curriculum, to discuss the next level for students, so, yes I'm a part of the decision making.

Liguori: Why are you in the cabinet, is it because [you have a school administration license], or just because you wanted to be?

Ms. Osman: I'm in the cabinet, not because of the license, because there are other teachers who don't have the license, and they're on the cabinet, it's probably because I am one of the senior teachers. I am not senior in this school, but because of the years of experience, um, it's mostly due to that and I expressed interest in being part of the cabinet member.

Ms. Mendelson, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ms. Mendelson discusses how her department chair will involve teachers in decisions.

Liguori: Do you have an impact on the decisions that they make?

Ms. Mendelson: Well, they're always asking us our opinions, you know and to write this down, I have this problem, you know, my AP is big on that. "I have this problem let's brainstorm, how can we make it better?" And we come up and we write down a whole bunch of ideas and she puts it together in I guess her cabinet meeting, she presents it to them.

Ms. Davis, 24, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Davis discusses how administrators solicit her advice as to what books are needed for her class.

Liguori: Do you feel any pressure on you?

Ms. Davis: No. I pressure myself. I don't feel the pressure from them, but I want the kids to do well.

Liguori: Do you feel the pressure in Math A?

Ms. Davis: No, I only have one class. I think I'm confident with it.

Liguori: What kind of pressure does the principal place on you to increase passing percentage?

Ms. Davis: I don't think he puts pressure on me. He asks what do we need to do, but I don't think that's pressure. He can about it, how are we looking? Do we need anything? Do we want the review book. What can we do?

Liguori: What about the AP?

Ms. Davis: Same thing.

Liguori: Do you ever feel that you're not meeting their expectations?

Ms. Davis: He's asked me, how do I feel about the passing percentage and I say the same thing 50-50. I haven't felt any pressure. I've told them. I don't think they're ready. I voice my opinions

High Stakes Testing Pressures Follow Different Mechanisms from Teaching

Regardless of previous statements, in discussing pressures to pass state exams, many teachers subscribed to the Nested Layers model of school organization where they

felt that pressure from the chancellor was channeled through to their principals to their direct supervisors to them; however, while many of these teachers subscribed to the nested layers model when discussing pressures placed on them to increase passing percentages on state exams, they may have subscribed to another model of school organization when discussing their classroom, for example, the loose coupling model where there is a disconnect between administrative functions and teaching or the Dynamic Multidirectional model where teachers have a say in the direction of the school.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn who subscribed to a loose coupling view of classroom supervision discusses how pressure is related to her via a Nested Layers approach.

Liguori: Just a couple of questions about expectations administrators may have for you regarding test scores. Do you feel that there's a lot of pressure for you to raise or maintain the passing percentage in your subject area on the regents?

Ms. Penn: It's definitely discussed. So, there's definitely like when we're having meetings "oh, this is the percentage that we have for Earth Science last year, and we want to try to keep the percentage this year." But I think the woman who taught ESL Earth Science also had like 90 percent passing. Um, so it's definitely discussed at meetings. Do I feel a lot of pressure? I don't know that anyone's ever come to me and said specifically to me "there are changes that need to be made." Yeah I think that it's there, it's definitely there, it's not there every day, but whenever we do meet it's mentioned.

Liguori: Hi, Medium or Low pressure would you say?

Ms. Penn: Medium.

Liguori: What about from the principal? Is there any pressure coming from him to the teachers?

Ms. Penn: If there is pressure coming from him, it's via the assistant principals, but from him directly, no. But I think that's because we just don't have very much interaction with him at all.

Liguori: What about from your AP? Is there a lot of pressure from your AP to raise test scores?

Ms. Penn: That's actually the pressure I guess that I was describing earlier. So it's like this medium pressure when we get together, I don't really feel it as much again because I said for some strange reason, my AP has seen me teach twice and has this idea that I am a good teacher. But I do know that I had a colleague who was a new teacher this year, and even though I think she was doing an excellent job one of the other teachers complained about the job that she was doing and my Assistant Principal did sit down with her and was like "this is the percentage of passing that we had last year and we're going to be graded on this percentage of passing and so we need you to step up your game because we need to make sure we have this percentage." So that definitely was a factor in the discussion they had about their teaching.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan previously discussed how there was a lot of autonomy in his relationship with his administrators in his classroom discusses how pressure is handed down the chain of command.

Liguori: Do you feel that there are any pressures put upon you by the principal to raise passing percentages?

Mr. Sagan: Probably, but he puts it on the APs, and they're supposed to either put it on us, or give it to us in our own way.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz previously mentioned that there was a great deal of teacher autonomy in classroom instruction, but feels that the principal and the assistant principal put pressure on him to attain a high percentage of students who attain mastery scores on the regents.

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in biology?

Mr. Arnaz: Oh, Definitely. In my previous high school teaching, which was at a non specialized type of high school in NYC, I was aware of personally, and made aware of my passing rate by my admin. But no one even talked about mastery before, but now it's very clear, the whole science staff was informed of what the previous year's and my predecessor's mastery rates were, it was 35%, which I guess is fortunate for me, because I feel it's something I can work on and improve hopefully. So my goal for this year is 50% and yeah, I feel like a lot of my success or failure for my instruction for the year would be based on that.

Liguori: You were at [a closing school]?

Mr. Arnaz: Very general public, I did my last 3 years in the school that had phased out.

Liguori: Who makes you aware of the mastery?

Mr. Arnaz: My Assistant Principal, and Principal as well, but yes, it was discussed one time, but very clearly somewhere in the first half of the year at one of our PD sessions.

Liguori: Was it to everyone or to you?

Mr. Arnaz: It was the whole staff, I think it was couched in the context of things like the school report card and the quality review, that this is a major measuring stick, especially for upper echelon high schools like ours, and we want to do our best.

Liguori: Does the AP say things throughout?

Mr. Arnaz: I mean, No, both he and the principal have been just very supportive, the thing that they would check in most is not for me to make crystal ball predictions, but to just ask me if there are any other resources that I think the kids would benefit from. They're very supportive of that, but it's clear what the goal is. Laughs.

Mr. Ramnauth, 36, Math Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Ramnauth initially discusses how administrators have a little impact on his teaching, giving him a lot of autonomy. Later, Mr. Ramnauth discusses how the pressures come down from the NYCDOE hierarchy.

Liguori: Do the decisions made by the administration affect your teaching?

Mr. Ramnauth: I don't know, I think in this school here, so long as they find that you're a competent teacher, you're free to do what you want to do. The idea is to get the students to learn, whatever your technique is, whatever your approach is, they don't come and impose on you daily, that doesn't happen here. AS long as you're doing your job, you're getting results, the students are learning, and they pass the regents, you know, that's about it.

Later...

Liguori: Is there a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage on the regents?

Mr. Ramnauth: I don't know, that might be true because of the way it is nowadays, they're grading schools and they're grading teachers, I think it's kind of unfair too, because we don't have the best students. I mean, any student who comes here, I mean, we don't handpick our students, that system would be good, if you know the students who are coming, if you know their ability.

We have a lot of kids who have 1s and 2s from middle school out of 4. We have quite a few of them; a good percentage actually.

Liguori: Who do you feel this pressure from actually?

Mr. Ramnauth: From the top, from the chancellor.

Liguori: But the chancellor doesn't speak to you directly.

Mr. Ramnauth: But he communicates with the principals.

Liguori: What does the principal say?

Mr. Ramnauth: He'll say that they expect that. I don't think our school, I mean, we're in that bad shape, we're a little better, I mean, than other schools over hear. We get good results here, last year, we got almost 99 percent in Math A, well over 50-60 percent in Math B.

Because the pathway for high stakes testing pressure may be more likely to be hierarchical despite previous teacher inclinations, it is possible that teachers may be more likely to respond differently to high stakes testing pressures than to other pressures that are found in the classroom. One consequence of this pressure is the need to engage in behaviors that increase students' test scores. One way to increasing test scores quickly is for administrators and teachers to engage in Test Score Pollution.

Literature on Test Score Pollution

Test Score Pollution is a concept that was advanced by Haladayna, Nolen and Haas (1991) that describes any factor that affects the truthfulness of test score interpretation. However, this is a very general term that can include both ethical and unethical acts. In fact, there is no academic term for deliberate acts of academic dishonesty on the part of teachers and administrators. Among factors that could be considered test score pollution are: teaching to the test, dismissing low achieving students on the day of the test, and interfering with test responses. In the regents exams, there are practices that could contribute to test score pollution. Teaching to the test is a well-established practice in and New York. In fact, the regents exams define the curriculum in

New York. However, in other states, such as Texas, there is much debate concerning the role of test preparation in the curriculum. In traditionally underfunded regions, there is a high pressure to raise TAAS scores and a substantial portion of the budget is set aside for TAAS preparation materials instead of substantive curricular materials (McNeill and Valenzuela 2001). This leads to a dilution of the curriculum in underfunded regions, which widens the gap between affluent and underprivileged school districts (Valenzuela 1999).

Teaching to the test as one example of test score pollution

In the sample, many teachers complained that NCLB, the educational accountability movement and their administrators encouraged them to teach to the test. Teachers feel that the regents exams are foremost in their minds and are trying to get as many of their students to pass as possible. Many teachers felt that in order to get more of their students to pass the test, they should teach to the test. While teachers mostly decry such actions, they view it as a necessary evil in order to get more of their students to graduate from high school, which they see as their ultimate goal.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi likens teaching to the regents to studying for his Bar Mitzvah and then later becoming more secular in his beliefs.

Liguori: Do you feel that you teach to the test in any way?

Mr. Askenazi: Oh yes, especially you know prior to the test I'm going to fill in some stuff that I'm 99 percent sure might be on the exam. The reason I'm going to do it for that is I'm going to separate my opinion from the fact that I well if I had to make a decision whether a kid's going to love social studies for the rest of their life, or pass the regents and then hate social studies, I'd have to go with them passing the regents. Which is again not a good thing for me to say in my own personal view of teaching, because teaching shouldn't be something that stops when that child has not passed the test and it's over. It's almost like my Bar Mitzvah, I stopped being a Jew when I was Bar Mitzvahed. So what good was the lessons. You know I did wonderful at my Bar Mitzvah, everybody was proud of me, it wasn't a big thing, but I stopped going to temple afterwards, and I think that was part of it. I think everyone was at fault. My parents are not religious people, but you have to have a Bar Mitzvah. The same thing is true about my own son. He went out and religiously he's chosen to be what he is on his own. Learning has to be enjoyable. There's an old expression, don't let school get in the way of your education. You know and I think when you allow a social studies teacher to make social studies interesting, it is a beautiful subject, and you know, and again I'm proud of myself. When I teach Napoleon going into Russia, I teach Mohammed Ali fighting George Foreman in Zaire, one fighting...so the kids listen and they enjoy

it, and that's how I'm proud of myself. Now should I be able to do that and these kids pass the test as well, I'm more proud of myself. But if I had to choose between kids doing what they gotta do to get a diploma in this society and them loving Mr. Askenazi, they could hate me, I'd rather them pass the test. If I could do both, great.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan discusses how he is beginning to teach to the test because of pressures from administrators and in order to see his students do better.

Liguori: Do you prepare your students for a regents?

Mr. Sagan: You know what? It's a funny question. In my social studies class, I certainly do, upstairs in my special ed social studies, like I was telling you earlier with my AP that she's spread thin doing a lot of different things, not a bad thing, someone's gotta do it and they're putting it on her, that she really doesn't watch specifically what I do in the classroom. I tend to actually teach. I'm the worst teacher. I'm going to say this (loudly and into the recorder) I'm the worst Social Studies teacher you've ever seen, because I don't teach to the regents. I'd rather teach to a passion have my kids leave wanting to learn more instead of leave, passing a test and never open a history book. So instead of scratching the surface, Revolutionary War happened 1776, Washington, Delaware, crossed it everything Hessians, we win, British over, I would rather here's why things happened, here's what happened first chronologically. Here's where it happened, who did what, and why, why are we fighting this war. It wasn't just over taxes on tea, what was it over....

Liguori: Does it test what is taught in the classroom do you feel?

Mr. Sagan: Well, again, administrators want you teach only regents stuff so yes.

Liguori: When you make your exams, do you model them after...

Mr. Sagan: I haven't, but I'm beginning to. Like I'm getting into it like because of specific pressures that you have to do.

Liguori: Who are these pressures from?

Mr. Sagan: APs.

Later

Liguori: Do you feel that you ever leave out material in your class because it might not be on the test?

Mr. Sagan: As I said already, I didn't teach to the test. Only this year I am starting to teach to the test.

Liguori: And you said that was because of more pressures being placed on you?

Mr. Sagan: That was because of pressure placed on myself because now I'm starting to think and reevaluate, now if I pass these kids because they got the work done and they have knowledge. Yeah, so, if they don't pass the regents because I didn't teach them a certain thing because I wanted a specific goal, is that fair to them if the regents counts more than my valiant crusade to get them to learn other things...

Liguori: Do you ever leave out things because it might not be tested?

Mr. Sagan: I'm going to start.

Mr. Hanratty, 28, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 5th year teaching. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Mr. Hanratty discusses how he is motivated by both desire to have his students graduate and for the school to look good.

Liguori: Do you ever feel yourself teaching to the test?

Mr. Hanratty: Sure, I think that whenever you teach a course that culminates in a standardized exam ultimately everything you do comes down to teaching for the test.

Liguori: Why do you do that?

Mr. Hanratty: It's twofold; I think my number one reason is that the standardized test is required for students to graduate, and I want all of my students to achieve and to graduate. Number 2, getting back to underachieving and overachieving schools, I want my school to be listed as a school where parents will look at it and say I want my kid to go there. So that's probably the second reason. And thirdly, I take pride in what I do, and I guess that's the way the st, that's the state's benchmark, how students perform on this exam and I guess that's a reflection on myself. I want to look good also but that's the last reason.

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez teaches to the test because he feels he has a duty to make sure his students graduate and that duty sometimes supersedes his job to teach them history.

Liguori: Do you ever find yourself teaching to the test?

Mr. Lopez: Yes.

Liguori: Why do you do that?

Mr. Lopez: Because you want them to pass the regents and as a teacher you sort of think you have a duty to yes you want to teach them history, but you also want to do what's right for their futures. And their future consists of passing this test, so you sort of have a duty to stand by your kids and get them through the tests.

Mr. Sanchez, 61, Foreign Language Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 18 years was previously assigned to a school that is now closing. Mr. Sanchez feels he is obliged to teach to the test for his students' sake.

Liguori: Do you ever find yourself teaching to the test?

Mr. Sanchez: Well, in some aspect yes, we have to teach for the test.

Liguori: Why do you do it, what's your motivation for it?

Mr. Sanchez: My motivation is that I don't want my students to be unable to succeed because I didn't put the time into making sure that they know the material that is going to be presented in the test.

Other teachers have a more self-centered view of teaching to the test. Instead of teaching to the test for the benefit of their students, some teachers are less focused on the students, citing personal reasons to teach to the test. Certain reasons that are given for teaching to the test include reasons such as improving a teacher's self worth or diminishing the pressure that is felt by the principal's office. Many of these teachers seem to agree with the overall goals of high stakes testing, or are at least more accepting of their goals.

Mr. Glock, 24, Social Studies Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Glock teaches to the test because it will increase his “treet cred” as a good teacher.

Liguori: Why do you teach to the test?

Mr. Glock: Um, I think to a certain extent, that it’s a reflection of what you’ve done, I mean there’s a certain amount of like street cred in terms of like how many kids did you get through, and also these upcoming ideas from the top that you will be measured by your student’s test success whether it’s on the regents or another standardized test.

Mr. Farrell, 31, English Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Farrell feels that his motivation to teach to the test is personal- he does not want administrators to bother him and he wants to improve his self image by having his students do well on the test.

Liguori: Why do you teach to the test?

Mr. Farrell: I mean, I don’t want to go on to too big a tangent, but I gave the kids a test, I told them you’re going to see a certain task 3 times in the next month, all year I’ve been giving you the tools that you need to take it, I made this whole connection between what I was doing and the Karate Kid the movie, you know, give them the tools, now it’s time to actually do it. But, that said I have to go over the directions, they have to understand exactly, here’s task 1, in this task I have to do this, this, and this. Otherwise, if I don’t do that, and if I don’t do that and they just sit down, even if they’re very smart, they might not understand the directions, they might take it the wrong way, so I’m just preparing them to take the test.

Liguori: Why do you want them to pass the test?

Mr. Farrell: I have 2 motivations, 3 motivations, no particular order: I like the kids, I want them to pass, and I want them to not pass, another one is I don’t want heat from the administration, like “hey, why aren’t your kids passing the test (funny voice)” and the 3rd one is I want everyone to pass and do very well, so that I can kind of like trump myself up to the other teachers, like “all my kids got 80s” that’s just my personality.

Mr. McCormick, 43, Physics Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. He has been teaching for 13 years.

Liguori: Why do you teach to the test? What’s your rationale?

Mr. McCormick: Because the effectiveness of my teaching and my program will be judged by the scores on the test. I would say primarily and secondarily I think the students themselves want to see that they get good scores for their sense of having accomplished something. Getting a good score on a regents exam will make them feel good.

Ms. Kent, 25, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school (A small high achieving school). Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Kent teaches to the test because she feels that tests are an unfair reality that measure teacher performance.

Liguori: Why do you teach to the test?

Ms. Kent: Because I feel that’s the only true measurement of my success as a teacher as far as at the school and in the general public, if you teach a regents class and your students pass the regents and get a certain percentage mastery, then you’ve succeeded in your job and the other measurements of you know observation reports and things like that I think are really secondary to the primary measure of success being the regents themselves.

Liguori: If another teacher had a different passing percentage would that mean they are not as successful?

Ms. Kent: No, um, obviously you can’t hold them to the same standards as a school like this, but I would say that if they had a school population that had 35 % passing and they improved that number substantially, then I would say that they were being successful. But, again I don’t

necessarily agree with the test being the measure of success of a teacher, but I feel like that's the standard.

Gaming the Test by Disenfranchising Poor Performing Students

Much of the literature on academic dishonesty focuses on students that cheat and the factors that lead to it, but there is a gap in the literature when it comes to teachers and administrators that commit acts of academic dishonesty and the pressures that are put on them. The increased emphasis on test scores has led many different actors to act in a way to maximize test scores and test score reporting within their schools, districts and states. The “Lake Wobegon effect” refers to the tendency for all school districts and states to report above average test scores for a particular school, district or state (Cannell 1988a; Cannell 1988b; Hamilton 2003). One example of how districts and states can arrive at the “Lake Wobegon effect” is when school districts or test makers equivocate the terms “mean” and “norm group” for reporting purposes. This allows states to report gains relative to a past norm group rather than comparing current students to other current students from other states.

Gaming the current laws also allows for schools and school districts to report higher achievement in the face of high stakes tests and increased accountability. Since the introduction of NCLB, one provision in several state testing laws is that students that are deemed to require special education services are usually exempt from taking high stakes exams. The number of students being reclassified as requiring special services has increased significantly since the introduction of new testing regimes in some states (Amrein-Beardsley and Berliner 2003; Figlio and Getzler 2002; Jacob 2002; Jacob and Levitt 2002). Furthermore, the reporting of dropout rates, which are sometimes used as a

measure of the effects of standardized testing are often politicized and reported incorrectly (Haney 2000).

Because of the potential for school districts and state education departments to game the laws regarding high stakes testing, many have called for a differentiated approach to standards that combine a variety of assessments (Linn 2000; Koretz 2003). There is also an increased pressure that is put on teachers when there is a testing regime put into place (Shepard and Dougherty 1991). This pressure that is felt by teachers is much greater in high stakes testing environments as compared to environments where the tests do not carry such a great significance (Wilson and Corbett 1991). Before an exam, teachers review the material that is likely to be on the exam as sound educational practice; however, this practice could quickly degenerate to extreme practices of teaching to the test. More egregious forms of teaching to the test include teachers that actually use their knowledge of the test questions and use it prepare their students accordingly.

One state that has undergone a drastic change in high stakes testing is New York State with its reinterpretation of the Regents Examination. The regents exams have undergone several changes over the last decade. The main change the exams have gone through is that they are no longer intended exclusively for elite students (Natriello and Pallas 2001). Schools in New York State previously issued two types of diplomas: a regents endorsed diploma and a local diploma¹. In the mid 1990s, starting with the New York City Board of Education, the state of New York started to phase out the less

¹ In order to get a diploma with an endorsement from the state board of regents, a student was required to take and pass a minimum number of regents exams. The local diploma, issued by a local school board, did not have the same requirements. At first there were no state-wide requirements for a local diploma; however, in the mid-1980s there were some state-wide standards implemented where regent-competency tests (RCTs) were mandated for graduation with a local diploma. While these tests were required for graduation, they were not meant to be as academically rigorous as the regents exams. This perpetuated the two-tiered diploma system within New York State.

rigorous Regents Competency Tests (RCT) and use the more difficult regents exams as the only high stakes test in the state (Bishop and Mane 2001). At first, there were different grades required on the regents exams to obtain a local and a regents diploma; however, starting with the 1999 school New York began to phase out local diplomas.

Within New York State, previously released regents exams are published in New York and are part of the public record. This allows teachers to use the previous exams to prepare their students. While using previous regents exams is standard practice in New York, some may find this practice unethical and a waste of class time that could be spent on the curriculum. Hoff (2000) describes how two very similar incidents of teachers drilling students on test questions, one in Virginia and the other in Illinois, had very different results. The teacher in Virginia obtained an illegal copy of the test, while the teacher in Illinois used materials that were from a test preparation guide. In Great Britain, there have also been security problems concerning their national curriculum exams (Pyke 1999). Henry (2001a and 2001b) describes several instances of cheating and educational malpractice in Britain. These allegations include obtaining copies of exams in advance and allowing prepping students with those exams. An examination of test score data involving simulations led Jacobs and Levitt (2002) to report that possibly 4-5 percent of classrooms in the Chicago public schools encounter teacher or administrators cheating on exams.

One possible way to increase passing percentage on high stakes exams is to limit the number of students taking the exams to only those that have a good chance of passing the exams. Students can be dissuaded from taking the exams if it is not a requirement for graduation or they can be relocated to a special education environment where the tests

may not be required. Dismissing low achieving students on the day of the test is a practice that does not make much sense in the context of the regents exams. In New York, all students are now required to take the regents exams and the schools are graded on the number of students that participate in the exams; therefore, administrators have a vested interest in increasing participation and not dismissing low achieving students on test day. Special education students who are exempt from regents requirements and can take the less rigorous RCTs still must take the regents once and fail it before they are able to take the RCTs, so it is even in the best interest of the administration and students for special education students to take the regents. These two state strategies prevent egregious cases of test score pollution where many students are summarily disenfranchised from the tests in order to improve passing percentage.

Mr. Schwartz, 55, Former science teacher, Principal of a Large Comprehensive High School. Has been in education for 26 years and an administrator for 16 years. Mr. Schwartz discusses how participation rate is included in determining his school's progress report score.

Liguori: Just a couple of questions about expectations that are placed upon you. Do you feel that there is a lot of pressure for you personally to raise the passing percentage on regents exams in your school.

Mr. Schwartz: Yeah, we've always done well. There was a way, which ever method the city used to compare successes of schools, and you would see where you fell in the spectrum regarding your passing rate on a certain exam compared to other schools. And there were usually three tiers in [my borough's] superintendency. When there was a [borough] superintendency.... In the three tiers the way a principal should operate and Assistant Principals had looked at their data was, you know, "Did I fall within my peers?" ... And as long as you were where you were at the higher end of the group, you felt safe and secure. Things changed where then the report cards were not looking at annual examinations. Because you could look at your January, your June data and go year by year by year. Then they went for cohort data. So now students have to complete their requirements in 4 years and the examinations should have been on time in terms of students sitting and taking these courses. So now you are penalized if students didn't take the exam because participation counted even if the student failed. So, and, you know, it became now, to me it was a game, it was a numbers game. Then rarely were we able to have a comparison because the city regents reports that are generated still looks at a 55 as a passing.

Liguori: They do the 55 and up and 65 and up, right?

Mr. Schwartz: There is no 65 and up.

Liguori: No?

Mr. Schwartz: You have to, well, they do segregate it out, but you have to calculate it. But the actual report itself is printed gives you passing percentages based upon 55 scores.

Liguori: OK

Mr. Schwartz: So even the city hasn't come out with this report. It used to come out with 65s. If 65s count, then that is what we should see. And I think it is important to know how all schools did. And there were mechanisms in place where we could see comparisons among the schools. Then they weren't there. Now they are revisiting it through the progress reports. A kid has to take it on time. You score more points or you get weighted credits if your lower end of the population scores 65 or better. Whereas if you have a level 2 student and they score 65 you get more credit than getting a level 1 student to 65. A 1 to a 3 compared to a 2 to a 3. The student population are different. Some schools have more level 1s and some have more level 2s. And the level 1s may get more funding, other level 1 school may get not as much funding, so funding is definitely is a critical thing. And then when they do comparisons they look to see how far do expected less using this formula put out by the psychometricians using these deciles. So, each subject area has been given decile formulas. So, just for arguments sake, you have a Math A exam, Most students should be able to pass Math A, so, you come at a low level, you have a weighted figure, whatever it is, three point something on the value. Yet you come in at a higher level, you don't get as many points if you pass the Math A because it's expected. Yet with Math B if you get your low-end students to pass the Math B exam, you get like triple point Yahtzee. So, why not take the philosophy of "give every kid Math B when they come in the building" because as long as they pass the Math B your scores will Skyrocket. OK? That's a numbers game, not a reality game, but it's a numbers game. The same thing with Physics, you get fewer points along the decile rank for Living Environment, where a scaled score being lower, you can pass with a 40 on the exam. They're given Physics...

Liguori: And they pass...

Mr. Schwartz: You'll get triple word Yahtzee. They pass, and you are a genius. So, you know it's a strange philosophy the way they created this world. Our contention as a comprehensive High School is "you lose." We can't compare to the small schools where they have small schools when they have 400 students that have the equivalent amount of resources and a handful of teachers and we feel they receive additional funding from other sources. But we're now being compared with some of them. So, when we begin a school year with 3,500 students they have 400 students. So, it's unfair. But that's now the new comparison. It's not "high schools...2000, 3000, 4000", it's "high schools (different tone)" as opposed to city not regional where demographics are not taken into account any longer where they had been. So now, we are going to be compared with a school that has a handful of kids, yet the expectation is that we move our 3-3500 kids the same way that they can move their 400 kids. Now a quick analogy, you try moving, evacuating 3500 kids down the street. From here to Coney Island take 400 kids if they're across the street and you can't neglect at the same rate. The expectation is to progress them at the same rate

Ms. Goldfarb, 51, Special Education Assistant Principal, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been in education 28 years and an administrator for 15 years. Ms. Goldfarb discusses how she has her students take the regents to improve participation rate, but if they do poorly she doesn't encourage them to take it again so the passing rate will not be affected.

Liguori: Do you ever for example as an administrator have teachers who advise students not to show up for exams to increase passing percentages..

Ms. Goldfarb: Oh, oh, that. Oh that I don't... the only way I do know that some of the teachers might, and it's a special ed issue, is if a student has taken the regents already and failed it and taken the RCT with it. They don't need to take the regents a second time. So they use the RCT. That's the only time I could ever think of a teacher saying don't bother to take a test. Or if the student is 21 years old and they have already taken the test 25 million times already and they're getting an IEP diploma, why are you going to put yourself under all that pressure to do it you're still going to have the same thing. But each kid has to take the test once. You mean not to take the test at all? Not to sign the kids up because it ruins their statistics?

Liguori: Yeah

Ms. Goldfarb: I try to get the kids to take the kids to take the test at least once. Because you do want the statistics honestly to look good. So as long as the kid had taken it once, and doesn't want

to take it a second time, because that will bring down your statistics again. But they need to take it at least once. The RCTs they take over and over and over. And some kids actually I sign some kids up for the regents even if they don't need it for the diploma, because they already have the RCT, but they want to take it. So I let all the kids who want to take it take it. I know some kids who take it over and over and over again. But we've always signed up initially the academic APs used to be upset with me because we used to bring their statistics down, I still bring their statistics down, I still do. But what are you going to do. They want to take it so they take it. Or the truant. The other thing when the state came in to look at the things. I signed these kids up because they were supposed to sign up, but then only 60 percent of the kids showed up to take the test. So then that looks bad. Either way you go something is going to look bad. I sign the kids up if they need it. I try to get them in to take it.

Ms. Oxford, 43, Principal, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. A former Math Teacher, she has been in education for 21 years and an administrator for 8 years. She was previously an administrator at James Buchanan High School. Ms. Oxford discusses the lengths she goes through to improve participation rate.

Liguori: Are students ever asked not to show up for a regents exam?

Ms. Oxford: No, we...if I could hire a bus to pick kids up, to get them here I would, because part of the accountability factor is making sure that they participate in the exam, now, I'd rather take my lumps on kids not making the grade, there's no excuse for a kid not even participating, it's not fair. So I mean I have 3 kids who are long term absence kids and when I see them I always give them a sticky[note], June 17th, you have to be here because you have to sit for English, you have to be here call your friend, make sure he's here, there's an incentive, maybe I can work out your transfer, so in terms of it becomes a very good bargaining school, because I'm small, every kid matters for me for participation.

Ms. Dimaggio, 36, Assistant Principal Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. A former Social Studies teacher, she has been in Education for 15 years and an administrator for 9 years. Ms. Dimaggio discusses the effect attendance has on her statistics.

Liguori: Are students ever asked not to show up for a regents exam?

Ms. DiMaggio: Never.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. DiMaggio: Why not? Because it affects our participation rate, um, I would kill a teacher that did that. The teacher stats, when they are broken down, which they're supposed to break down themselves and then I do it on excel, it's number of students in the class who should have taken it, number of students absent, number of students 55 to 64, number of students 65 and higher and then as far as the observation...where are your kids? So that absent rates are a direct reflection on the teacher's important role that they play on attendance, so it goes back to the attendance piece.

Among teachers, there was a sense that students should not be excluded from these exams based on talent and that all students regardless of talent should be allowed to sit for the exam regardless of whether the student would pass the class. While there was an egalitarian nature to the teachers' positions there was also a sense that they would get in trouble if they would ask a student to sit out an exam. Furthermore, many teachers felt that they were doing in the best interests of the students because they felt that most

students could pass these exams because of the simplistic nature of the exams and if they didn't it would serve as a costly lesson to the students to study harder.

Ms. Goldstein, 52, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 15 years will be an Administrator the following semester. MS. Goldstein discusses how maybe guidance counselors may deter students from taking too many exams at once, but individual teachers do not discourage students from taking the tests.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam? Remember these are totally confidential questions.

Ms. Goldstein: Never.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. Goldstein: Because it's not fair because if they want to they should be given that opportunity, you never know and if their goal is to go on to college why would I do that. It's really up to them, they get a sheet that tells them what they need to take. We might suggest that they not take so many at one time, you know some kids as they get into the higher grades, I'm talking about the special ed kids, where they'll need to take 5 tests, but it doesn't make sense for them to have the pressure of taking 5 exams in June or whenever the testing time is. Umm... but as an individual I would never say that, but the guidance counselor might suggest that they not take so many at one time, but not to show up for statistical reasons, to raise statistics, never.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan discusses how maybe some students may be able to pass the exam under certain circumstances and that is why he would not discourage students from taking the regents.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents?

Mr. Sagan: (Emphatically) No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Sagan: I never thought of a reason to not have them take the test. I couldn't think of a reason to have them not take the test, Hey you never know. Even the Mets win some games.

Mr. Ben Zion, 31, Math Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Ben Zion feels that the students who take the regents and fail it may learn something from the experience.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student here or elsewhere not to show up for a regents exam?

Mr. Ben Zion: (Surprised) No not ever.

Liguori: Why not? You know that a student may barely be operating on the RCT level.

Mr. Ben Zion: He's gotta show up. First of all, I'm never going to jeopardize my career with something like that. It's not worth it. Number 2, I think kids should...I've seen a kid come in and get a 4 on the regents. It happens. He's gotta come in and take it. Where I taught you had to take it. Special ed students had to take it at least once and fail before they could be moved to the RCT level.

Ms. Onderdonk, 48, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 14 years. MS. Onderdonk discusses the lengths to which she would go to have her students the regents exams.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for an exam either here or in your Catholic school?

Ms. Onderdonk: No.

Liguori: What about if a student wasn't going to pass the exam?

Ms. Onderdonk: No, absolutely not. That goes against all my ideology, I can't imagine that. As a matter of fact, we would have secretaries to make sure they got up in time to make the exam. I would always tell them make sure you get here on time because I start the reading process right away.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. Was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School. Dr. Wang does not discourage students from taking the regents because sometimes students can do surprisingly well.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Dr. Wang: No. Not for a regents exam. For a class, yes, but not for a regents.

Liguori: Why?

Dr. Wang: Some students are very hard in order to deal with in order to deal with in the classroom because they don't want to learn. So I'd rather sacrifice the one for the many. So a lot of times we'll have like maybe 20 kids who want to do the work and maybe 2 kids who act up constantly within the classroom, because they either don't want to do it even though they're capable and don't want to do it, or there's just like emotions that they're going through that they just can't handle the work for that day. So as a result of these few students, the entire class suffers, so there are times where I tell students if you're not going to do the work, don't show up.

Liguori: Why wouldn't you do that for the regents?

Dr. Wang: I tell them to show up regardless of whether or not they think they're going to pass or not. Because there's some times in which they'll surprise you on the regents. Sometimes at the end of the year, the regents are easier some years than others, so they might have bad practices, but they're trying and then they'll do great last year. I've had times when kids have done horribly and due to the curve on the Math B regents, kids all of a sudden passed because the rest of the state had done poorly so they had to recurve the grades so I just told kids show up, do what you can, we'll sort it out later.

Mr. Sullivan, 48, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 20 years. Mr. Sullivan discusses the ethical and legal ramifications of asking students not to show up for the exams.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Mr. Sullivan: No. I have never done that.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Sullivan: Well, the students need the regents exams in order to graduate, so the thought of telling a student not to come for a regents exam would never cross my mind for a moment. The students, all of the students in our school pass the exam, so why would I, on that level why would I do that. Secondly such an action would be terribly dangerous on my part, even if I decided that I wanted to do that for some reason, I would never do that because that's unethical and illegal, I could lose my job for something like that. Tell a student not to come to the regents exam? That's highly unprofessional.

Despite the possible sanctions they could have faced from administrators, there were some instances where teachers said that they had or had observed other teachers

asking students to not sit for exams. The teachers that admitted to doing that felt that it was because it was in the students' best interest; for example if the student was almost certainly not passing their class and had other another exam to take that day and had a good shot at passing it. The teachers who disagreed with the practice and observed their colleagues disinviting students to the regents felt that excluding students was wrong to do and selfish.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn discouraged some students from taking the regents because they would have to take the class over anyway.

Liguori: You mentioned before that in June there are certain students that are still receiving 20s and 30s. Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Ms. Penn: No.

Liguori: Why not? For example you might feel they're definitely going to fail, what's your motivation for having them sit 3 hours?

Ms. Penn: You know what actually, I take that back, so I haven't ever said like "don't show up for the regents." But for example, this past spring, I had a couple of students who were short 3 or 4 labs, and who could have then taken 3 or 4 hours and done extra makeup labs to then be able to take the regents, and looked at their transcripts and saw that they failed every single cycle and were therefore going to have to take the entire course over again, and so I said you know what, don't worry about making up these 3 or 4 labs to take the regents, because you're going to take the whole class again and so I think that it would be better for you to just take the regents then next year rather than spend your time making up these labs now because you've got the labs. So I take it back, and maybe that is in a sense telling a kid not to show, these are kids who maybe had the chance to take the regents this year and I said you know what we're just going to save it for next year.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Mr. Arnaz: No, but I have seen it done. I think it's really bad.

Liguori: Why was it done?

Mr. Arnaz: To maintain a passing percentage, that's bad, I've seen it.

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez discusses how he felt when other teachers told students no to show up to the regents.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student no to show up for a regent exam?

Mr. Lopez: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Lopez: Because it's illegal and I've heard of that in my first year teaching, there was a teacher who did that and I think the other teachers in the department really hated him for it, um because that inflated his standings, his rates, so no, I would never do that no.

While the regents participation rate matters for most administrators, there was one instance where a teacher was directed by an administrator not to include all students in taking the regents. This was done for a foreign language regents which was not required for graduation. This instance was telling of the pressures to get students to graduate since the principal of that school tried to include students in taking the regents in all other subjects; perhaps since foreign language is not required for graduation and possibly not counted in the report card data, the administration encouraged excluding certain students from the regents. In the same school a teacher told some students not to take the regents to counteract the pressure being placed on students because the administration was trying to push the exam a year earlier than was necessary.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. While the teacher claims that she did not disenfranchise students from taking the regents, she was told by her administrators to choose which students to move on to the next semester of Spanish (where they would take the regents) based on their likelihood of passing the regents exams.

Liguori: Approximately what percentage of your students do you expect to pass the regents exam?

Ms. Rapetti: Well, they told me to choose students that would definitely pass, so hopefully 95 percent.

Liguori: What about the others?

Ms. Rapetti: They won't take it. They won't get the advanced regents diploma.

Liguori: Why was that was it to boost up passing percentage?

Ms. Rapetti: Because they said that they didn't want to have a failing grade on their transcript. This is like something that pisses right off.

Liguori: What percentage of your students are selected to take the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: Um, Well since the guidance counselor told them that they didn't even have to take the regents so don't worry about it, you know, it's a struggle with them trying to get their mindframe set to them taking it, so I'd say 50-75.

Liguori: How did you make the selection of who will pass and fail?

Ms. Rapetti: Just on their performance in class their work ethic, you know, the kids that were on the bubble I gave them the choice, because it's not something that I want to push, it's not that I don't want to push, but I feel like I pushed all year and now this is you. It's your last Spanish that you will probably get because our school is so small so it's a struggle for me to have to teach 6 classes next year, so it's tight. So if they're on the bubble I give them a choice and those kids that really weren't on the bubble, it was very clear and evident that either you don't come to school so you have no Spanish or you come into class and don't do anything, so kids that basically did their work and were with us every year, that's who's sitting.

Later...

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Ms. Rapetti: No.

Liguori: Though you have asked students...

Ms. Rapetti: Well, preselect them, but I don't ever select a student, and then say sorry you're not...

Liguori: How do you inform a student that they were not preselected?

Ms. Rapetti: Well, with this group they've been so misinformed and it's been such horrible communication that I only told them that 2 weeks ago. Some students will take it and I was "well, if you're not ready, then hopefully you can get another year and then take it."

Liguori: Can a student that wasn't preselected show up and take the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: Could they? They could. Would they? No. They wouldn't be able to do the speaking.

Ms. Rosario, 25, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Rosario discusses how she told some students who were worried about the regents to stay home because they were pushed into taking the regents exams early in their high school careers.

Liguori: Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam?

Ms. Rosario: Thinks. Long pause. Yeah, this year actually, they're making all of the sophomores sit through the regents, it's like practice, I told a couple of my...because I have the lower level kids, and a few of them were freaking out. I was like you are not...Don't worry about it, if you have to worry about math because you took it 3 times, like just don't come those days sweetie, so yeah, absolutely. But never maliciously, like don't bother, like really it's because like, you...my low level kids have all passed my class, they're doing really well in my class, but they're by no means ready to take a Junior year test at the end of their sophomore year. So I told the ones that were freaking out just to take a nap. I'm fine with that decision.

Liguori: It was not for passing percentages to go up?

Ms. Rosario: No, not at all, they wouldn't, the only way it would count for percentages is if they got the 85 or above and if they got a 55 I would be startled. I'm not concerned, if I get crucified for testing scores, I'm going to the mats and fight for myself.

Liguori: When you asked them, did you feel that it was doing something against what the administration wanted?

Ms. Rosario: Absolutely, I'm certain that they feel that (Student name) belongs in that room, but I disagree entirely. He doesn't need the bad memory of that test next year when it counts.

While the motivations for dismissing/disenfranchising these students are different, these last 2 behaviors show teachers and administrators working in ways that would eventually improve the passing percentage of their school. In the first situation, the administrator disenfranchises students in a metric that will not make her school look bad since it will not affect graduation statistics, but will improve the standing of the school since it will have a higher percentage passing the foreign language regents. In the second situation, the administrator and the teachers are both engaging in behaviors that will improve their statistics. The administrator is attempting to increase the participation rate by registering more students for the exams (even students who are not yet scheduled to take the exam), and the teacher is asking certain students not to show up, an action that will result in higher passing percentages for the teacher. These are numbers that will not be reported by school report card data and would improve the school's overall evaluation in the long run. These actions stem from both the structures of the school/NYCDOE and the pressure that is placed on the various actors to succeed. In the next chapter, scrubbing, a behavior that increases passing percentage while grading the regents exams is explored as a natural progression from these other forms of test score pollution.

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:
New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability
Chapter 5:
Scrubbing and Extreme Test Score Pollution

Smith (1991) discusses eight scenarios which can be taken in response to the introduction of a HST. The actions that were documented ranged from taking no action at one end of the spectrum to cheating at the other end of the spectrum. It was found that 12 percent of the population surveyed by Smith (1991) did not prepare their classes for the HSTs that were studied. Other behaviors included teaching general test taking strategies, exhortation in the form of telling students to get a good night sleep or a pep rally, teaching the content known to be on the test, teaching to the test, stress inoculation, and practicing on items of the test itself or parallel forms. In discussing cheating, there were 4 types of cheating briefly discussed: providing extra time, providing students with hints or rephrasing the wording of items, providing correct answers, and altering marks on answer paper sheets. The teachers studied by Smith (1991) did not engage in any of the 4 behaviors that were deemed to be cheating, but some of them had claimed knowledge of an occurrence at another location. Because there are many different behaviors that administrators and teachers can take in response to HSTs, a better definition of those behaviors was needed.

Test Score Pollution (TSP) as defined by Haladyna, Nolen and Haas (1991) refers to “any factors affecting the truthfulness of a test score interpretation. Specifically, pollution increases or decreases test performance *without connection to the construct* represented by the test, producing construct-irrelevant test score variance.” Haladyna, Nolen and Haas (1991) posited that with the increased pressures on schools and personnel to raise test scores, the amount of TSP would increase. As mentioned in previous chapters, TSP behavior can run the gamut from promoting student motivation for the test at one extreme to teachers interfering with student responses at the other

extreme. Behaviors consistent with TSP increase when there are larger stakes attached to standardized exams (Abrams, Pedulla and Clarke 2003). With the increased emphasis on the NYS regents for graduation (Bishop and Mane 2001), there may be an increased amount of TSP at the school level that occurs in order to ensure higher passing percentages. This chapter will deal with “scrubbing,” a behavior first identified by the popular press in 2004 (Campanile 2004) that involves teachers’ behaviors while grading high stakes exams in New York State (NYS). Behaviors included in the term scrubbing can range from merely re-checking one’s addition in scoring to erasing and filling in new responses for the students. Because of this very large ethical and behavioral range, a concrete definition for scrubbing, including gradations, is included in this chapter. Despite the attention paid to NYS in this chapter, behaviors similar to scrubbing occur throughout the United States and the world.

Isolated cases of teachers cheating on behalf of their students have occurred throughout the United States and the rest of the world wherever HSTs are employed. In 1999, there were allegations in a case in Austin, Texas where administrators were charged with tampering with state documents when they changed the student identification number of low performing students on state exams. This had the effect of invalidating the students’ exams and raising the passing percentage of the district (Johnston and Galley 1999a and 1999b). These administrators later pleaded no contest to a criminal conviction and were fined (Keller 2002). Teachers and administrators have been accused in, isolated, unrelated incidents of interfering with test responses. There are several ways teachers can interfere with responses; however, there are few mechanisms in place that actually attempt to curb such behavior. One way teachers can interfere with

responses is to give hints to students during exams. In one case, teachers admitted to changing the way they read instructions while others admitted to helping students select some answers during the exam (Haladayna, Nolen and Haas 1991). Many of these allegations are uncovered because students report such activities to parents who then report it to district superintendents. However, other than that mechanism, there are no other ways to ensure that students are not given hints throughout the exam.

Moore (1994) studied different teacher behaviors in relation to the introduction of a HST. Moore reported almost half of the respondents in his study had reported that they were aware of others in their school that had engaged in “cheating” to improve student test scores; however, the study did not seek insight into the teachers’ own cheating behaviors. Jacob and Levitt (2003) discuss how teachers in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) were likely to engage in cheating. Through statistical analyses they estimated that approximately 4-5 percent of classrooms had teachers or administrators cheat on behalf of the students. Because the High Stakes Tests (HSTs) that were used by the CPS were all multiple choice exams, patterns of cheating were easily deciphered by looking for unusual patterns of answers that occurred in certain classrooms that also had unexpected test score gains. The HSTs used in Jacob and Levitt’s (2003) study of the CPS were graded off site and were all multiple choice exams. The NYS regents exams that are administered in this study have free-response segments and are graded on site by the teachers in the school.

There are different manners in which allegations of teacher and administrator misconduct are followed up on. In New York, each school district is in charge of regulating itself. In Texas, there is an office within the Texas Education Agency that is in

charge of investigating cheating (Zlatos 1996). While Texas does not have a higher instance of cheating than other states, it takes it more seriously than other states. Joseph Lucio, the officer in charge of investigating cheating is nicknamed the Texas Ranger of Testing and he is the individual that is in charge of overseeing honesty in testing. Lucio found that student cheating occurred more frequently in tests required for graduation, while test score pollution usually occurs in tests covering reading writing and arithmetic. There is no such office in the State of New York. Not only is there less oversight in New York when compared to Texas, there are also more opportunities for institutional cheating in New York. Isolated cases of teacher cheating have also arisen in the NYCDOE. One incident involved an assistant principal directing teachers to change the grades of dozens of students from failing to passing on regents exams, another incident involved an administrator improperly providing a student with answers to the Regents exam in global history (Herszenhorn 2005). While there are isolated incidents reported, some individuals claim that cheating on the regents is more widespread (Campanile 2004). The structure and timing of the regents especially lends itself to TSP and teacher misconduct.

The NYS regents are curricular exams and must be administered at the end of the school year after classes have been completed. Because of the role the regents plays as a HST used in determining whether or not students qualify for graduation, these exams need to be graded in the period of time between test administration and school graduation. Because the regents exams are given over a period of approximately one week, some exams are required to be graded in a period of less than a few hours in order to determine if certain students have met the graduation requirements for a regents

diploma, which is now universally mandated. Because of the shortened turnaround time required, and the available labor, each school grades their students regents exams on site using the available teacher workforce. This means that in NYS students' HSTs are almost certainly graded by the same teachers who have taught them and are familiar with them as individuals. With more students taking the regents exams a situation has developed that can potentially lead to more chances and reasons for teachers to engage in test score pollution on behalf of their students. Heubert and Hauser (1999) predicted that with an increased dependence on high-stakes tests

[t]here is an inherent conflict of interest when teachers administer high-stakes tests to their students or score their own students' exams. On one hand, teachers want valid information about how well their students are performing. On the other hand, there is often substantial external pressure on teachers (as well as principals and other school personnel) for their students to earn high scores. This external pressure may lead some teachers to provide inappropriate assistance to their students before and during the test administration or to mis-score exams (p. 81).

As mentioned previously, in New York, teachers are the individuals in charge of grading exams. If a student takes the regents exam in earth science, her/his earth science teacher would be in charge of grading her/his regents exam. The only mechanism that checks whether or not exams are graded properly is the threat of a state audit, where the state board of regents recalls the exams to check that the teachers have graded them properly; however, the audit process occurs approximately once every ten years. The practice of having teachers score their students' own exams is a relatively unique phenomenon. In most instances states grade their high stakes exams in a decentralized manner, even in New York, the assessments for lower grades are not graded on-site, but in centralized locations (Martinez and McGinty 2011). This leads to one common form of test score pollution called "scrubbing." Scrubbing exams involves changing the grade

of an exam from failing to passing. In interviews with teachers, there have been several methods of scrubbing that have been uncovered.¹ These methods will usually hold up to the scrutiny of an audit, but require an initial evaluation of the exam to be done by the teacher. There is also a difference in how the acts may be interpreted by the administration. While an easy solution would be to blame the teachers because they are the ones that are scrubbing tests, they are not the only group responsible for scrubbing the regents. Administrators sometimes tacitly approve of these measures because of the pressure that is put on administrators from the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) in order to get a good school report card grade other times the administrators may be complicit in the deceptions that occur (Herszenhorn 2005). Furthermore, NYS instructions may encourage some forms of scrubbing.

Because all standardized tests have a standard error of measurement, a range of grades that a student may have actually scored under different conditions, teachers may be acting in order to correct what they see as a student's possible performance based on their knowledge of the student. Because of the possible errors that can be made on some regents exams, NYS recommends and in some cases requires that exams to be looked over for grading errors when a student gets an initial score between 60 and 64. In its

¹ One method of scrubbing includes teachers entering different grades on report cards and different grades on test papers that way if the papers were audited, the tests would be graded properly; however, the state auditing mechanism would fail because state audits just check whether or not the exams were graded properly, they do not check whether or not the grades were entered properly. Likewise, in tallying up the score of a student, a teacher may make a mistake in tallying up the score. While many times errors in addition are inadvertent, there are many occasions where it is done deliberately in order to give students a passing score. While these exams may be audited, in conversations with auditors, it was mentioned that if there is an addition error of 2 points or less, especially if it is the difference between passing or failing, the addition error is allowed to stand as the students score on the regents exam.

Another method of scrubbing includes physically changing the responses of students. This is usually done when most of the exam is graded and it is known how many points are required to give the student a passing score. Scrubbing can also involve the interpretation of answers on an exam. Certain responses are subjected to a scoring rubric. By definition a scoring rubric requires some discretion on the part of graders. Graders may exercise their discretion differently if they know that one more point may mean the difference between passing and failing. Both of these scrubbing techniques are made to fool state auditors.

grading instructions for the science and math regents NYS requires that science and math exams be rescored if they initially earn scores of 60-64 (New York State Education Department; NYC Department of Education Memorandum); however, the changing of grades that do not merit changing or changing one's interpretation on a particular student response is not allowed. The rescoring of foreign language, English and history exams is not mandated and in fact discouraged (New York City DOE Memorandum); however, many teachers believe there is such a mandate in those subjects because of the mandate in the math and science exams. While some teachers feel that these mandates have been in place for decades they were added to the state's grading instructions in 1999 and 2002 when the math and science exams were respectively reformatted; previously there were no directions to rescore the exams.

Looking at ungrouped regents scores, graphing them and seeing if there was a discontinuity would ideally answer this question; however, up until recently this data was not made publicly available. Using data that was obtained in 2011, it was determined that there was a discontinuity in regents scores in the 60-64 range (Martinez and McGinty 2011; Otterman 2011). It was found that on the English regents, students were 5 times more likely to score a 65, the minimum passing grade, than one point lower; on the U.S. History and Government regents, students were 14 times more likely to score a 65 than one point lower (Martinez and McGinty 2011). While these data are conclusive in determining that there is a discontinuity in scores, in order to understand the scrubbing phenomenon, interviews with teachers are required to get a complete picture. Also, measuring the extent to which teachers follow the grading instructions for the exams would contribute to determining the inter-rater reliability of the exam. If it is found that a

significant amount of test score pollution, there would be consequences for the testing regime in New York State. The way the tests are administered and graded or even the types of questions that would be asked may have to be changed in order to minimize the phenomenon. Whether accountability practices affect the propensity of teachers to engage in egregious test score pollution and whether or not it is encouraged more by administrators who have more to lose if the school does not improve is also studied. This question is answered by analyzing the data obtained by semi-structured interviews.

Definition of scrubbing:

The motivations for scrubbing also vary with the pressure to scrub coming from different directions. Some teachers feel pressured to scrub because an administrator asks them to; other teachers feel that they are scrubbing in order to help their students meet the requirements to graduate from high school; while other teachers feel that they scrub in order to improve their own numbers to do better. Because scrubbing is an informal term that originated from teachers, it is very difficult to get a precise definition of the practice. Furthermore, there are certain behaviors that some teachers define as scrubbing and others do not. The definition of scrubbing was obtained by asking all respondents to define the term. While not all teachers were familiar with the term, almost all were familiar with behaviors that were associated with scrubbing or could derive the meaning from the context of the conversation. Using all of the respondents' definitions, scrubbing with regards to the NYS regents exams can be defined as:

Scrubbing: Any action taken by teachers or administrators in an attempt to raise the grades of their students while grading the New York State regents exams. Scrubbing most often occurs around benchmark scores such as 55, 65, and 85.

Based on this definition and the definitions given by the respondents, there can be 3 gradations introduced: soft scrubbing, hard scrubbing, and negative scrubbing.

Soft scrubbing includes behaviors that do not have major ethical complications such as: checking addition of scoring, making sure that items were marked correctly, and slight reinterpretation of previous scoring. Sometimes the lines blur on soft scrubbing as to what is ethical and what is not. For example, soft scrubbing only occurs around benchmark scores such as 65 or 85, meaning there is intent to raise the scores of students. Furthermore, some soft scrubbing activities may become egregious when teachers stretch their interpretation in order to get a student to pass. Some teachers consider even soft scrubbing to be cheating in favor of the students.

Ms. Goldstein, 52, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 15 years will be an Administrator the following semester. Ms. Goldstein defines scrubbing as going over an exam in order to make sure a student didn't fail unnecessarily.

Liguori: How would you define scrubbing?

Ms. Goldstein: Uh, if a kid is close to passing like a point or 2 away, another teacher would go over the exam to make sure that they agree with the way the exam was graded by the first teacher. Usually there's 2 teachers working together to grade the exams anyway. So, somebody else reads the exam.

Mr. Burns, 24, Math Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. This is his first year teaching. Mr. Burns mentions that points are more likely to be awarded if a student is very close to passing.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing in grading the regents?

Mr. Burns: No. No I haven't, but I've heard of certain regents grading discrepancies, or things like that.

Liguori: What have you heard?

Mr. Burns: Just that some pressure is put on the teachers to get these high scores, there's certain cheating or allowances or things like that that are sort of added in. Although I don't know if it's rampant or anything like that.

Liguori: What kind of cheating or allowances?

Mr. Burns: Well, on the rubric it says things like "got the correct answer" and "showed appropriate work" and there's some room for interpretation there as to what the "appropriate work" is, so maybe giving a 3 when maybe they should have gotten a 2 or something like that, especially if they're near a 65 mark like if it's a 63, maybe a teacher going back and saying "is there any place where we could find 2 more points on this test?"

Liguori: What do you mean by cheating?

Mr. Burns: I mean these certain situations and grading the test slightly differently that the teacher would have graded it if the student were passing. If the student has a 93, I think most teachers are going to grade that test in accordance with how they feel they should grade it based on the rubric, the student has a 63, maybe they'll go back and try to find 2 points.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino makes a differentiation between 2 different types of scrubbing, one of which he deems to be more ethically compromised.

Liguori: What is [scrubbing]?

Mr. Lomangino: It's been in the newspaper a lot in this district because there was a principal in another school who was either looking the other way or highly encouraging it in his building and I have friends and colleagues who work there. Scrubbing is basically when you have a student who's failed the regents exam and you reexamine it looking for points or creating points. I don't think that there's anything wrong with maybe looking to see if maybe you misgraded something, but when you're trying to figure out how to pass a student who has clearly failed, that's what we call scrubbing.

Mr. Napolitano, 57, former Math Teacher, Assistant Principal, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing school. He has been in education for 36 years and an administrator for 25 years. Mr. Napolitano differentiates between a reread and scrubbing. Other teachers may consider his definition of a reread to be scrubbing.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Napolitano: Well, we would call it a reread, where a child who got a 63 or 64 needed a 65, we would reread the examination to see if we could find an extra point here or there. As far as going from 30s or 40s or 50s to a passing grade, that would not be palatable. Scrubbing may have a connotation of really changing or altering the responses that the students made. I only use what is called a reread, which means that if the child is 1 or 2 points short, I have committees that mark different parts of the exam and I have them look at it, and I say quite frankly "you need another point for this child, does this solution warrant an extra point?" Sometimes they say no, and sometimes they say I could see giving another point for it. So when they were reading it the first time, there may have been a choice of giving them a 5 or 6 and they gave it a 5, but they could have easily given a 6 if it meant a passing grade. So reread yes, scrubbing no.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. Ms. Rapetti discusses how she was introduced to scrubbing in New York City and how it is likely a NYC phenomenon.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Ms. Rapetti: Yes.

Liguori: How would you describe scrubbing for me in the context of test taking?

Ms. Rapetti: Once a student gets a grade, let's say they get a 64, then they need a 65, going through the test and looking to see maybe there was like a grey area, maybe a person miscorrected a part, miscorrected a multiple choice, so you recheck the multiple choice. Trying to find points on a test.

Liguori: Where did you learn about scrubbing?

Ms. Rapetti: Here (laughs). That's when I did learn about it. Here.

Liguori: In...

Ms. Rapetti: In NYC in this school. Upstate I never heard of it.

Liguori: Does it happen upstate?

Ms. Rapetti: I never experienced it.

Liguori: But here?

Ms. Rapetti: I was like “what’s that?”

Liguori: If someone were to ask you was it a NYC Phenomenon or a statewide phenomenon...

Ms. Rapetti: I would say NYC, from my experience.

Ms. Testaverde, 40, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 17 years. Ms. Testaverde discusses how interpretations of a response can change If the stakes are raised to having a student pass or fail.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing

Ms. Testaverde: Yeah, of course.

Liguori: What is it?

Ms. Testaverde: Scrubbing is looking at a paper over again and trying to raise a grade to a passing grade. Trying to reevaluate it, so that it’s a higher grade.

Liguori: What do you mean by reevaluate it?

Ms. Testaverde: Well, perhaps somebody graded the essay instead of giving it...they gave it a 2 out of 5, but I look at it as a 3 out of 5, so I just think it’s... you know, and if the kid had the 3 out of 5 he’d pass the regents, so you make it a 3 out of 5.

Hard scrubbing includes changing answers on test papers and greatly changing interpretations in scoring merely to get a student to pass the exam. The main difference between hard and soft scrubbing is the level of ethical laxity in the actions of the graders. Here those in charge of grading actively seek out ways to change the grades of students in order to get them to pass. Furthermore, these actions are more likely to get the teachers or administrators in trouble if there were an audit. These are behaviors that most individuals would characterize as cheating in favor of the students.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn discusses how she has heard the term scrubbing used for both hard and soft scrubbing behaviors.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Ms. Penn: So, yes, but I am not sure exactly how you mean it. So you’re talking about like deliberately changing...

Liguori: How would you define it?

Ms. Penn: So there’s different ways that I’ve heard this used. Some people um talk about actually literally just going in and changing the numbers on the regents scores, other people think that it

refers to maybe giving kids credit for answers that are questionable, so increasing their scores that way. Other people actually talk about actually like you know changing kids' answers to questions and increasing their scores that way. So in general it's about increasing the kids' scores in ways that are sort of like um legally and ethically questionable, but the extent of the questionability varies and depends on who you ask.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi discusses how in years pass he would erase scantron bubble sheets in order to get students to pass the regents.

Liguori: In grading the exams, have you ever heard of a process called scrubbing?

Mr. Askenazi: Yes.

Liguori: You said it very quickly, how do you define it?

Mr. Askenazi: I would define it as every once in a while that you might find a test that might be a 63 or 64 and the teacher would say "can we find a way to pass this child?" And years ago for whatever reason, and again... years ago we would even erase a short answer. I guess someone dropped a bomb as they say, again I'm not sure if it's good or bad so now kids cannot, they have to ink over, at least at John Basilone, you have to ink over their short answers, so you can't erase and give the kid let's say that one question that might have changed them from passing to failing, so you have to look within the essay. So in that sense I do, and in this particular class where I'll make sure that I emphatically reiterate redundantly say please make sure you write an essay. And give them literal tips in how you can be successful in that.

Mr. Shapiro, 59, Special Education and History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Shapiro discusses how administrators may encourage scrubbing based upon how their peers at other schools are doing.

Liguori: Do you feel that there is any pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in your subject area.

Mr. Shapiro: I couldn't give a crap one way or the other.

Liguori: So, none on you?

Mr. Shapiro: I've worked in schools where the APs would call up their friends who worked in other schools, and say "oh, we had, we have an 87% rate of passing for this particular regents" and then the teacher would come in and say oh, you gotta scrub these papers, because some of these marks the students should have done better than they did, so go over it.

Liguori: What do you mean by scrub?

Mr. Shapiro: In other words a student say he got a 63 on an exam and you could give him a point or 2 on an essay or something, well, it's do you give him a point or you don't. Well I think this is what it should be, you think, so you average it out and that's what they get. Well, if you scrub it, well, maybe we could raise it a half a point, so that half a point makes the student pass.

Liguori: Now with scrubbing is it ever a situation where it might be a little bit more teacher centered?

Mr. Shapiro: Created?

Liguori: Created.

Mr. Shapiro: Definitely.

Ms. Santini, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. She was previously assigned to a failing school. Ms. Santini mentions how she previously witnessed a teacher changing grades on a scantron. This behavior went on without the knowledge of the administration. She contrasts that experience with her current school.

Liguori: In grading the regents, have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Ms. Santini: No, what does that mean, when they get like a 63, and you try to get them up to a 65, that's scrubbing?

Liguori: Yeah, some people would define it as that.

Ms. Santini: No, when we have like 63s, 64s, we'll look over the paper to see if we can get them an extra point or 2, if possible. Sometimes we can't. I have 4 kids in my 4th period they got 63s in January, we couldn't find them the points, but if we can, legitimately get them a point, to bring them to a 65.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a situation where you try to find a point and you exhaust all legitimate situations, so sometimes you may try to go to other ways of trying to find that point, by pushing the limit of the rubric or something like that?

Ms. Santini: Pushing the limit of the rubric, I don't know. I know we try the best we can, but if we can't do it, we leave it. That's this school, (bangs the table 5 times with her index finger)

Liguori: At other schools what happens?

Ms. Santini: Yeah, sure, I've seen other things happen, let's put it that way. It's never happened at this school. I've seen grades changed.

Liguori: What are the practices that might have happened?

Ms. Santini: I've seen a teacher actually change, like let's say on a multiple choice change a 2 to a 3.

Liguori: In order to get a kid to pass?

Ms. Santini: Yes. Not with the knowledge of the Assistant Principal, but you know. See the whole thing is you shouldn't be alone when you're marking the regents exam, and we're not here, but in other schools I've seen it. I've seen a teacher go out of the room with the regents papers.

Mr. Briscoe, 61, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Briscoe discusses how it is school policy to go over all borderline exams.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Briscoe: Yes.

Liguori: Can you define it for me?

Mr. Briscoe: I think it's rereading tests of kids who barely/borderline pass and need a few extra points and trying to find the extra points to pass the kids.

Liguori: What do you mean try and find?

Mr. Briscoe: That means change the scores that you originally gave if they need that extra few points.

Liguori: By changing it are those changes always deserved?

Mr. Briscoe: No. they're not always deserved.

Liguori: How did you find out about scrubbing?

Mr. Briscoe: Well, we do it. It's a school policy, after we mark every test, we pull the borderline tests and reread them, now I'm not sure if that's scrubbing to reread the borderline grades, I think it is.

Liguori: What about...does that only happen at this school?

Mr. Briscoe: No, at every school, you reread the borderline grades. You don't leave a 64, 63 without checking it over.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell contrasts her experience scrubbing with a highly publicized scandal that occurred not far from her school.. She mentions the risks of getting caught scrubbing egregiously.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Ms. Campbell: Yes!

Liguori: How would you define it?

Ms. Campbell: Scrubbing is...there's a legitimate way to scrub as I "call the doctors in" or there are ways to falsify results. You can legitimately...scrubbing was setup...I call it 63 or above, 63s I look through the test to see if there's any mistakes made, or remember it's supposed to be scored by 2 people, if there's anywhere you can find a point here or there. When you're erasing answers, when you're blatantly taking it to the next step, interpreting in a way that is incorrect, that to me is different than scrubbing. Scrubbing to me is you search through the exam and you see if there's any way that you can kind of find a point for a student, which I think is..they encourage you to do, because it says "or any other acceptable answer" and 2 people reading it can see things differently, if the one person can convince the other one, then that's fair. I've done that many times, I have no problem with that. Me, you know, taking something that's blank or writing an answer in or me changing a scantron, or me taking an answer that's completely wrong and trying to rationalize finding a point for, we'd never do it. We're allowed to look at exams. We have a pile of 63s we go through and we always check, because this is a kid, and this is their future and we don't want them to repeat this if they don't have to, it's like torturing them.

Liguori: Have you seen the other thing happen, like blatantly....?

Ms. Campbell: Yeah, at [a local high school] that happened. They lost their...they're at another school marking now. Their AP was fired; they took tests home and changed the score. They've always had better results than us and now we fucking know why. I mean it's bullshit, like we are the most honest, I would say, of all the schools [in our area] I know for a fact this is the most honest place where marking goes on. No one risks their license, no one fills in the blanks for the student or the teacher, and I could say that with 100 percent certainty. In this department no one changes anything. I was always like "am I going to lose my pension because this kid couldn't study? No Fucking way!"

Mr. Calabria, 66, Social Studies Teacher. Has been teaching for 7 years. Was previously assigned to a high school, but was sent to a reassignment center, or "Rubber Room," after being exposed as a whistle blower of a large scrubbing scandal. Mr. Calabria discusses how teachers would just add points to the papers of their students.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Calabria: (Sarcastically), let me see.

Liguori: How would you define scrubbing?

Mr. Calabria: I would define scrubbing as adding points to an exam that was within a few points of passing, but adding, not the regular recheck, because most testers or graders do in every situation, they do it in law school too, if someone's really close, let's find out if we missed something, Um, that is absolutely legitimate and I've done that too. Scrubbing refers to the indiscriminate raising of exams from a few points under the passing grade to the passing grade or over. It's illegitimate, it's a form of cheating. I call it affirmative cheating usually done for

personal reasons, that is, to help the student that you know to pass or to make your school look better, or as far as supervisors are concerned to make more money in bonuses.

Liguori: Who introduced you to the term?

Mr. Calabria: I just heard it in the grading room,

Liguori: Was it a teacher, an administrator?

Mr. Calabria: Probably teachers.

Liguori: So it's a term that teachers use among themselves?

Mr. Calabria: Yeah.

Liguori: Was it your first year teaching that you heard it, or was it after a couple of years?

Mr. Calabria: I saw scrubbing in my first regents grading room and I don't recall whether the term was used at that moment.

Negative scrubbing includes behaviors that purposely take points away from students in order to have either have them fail or fail by a larger margin. This behavior was reported least frequently, and according to the teachers was done mostly to spare the child's feelings of being so close to a passing score but still coming up short. It could also have been performed in order to make it less likely for a parent to call in and have a score regraded for a student.

Ms. Woods, 55, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 27 years. Ms. Woods discusses how sometimes teachers would lower a score of a paper in order for it not to be in the 60-64 range.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Ms. Woods: Yes.

Liguori: How would you define that?

Ms. Woods: I guess if a student receives grade on the regents that's close to passing, but not quite, maybe like with a 62 when they need a 65, scrubbing would mean to either bring it back up to a 65 or bring it down to a lower grade so that they're not left with a grade that's so close to passing, but not quite, so to kind of tweak it, review the exam, see if you can pull points, deduct points, things like that. I have not had the occasion to do that here, scrub a student's test paper. You know, but I know that it goes on, and this controversies in other schools that went on in other schools in [this area].

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez discusses how sometimes they would lower the score for a borderline test so it would not be in the 60-64 range. He claims that no matter who the student was, teachers would always try to raise the score first before lowering it.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Lopez: Um, no.

Liguori: In grading the regent have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Lopez: No.

Liguori: I'm going to give you a scenario, for example, let's say we're grading the regents, there's a 63 or a 64, what happens in that situation?

Mr. Lopez: Well, we do take a look at it again and we see, well...because we don't want...because if a kid gets a 63, they're going to look at it like "damn I got a 63, why couldn't they just give me the other 2 points." I think that's one of the worst grades to get is a 63, and I was trained at my other school, before this school, that if a kid's going to fail, they're going to fail with a 60 and below or they're going to pass and pass with a 65 and above. You don't want to be in that sort of that netherworld of 60-65. Just because the way it was explained to me in the old school, because you don't want the kid to feel like they just missed it. I don't run into that here, but what we do here is always if a kid does get a 63, we'll look it over again and see if we can find a point, maybe we didn't find something before, maybe we didn't see something, maybe we missed something, I mean you have to understand we grade, what, 300 tests in a day, so mistakes are made, we miss stuff, so sometimes we find the points, most of the times we don't. Most of the time what the grade is, is what it stays at, and out of all the tests that we sort of look at for a second time, overall I would say it's like 10 out of like 300 exams.

Liguori: That are 63?

Mr. Lopez: Right.

Liguori: How many of the 10 go to a 65?

Mr. Lopez: Probably 2. 1 or 2.

Liguori: What wound up happening at the old school?

Mr. Lopez: (laughs) Generally you would either wind the grade down. If they got a 63, make it like a 59 or something like that or you would wind it up to like a 65, not automatically, if you could justify giving a 65, if you could look at it and say, alright well, maybe we graded this as a 2, but maybe if this is a 3....that's what would happen, that doesn't happen here, but that happened in my old school.

Liguori: How did you get the 63 to a 59?

Mr. Lopez: We would do the opposite of that. We would say "alright, maybe when this other guy was grading the test, he was a little too generous and this doesn't look like the answer and so you knock it down to where..." Because if they get above a 55, they still sort of pass, they get the non-regents credit, but they get the RCT credit. So we were never really, we said it wasn't really a big deal, it was just like "alright, well, they're still getting above a 55, they're just not getting that 63."

Liguori: You mentioned before that you graded down sometimes, did it matter who the kid was?

Mr. Lopez: No, no, not necessarily, no matter what you feel personally about the student, you want to get him, you know, you want to do what's best for them. So, it really doesn't depend on the student. I mean when you get like a test and it has Joey on it, and maybe you don't like Joey, it's like, maybe this guys going to bomb the test, you know, before you even open it, but you won't actually do anything to screw it up.

Liguori: How do you decide how to bump them up or bump them down?

Mr. Lopez: It would depend on the grade itself, if they were going to get a 63, we'll see if we could bump them up to a 65, or if you can't bump them up to a 65, if you see that there's nothing else in the well, alright don't make this kid feel s if they've just missed it, make it clear that they failed and put them in the 50s. It was basically just the numbers that determined it.

Ms. Stone, 42, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 15 years, Was formerly assigned to a school that has been closed. Ms. Woods mentions that she does not know the rationale for negative scrubbing.

Liguori: For example it's a 63, to get them to a 65, would it ever be a 63 to a 59?

Ms. Stone: People have.

Liguori: Why?

Ms. Stone: I've never really understood it, but there's been some kind of...people have kept citing something that says it doesn't look good to have grade that are that close to passing, it's better to go down or to a few up so if someone is going to fail, they should fail by more, and I've never really understood that. I've been meaning to ask and I don't understand it.

Ms. Santini, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years She was previously assigned to a failing school. Ms. Santini mentioned that it was "cruel" to have a student fail with a score that was so close to passing.

Liguori: Are you one of the more generous ones?

Ms. Santini: Yes, yes. Usually.

Liguori: Let's say there's a 64, will it be give it to Ms. Santini?

Ms. Santini: Well, in my other school, like my boss had a rule, nobody gets a 64, so if you can't get that point, then let them lose a point somewhere else, because he thought 64 was cruel, so in this school, I think she'll let a 64 stand if that's the grade.

Liguori: But in the other school, you would take away from it?

Ms. Santini: Take away and give 'em a 63, because it was cruel to give a kid a 64, if you couldn't find a 65. One time I remember we couldn't find a point and the parent came up, and the parent and my assistant principal had to look at their test and they found the kid the point. And I couldn't find it anywhere, but the parent came up...I said fine, I don't care whatever.

Methods of Scrubbing:

While all the exams are set up and scored differently, all of the exams have two common components, a multiple choice section which is usually graded by machine and a free response section where students write things in their own words and is then graded using a rubric. All of the scoring (multiple choice and free response) is done on site usually by the teachers in the department pertaining to the exam. There were several different methods of scrubbing mentioned by teachers. These behaviors spanned the gamut from innocent soft scrubbing to egregiously wrong hard scrubbing. Most of the behaviors were performed or witnessed firsthand by the participants. Some of the

behaviors discussed were third hand accounts of incidents that occurred in that school or a respondent's previous school. All of the elements of scrubbing have a common theme, it happens after the exams are administered and during grading. The exams are then scrutinized and those exams that are the closest to passing, are flagged and set aside to scrub. The most frequent behavior mentioned was the soft scrubbing behavior of re-checking test papers to attempt to get students to pass the exams. The most often cited hard scrubbing behavior was changing interpretations of the scoring rubric in order to get students to pass the exam.

Many of the individuals who described soft scrubbing behaviors have very similar processes. The basic process is that the papers are re-examined if the student scores between 60 and 64. Teachers will often look to see if the short answers were graded correctly by machine and then will see if they can grade the essay/free response questions more liberally in order to obtain more points for the students.

Ms. Hunter, 54, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ms. Hunter discusses how points are given to students because teachers have a closeness to their students.

Liguori: What have you, how would you define [scrubbing]?

Ms. Hunter: The problem with a school this size is that you know all the kids. You know them all, so it gets personal and I think, you're not supposed to know the kids, I'm not sure what the real regulations are, but since we know all the kids, our attitude is, the teachers attitude is that we want to pass as many kids as we can because it just seems too punitive not to you know for them. So if you know a kid has worked and still hasn't quite gotten it and they get a 63, we're going to do anything we can to get them that extra 2 points.

Liguori: By everything we can, what does that entail?

Ms. Hunter: Maybe being a lot more lenient on another question or where we can, and that's with the written responses, I mean with the multiple choice, you can't play but you know, just to sit there, like on the global to give the benefit of the doubt with an answer. It's not egregious, but if it does happen that maybe if we didn't know the kid [and] we were being completely paid to just correct tests, that we might, it might, a kid might end up with a 62 or 3 rather than a 65.

Ms. Rosario, 25, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 3 years. Ms. Rosario mentions how scrubbing entails looking at steps that may have been missed in grading long answer problems.

Liguori: What do you say finding a point, you did that thing with the air quotes. What do you mean by finding a point?

Ms. Rosario: Not necessarily cheating, because it is not cheating or called that. You go back and see if maybe you missed a step or so in a math problem, or maybe they did something you might have, you just go back and further examine, does this make a little more sense than I originally thought it does. Given an extra point or 2 for the wrong answer, for the English regents you can't scrub. Like I can't make a 4 essay a 4.5, maybe I can, but I will not. Like it's too...the discrepancy is too great within the 3.5 or 4 so I don't. I was asked to like you know "oh, you're not going to scrub for that?" and I was "No. I'm not going to do that." Laughs.

Ms. Dimaggio, 36, Assistant Principal Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. A former Social Studies teacher, she has been in Education for 15 years and an administrator for 9 years. Ms. DiMaggio discusses how scrubbing is illegal and can potentially get you fired.

Liguori: What do you mean by find points?

Ms. DiMaggio: You have a part in the essays and the document based short answer piece where there are guidelines and it's an interpretation. So the answer isn't red or black or blue, the answer is maybe 3 sentences long and hopefully the right answer is in there. So when you talk to my department, I don't believe in it, it's not worth our jobs and too many people have been fired over it. So, 2 people look at the same essay, I give it a 4, you give it a 5, we're close, so it's a 4.5, if I gave it a 3 and you gave it a 5, a 3rd person reads it, that's enough, there's no need for scrubbing when you have 3 people looking at the same essay besides the fact that it's not really...it's not a common practice, it's not something that...you know, the kid either passed or didn't passed. More importantly it's not worth your job and scrubbing will get you fired.

Liguori: Scrubbing will get you fired?

Ms. DiMaggio: Absolutely. Because you're looking for...you know, 2 adults, 2 professionals have already looked at the paper, do you think a 4th person if there was more than 1 person is going to find it. Even if you find it, it was unethical for you to pull that paper once it was placed in the alphabetical stack. We work in groups, so why are you alone with the papers. The papers go back in the vault.

Ms. Strauss, 41, Biology and Earth Science Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Strauss discusses how administrators encourage teachers to re-examine different parts of the exam in order to look for points.

Liguori: ... Let's say you're grading the regents, a 63 is placed in front of you. What happens?

Ms. Strauss: Oh, the Assistant principal says "see if you can find them a few more points" (laughs).

Liguori: What do you mean by find?

Ms. Strauss: Uh, like, they fill in their multiple choice answer on their test booklet and they also put them in on the scantron. We'll compare them and see if maybe they got a question write on the answer booklet but they didn't transfer it to the scantron correctly and they get an extra point that way or we regrade the lab practical. The lab practical is complicated to grade, sometimes, somebody slips up and they'll take off a point for rounding and on the next page, they take off a point for rounding again when they're not supposed to, especially inexperienced graders. So, we'll look at that again and make sure it's graded properly, um, and then if we still need another point, we'll read some of the sort of questionable answer where it was like "ehh, we knew what he was saying, but did he use the right words" and we might take something that was questionable and say "ok, we'll make it a yes instead of a no." If it's on the borderline of...we know he's trying to say this, but he didn't day it clearly or something like that...the answer is a yes.

There were several different hard scrubbing techniques described by the teachers. Some teachers had mentioned that they had erased and bubbled in new responses on the machine scored portions of the exams. Other behaviors include drastically re-evaluating free-response questions in order to get students to pass the exams. One behavior described was merely putting in new grades after the grading was completed.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn describes how she witnessed another teacher change a student's response while grading the regents.

Liguori: Have you...remember this is totally confidential... ever scrubbed (referring to hard scrubbing)?

Ms. Penn: I have not, though I've witnessed it. So exactly what you're talking about happens again around the earth science regents then on the living environment regents 'cause again on the earth science regents it is a lot like physics, where you just have to put an X in a box or something or you have to put a dot in a certain place and a kid didn't write anything. And so I've seen teachers only here actually, not at [my old school]... When I first saw it here, but yeah I've seen that happen here. And it's never like a matter of, it's usually like with kids who are within a point or two of passing. It's never some sort of dramatic change of the students score, but...

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi discloses that occasionally he would change the multiple choice responses of students while grading the regents.

Liguori: Getting back to what you said before and remember you're not talking to [The New York Post], everything's confidential, you said before that you would erase answers...

Mr. Askenazi: Yes.

Liguori: And put new ones in?

Mr. Askenazi: Yes.

Liguori: Was that something that happened frequently, infrequently...

Mr. Askenazi: No. No. Because yeah, because you're not getting that many kids that are getting that grade, because usually they either pass or they fail. But for that one or 2 kids that you might see out of 100, or so that you think you could do them a favor to pass them, yeah.

Mr. Laufer, 26, Social Studies Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 3 years. Mr. Laufer mentions that at his previous school there was a scandal where an administrator was temporarily removed because s/he directed the changing of grades on the regents.

Liguori: You said there was a big scrubbing scandal, would you give your interpretation of that?

Mr. Laufer: Pretty much the AP along with other teachers, were just changing grades, the person that blew the whistle, Mr. Calabria, was then...when he was asked about this over a period of 2 years, he was pretty much just removed from regents grading in general, it eventually became a big scandal, the New York Times and the backlash is still spilling out from that. But, no, the teachers who, I knew many of them, I mean they all talked about it, they scrub, it's not nothing, there's no lying about. I mean they recently reinstated all these people, however, they still don't refute the fact that there was cheating. Obviously there was cheating on the exam. I mean, the statistics were impossible, that's how they knew.

Liguori: Why did they do it?

Mr. Laufer: I believe that the AP was pretty much the one who was doing it. I believe she was the one who was meeting with the teachers to change the grades. It probably pretty much came top down I believe.

Liguori: What happened?

Mr. Laufer: [The AP] was fired and then later reinstated, and I she is suing them now, which is ridiculous, because she cheated. None of the teachers really lost, or really got in too much trouble. I think they had to grade under supervision the next year. For the most part regents as far as I know, the regents, for the most part when it comes to regents grading, it's just a matter of, I mean the rubric is so broad that it's interpreted... probably the best thing to do if you really wanted honest test grading, your tests shouldn't be graded by the teachers in the school. It should be sent out to a 3rd party or something like that. That's probably the most fair way to grade the exam, if you really were worried about it.

Liguori: Did they ever change student responses?

Mr. Laufer: I've never heard of people actually changing things on exams, just changing the final scores for the most part. Like let's say this is clearly not by any stretch of the imagination a 3 on this essay, and you put like a 4 anyway or you put a 3 instead of a 0, it might be totally incoherent, but you say it's not and you just change the score.

Liguori: You mean you change the score even though it is totally divorced from reality?

Mr. Laufer: Yeah.

Ms. Mendelson, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ms. Mendelson discusses how one of her colleagues had changed the grades on the regents. She mentions how it was taken care of within the school.

Liguori: Do you think that most teachers are as honest as you?

Ms. Mendelson: I think that the majority of teachers in this department are, um, a few years ago under a different administration, there was one teacher, who, you know, was, I guess scrubbing (laughs) and we brought it to the attention of the AP, we said we were very upset, because this is not how we work as a team, you know, we do the best that we can, we help the kids out as much as we can and give up most of our preps... So we did share with the AP, and we were sort of in a dilemma because it was our colleague, but it could, it was like, we all were outraged, and then he took care of it, so I can speak for my department, I can't swear for everyone, I haven't seen anything, and we have a lot of eyes, just the way we grade, we grade in teams, it's very hard to do something like that, and hell, even if you were a teacher who would, it's very hard to do that, because you're grading in teams, you're grading one question and another group of graders grades another question, so it's very very hard to do that.

Liguori: What did this one teacher do?

Ms. Mendelson: Um, when all the tests were graded and they were put in a room, a secure room, and they were being alphabetized, he pulled a couple of test papers and started to change the numbers of the grades on the pages. So we went as a group and we shared our thoughts. We took care of it.

Mr. Ramnauth, 36, Math Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. RAMnauth discusses how he witnessed another teacher simply passed a student without merit.

Liguori: Do you ever push the boundaries?

Mr. Ramnauth: No. We don't do that.

Liguori: People do different things, I know if you can imagine.

Mr. Ramnauth: I know one school in Brooklyn, this kid got a 64, and nobody could find any point and this lady said “look just put a 65.” It happened.

Liguori: Were you there when that happened?

Mr. Ramnauth: I was there for a few months. I was helping, but I was not part of the team actually grading. I was in the group grading, I was not part of the team, I had no say.

Liguori: But she just said give him a point.

Mr. Ramnauth: She wrote the 65 on the paper.

Liguori: That just went through?

Mr. Ramnauth: That just went through (laughs).

Mr. Bannistry, 37, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Bannistry discusses how it was alleged at his old school that administrators changed the grades of a whole stack of borderline papers.

Liguori: Would you mind defining it for me.

Mr. Bannistry: Sure. Scrubbing is where a school, usually led by the principal or AP takes exams and, um, looks at the exam a second or third time to find points, uh, so that a child who is getting a 63 can get the 65.

Liguori: What do you mean by find points?

Mr. Bannistry: You would look at the entire exam, all components and see if there is any area in which perhaps a low grade could be slightly increased.

Liguori: From your impression is it honest or dishonest?

Mr. Bannistry: Yeah, it’s dishonest, but it’s something that at this school really doesn’t happen, I’ve not seen scrubbing. At my old school, there was a lot of scrubbing, where we would have a stack of kids that we would go over and try to increase their grades, there is even a whole scandal that was reported in the newspaper, it was supposed to be done with the knowledge and consent of the teachers, but there is a whole issue of whether the principal and AP acted without teachers’ approval or consent or knowledge and changed grades.

Liguori: They just...

Mr. Bannistry: They just changed grades.

Liguori: Did they regrade it?

Mr. Bannistry: Well, that was the accusation, that they didn’t even read the papers, they just changed the grades.

Liguori: From what your opinion, did they actually...

Mr. Bannistry: I’m, not familiar in terms of what happens, but based upon what happened, because it was in a different department, but based upon what happened within the social studies department, I don’t believe that...I do believe that the grades were looked at and it wasn’t just an automatic “let’s boost the kids up” but I do believe that the exams were looked at to see if points could be found.

Liguori: Were standards lowered to find points?

Mr. Bannistry: Yes. But that’s not the term that’s used. The term that is used is “we’re taking a holistic approach to this.”

Mr. Calabria, 66, Social Studies Teacher. Has been teaching for 7 years. Was Previously assigned to a high school, but was sent to a reassignment center, or "Rubber Room," after being exposed as a whistle blower of a large scrubbing scandal. Mr. Calabria discusses how he had never seen anybody change students' responses, but instead saw many teachers change the grades of students without merit.

Liguori: Did you ever scrub?

Mr. Calabria: No, I never cheated.

Liguori: But you said that you rechecked.

Mr. Calabria: When I was asked to, like the exams that were close to passing were put in a certain, well, actually, according to NYS guidelines, anything between 60 and 64 would be rechecked and was I given some of those to recheck, the answer is yes.

Liguori: You said you saw other teachers scrub. What did they do?

Mr. Calabria: In our social studies exams, I never saw anybody erase multiple choice answer and give a correct answer where an incorrect was not, but the way it was done at cobble hill was to change the essay scores. There were 2 essays, one based on documents and the other based on themes and the rubric was from 0-5 and usually the first grading was accurate and fair, let's say some would get a 1 for an essay and then all the scores would be added up and maybe this kid would get a 63, wow, when in order to scrub this exam, you would go back to that essay, erase the 1 and give it a 2 or a 3 deepening on the weight that it needed to get from 63 to 65 or above, so scrubbing in my old school involved mainly, maybe exclusively, erasing the subjective grades for the essays on the lower grades and moving them up on the scale so the kids could pass.

Among the norms that arise in the grading room is that different positions may arise among the team of teachers. This can lead to one individual who is in charge of the scrubbing for a particular department. This designated scrubber usually has the most lax interpretation of the rubric and has other teachers give them the papers that are close to the benchmark score. These respondents either admitted to being the designated scrubber or handing off to the designated scrubber while grading examinations.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci describes how he is adept at finding points for students.

Liguori: Have you participated in any of your type of scrubbing behavior?

Mr. Matucci: Well, sighs, pause, have I ever been? Well, at my old school, I was the 3rd grader. Like I was, when there was a questionable test, they'd give it to me. And I was able to find and justify, I never gave an answer that I couldn't justify, and I would always pass it by 2 or 3 people before I awarded points for it, but most of the time however, I have to tell you, most of the time, when I go the 63 and whatnot it was more of grading errors, there were blatant answers that were marked wrong that I was, most of the time, I would say 75 percent of the time I'm sitting there going this is a right answer why did they give this wrong. And then all of a sudden you look at one of the graders and you see that, and like, you see a pattern. So I don't think there's no consistency in the grading of the regents. And that's a problem. That part of it is a problem. Because I've found sometimes 10-15 point errors, 10 -15 point errors in one test. That's a huge swing, that's going from a 63 to an 85 you know, and I've found those before. All of a sudden I get a 63, they're like, Matucci do your magic. They would always say "do your magic," and I really wouldn't be doing any magic. A lot of times scantrons were wrong. And by law you're supposed to hand mark

them, not use scantron, so I'd just look at the scantron and go 1, 2, 3 there's 3 points right here. A lot of times I didn't go on when I found the points. If I had 4 points, I wouldn't, because I had like 1000 tests to mark, if I found 4 points and I had gotten the kid to the passing range, sometimes I wouldn't go on unless it's a real, real, blatant consistent problem on the test. I would just award the points and go on. You know go on to my next pile.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz mentions that because he was the only Biology teacher at his old school, he was in charge of scrubbing all borderline test papers.

Liguori: Does scrubbing happen or other types of scrubbing happen at the high school level on the regents?

Mr. Arnaz: Sighs. As someone who graded the living environment test at my previous small school, I was the only biology teacher, so I would need 2 signatures on the test, I would have another math or science teacher grade the multiple choice, I would do the long answer, at that time, I was not concerned with my passing percentages, certainly not my mastery percentages, to whatever degree I would try to grade a student's test most favorably, it was for the individual student's benefit, because I knew that this would be the one science regents they would pass to give them the opportunity to graduate high school. So that's my experience with it.

Liguori: How would you describe scrubbing?

Mr. Arnaz: I've never heard it used among colleagues, but if a teacher was doing that I don't think they'd talk about it very much, I'm telling you that for the benefit of students, because I knew this would be their only chance to pass a science regents to graduate, I wouldn't erase something or change an answer, but I would really stretch, when you get the answer key to science regents, or any regents with a writing component, it's very open ended, and there are a lot of things that could be graded correctly or incorrectly, given credit or not given credit to, so there...you grade the test one time and you might have a bunch of kids with 53s and 54s and depending on the year of which the student was in high school, a 55 was passing, you definitely go back and you grade again and you look very hard and I'm sure there were a few times where I probably shouldn't have given a student a point or 2, but it wasn't for my benefit, it wasn't for the benefit of the school's statistics, I can honestly tell you it was for the individual student, I wanted them to be able to graduate.

Ms. Stone, 42, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 15 years, Was formerly assigned to a school that has been closed. MS. Stone mentions that when grading the regents there is always somebody available to regrade a borderline exam.

Liguori: Have you ever engaged in any scrubbing behavior?

Ms. Stone: I've reread tests to see if I could literally give a test a higher lower grade and I have on occasion been able to go up, but I've never given a score that was higher than I really felt it should have and we did have somebody else who actually graded according to his sort of creative [guidelines]. (Laughs). I think there's somebody like that in every school. I always felt a little weird about that. But, I've been fortunate in that area, and I never had to fail a kid, that's not true, there were a couple of kids who I just couldn't go up even a half a point, I couldn't do it.

Liguori: Have you ever felt pressure to do that?

Ms. Stone: There's always somebody to do it. (laughs)

Liguori: What do you mean?

Ms. Stone: I mean there's somebody else in the room who would grade it lower.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell jovially refers to her position as the designated scrubber in her department.

Liguori: Do people now use [the term scrubbing]?

Ms. Campbell: Yeah, I use it all the time. I say “the doctor is in” But like I said, I don’t want you to think that I’m someone who makes or fabricates scores. I think you understand because you marked the tests, what I’m talking about, there are answers that could go either way, and with a 64, 63, I think you could find it, If there’s not, you can’t. I always say that I really like what I do and if I want to keep doing it, I have to do it the right way. If there are seniors and they need it to graduate and they get a 64, of course you’re going to try and find a point for them. Are you going to be a jerk? That’s wrong. This year it’s going to be tough because the graduation is...and the last day of testing is the day before, we’ll see how this works, they’re waiting for certain kids regents to be marked to see if they graduate or not. Terrible, terrible, situation. Really not fair to the kids, that’s really psychologically the right thing to do, to put them in this limbo within 24 hours.

While not considered scrubbing, some teachers maintain that there are members of the school staff that are engaging in egregious test score pollution in order to get students to pass the regents. Many times this includes accommodations for students that have been put in special education classes. Below, the use of a scribe to have the student pass an English exam is questioned. Many of the same rationalizations of teacher cheating behavior were used to describe the scribe’s behavior by the respondent.

Mr. Shapiro, 59, Special Education and History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Shapiro mentions that he previously saw a paraprofessional give unauthorized help to a student during a regents exam.

Liguori: ...Are you ever surprised by anything?

Mr. Shapiro: Um, I wouldn’t say I’m not surprised, but um, depending on who’s administrating the exam. The, long pause, sigh, long pause, sigh, the people not who proctor it, but who are helping some of the students who have modifications. You know you’ll have someone who you know is academically inept and has an ice cube’s chance in hell of passing a regents and gets a 65 on it. Well, you know, the scribe or the reader did rather well for the student. And you can tell it’s not the student’s.

Liguori: Now how does that happen, when they’re writing it down?

Mr. Shapiro: OK, I have a modification where questions are read to me, you’re taking a reading RCT, and you’re supposed to read it, but your modification is you have a reader, so the reader reads it to you. Who are we testing you or the reader? Then it’s a close exercise, so they stress one of the questions, in the paragraph they’ll stress a couple of sentences, a sentence before or a enunciate a specific word that will shed some light on one of the 5 choices, and then via visual nod or shake, which do you pick, so many of the students are passing the reading.

Later...

Liguori: What about situations with the readers?

Mr. Shapiro: Well, you can’t prove it. You weren’t there. I just happened to witness a few things and I brought it to the supervisor’s attention and they pulled the reader out.

Liguori: Would you ever have considered to do something like that for example?

Mr. Shapiro: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. Shapiro: It's not worth it. First of all it's not advantageous for me for any reason. And besides not getting anything out of it, you're not benefiting the person taking the exam. You know, you're there as a role model to teach them something. And by doing something underhanded, it's a negative behavior, that's not what you want to reinforce.

Liguori: What was done afterward other than the teacher being pulled out?

Mr. Shapiro: It wasn't a reader, it was a para or an aide. And they just would not be given that, be put in that position again to read or to proctor.

Liguori: And they weren't disciplined or anything like that?

Mr. Shapiro: I wasn't privy to it so I wouldn't know. I know they were admonished, but to the extent I would not know.

Rationale for teachers to scrub. Why do they do it?

There are many different rationales for teachers to scrub. While the pressure to increase passing percentages was sometimes cited, it was usually a secondary concern among the respondents. Most individuals who scrubbed did it simply because it was what was always done and they were socialized into it from the start of their careers. Other individuals scrubbed because they felt that they wanted to see their students succeed and move on to the next level. Another common theme in scrubbing was due to administrative pressures to scrub. Unlike other forms of test score pollution, like teaching to the test, no teachers mentioned that they scrubbed in order to boost their self image. The rationale for teachers scrubbing was mostly to please others whether it was the students below them or the administrators above them.

Administrators putting pressures on teachers to scrub.

One rationale for teachers scrubbing is that administrators put pressures on the teachers to scrub. As mentioned previously, under the new accountability measures from the state and city governments, principals are under tremendous pressures to have their schools succeed. In fact, in the NYCDOE administrators have a financial interest in having their schools do well on standardized tests (Medina 2009; Otterman 2009). Like

other forms of test score pollution, scrubbing is used to meet these pressures. Because of the state's regulations on how regents should be handled, many administrators stay away from the routine grading of the exams; however, they may instruct teachers to re-examine exams that are close to passing. Some situations discussed with teachers indicate that administrators sometimes ask them to change grades or interpretations against the teachers' better judgments.

Mr. Shapiro, 59, Special Education and History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Shapiro mentions that sometimes he feels pressure from administrators to scrub exams. This pressure comes from intradistrict competition among administrators.

Liguori: Do you feel that there is any pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in your subject area.

Mr. Shapiro: I couldn't give a crap one way or the other.

Liguori: So, none on you?

Mr. Shapiro: I've worked in schools where the APs would call up their friends who worked in other schools, and say "oh, we had, we have an 87% rate of passing for this particular regents" and then the teacher would come in and say oh, you gotta scrub these papers, because some of these marks the students should have done better than they did, so go over it.

Liguori: What do you mean by scrub?

Mr. Shapiro: In other words a student say he got a 63 on an exam and you could give him a point or 2 on an essay or something, well, it's do you give him a point or you don't. Well I think this is what it should be, you think, so you average it out and that's what they get. Well, if you scrub it, well, maybe we could raise it a half a point, so that half a point makes the student pass. Um, long pause, sigh, long pause, if on the English regents, if [the student] write[s] anything. Long pause. For one of the essays they get a minimum of one point and on a couple of exams, I refused to give them the one point, because it was gibberish and had nothing to do with what they were writing. So, do you give them the 1 point or do you give them a zero. And I had a principal, an AP, say "well, you know, they're saying something". And I say, "it's raining outside." You know, he says "what does that gotta do?" I said "exactly, what does it got to do with the question, nothing." "But he wrote something" Fine. Do it. It deserves a point? Yeah, it deserves a point cause there's a response. So what I do is I scratch my name off, here's the paper, you give him the point.

Mr. Sagan, 29, Social Studies Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Mr. Sagan mentions how administrators pressured him into changing grades on the regents.

Liguori: What would you constitute as scrubbing exactly? You said find points for.

Mr. Sagan: On the essays you could probably scrub a little. I don't like to, I've been pressured to, but I don't like to.

Liguori: You've been pressured to, how exactly have you been pressured to?

Mr. Sagan: I've had people shove a test that's a 64 in my face, and say find points.

Liguori: By find, what did they make you do?

Mr. Sagan: Re-look at the essays and see if the score that the last person gave was accurate.

Liguori: Would you mind elaborating a bit?

Mr. Sagan: (shakes head)

Liguori: Remember this here is confidential, if you would want to move into a different room.

Mr. Sagan: Mr. "May the Schwartz be with you" may uh. I just don't know.

Liguori: People in the school have actually answered it honestly.

Mr. Sagan: Then yes, there is a degree to that which I have had tests shoved in front of me, and then that person would turn around and say, but I don't see anything. And then I'm like well, I don't know if I'm seeing anything either, take your test back then. Why, again like I told you with blame, blame is a funny thing.

Liguori: Did they ever ask you to change something physically?

Mr. Sagan: Yes.

Liguori: Like a student's response.

Mr. Sagan: No no. I mean like a score that another teacher gave "change this 2 to a 4."

Liguori: 2 to a 4, so that big of a jump.

Mr. Sagan: Is it really that big of a jump. What did I tell you about my triangle theory, you can make a strong argument, I could tell you that the Nazis won. I could prove my argument. Never change someone's answer, that's a line I don't know if I would cross.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien feels that if students are not doing well after marking the first part of the regents, there will be pressure from administrators to mark the second part of the regents less stringently.

Liguori: What about the regents is there any pressure for you to raise regents scores?

Mr. O'Brien: Um, well, the kids who take the English regents in general are in the honors classes, I think 100 percent of them actually passed the regents. So there wasn't any pressure there, but I think that there might be in June when we start grading. Depending how the numbers start working out after grading the first day, they might say, you know when we're grading the second day's part, be a little bit more generous. I think they're definitely going to do that... Because this school is very concerned with how they look on paper and they would rather look good on paper

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Shriver discusses how administrators encourage her to always err in favor of the student in grading the regents. This pressure comes from the expectation that a good number of her students score mastery scores on the regents.

Liguori: What percent of your students do you expect to pass the regents exam this year?

Ms. Shriver: 100 percent.

Liguori: What about to get Mastery?

Ms. Shriver: I would say, my personal, when I look at my students on their skills I would say 85 percent should easily get mastery on the regents, but the I feel that there is that 5 percent that is really gray and we're encouraged in our grading to err on the side of a higher score.

Later...

Liguori: What about Ms. Wechsler, does she put any pressure on you?

Ms. Shriver: (Quiet, but stern) Yes.

Liguori: How does that manifest itself.

Ms. Shriver: Sighs. When we're grading the regents, it's, uh, like she's constantly saying things like "well, if you're not sure if it's a 4 or a 5, it's probably a 5, just put 5;" or "if you're not sure always give the kids the benefit of the doubt, because even our worst kid's work is really a 4 or maybe a 3." Like if one grader/teacher is consistently getting what she considers lower scores or if she looks at a student's name and says "I think that student would have gotten higher," then she'll reread it or have you reread it or another person reread it to see if there can be more points in the process.

Liguori: Do you feel that it's for the student? Is it to boost numbers?

Ms. Shriver: No, it's totally to boost our numbers. Like, we're told whatever percentage our mastery is, it's touted over and over and over again, like at our open houses. At our department meetings to parents during parent initiation over and over again.

Liguori: Do you ever feel that any of it is shady?

Ms. Shriver: I don't... I don't... Yeah, I feel like it's kind of shady, I feel that we try to inflate our numbers. Like our kids are great and I don't feel that we really need to, we don't have to put much effort into making our numbers higher, but again, we lean closer to putting our number up then making them be exactly representational.

Mr. Lopez, 29, Social Studies Teacher, J.P. Morgan Technical High School, a small, career oriented, high school. Has been teaching for 8 years. Mr. Lopez discusses how his former administrator did not want to have any students score between 60-64. He mentions that while there was no pressure from him to scrub, whenever he left the room, his papers were scrubbed by other teachers in the room.

Liguori: Who told you to do that?

Mr. Lopez: I don't want to give names.

Liguori: Just give positions.

Mr. Lopez: One of the APs in the school, I mean she was a very nice woman and she was one of these sort of touchy feely type of educators. I remember very vividly that one year they gave the regents exam and a girl one of the papers that I was grading had a 63 and the girl was crying or whatever and the AP said, well she got a 63 and she feels that she sort of missed it, and you know "(funny voice) if you're going to grade the regents you gotta make sure that they get a clear failing grade or clear passing grade, none of this 63 you know mumbo jumbo." I think it was because she saw tears coming out of the girl's face.

Later...

Liguori: Did you ever rebel and leave it at a 63?

Mr. Lopez: I did I tried, but when you have a committee of teachers. You could say alright don't look at this test it's a 63 and that's what it is, but you can't control what they're going to do when you're out of the room. You could walk out of the room and get a drink of water and all of a sudden now that test is a 65 or a 59 or whatever it is.

Mr. Matucci, 35, Biology Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Mr. Matucci feels that his decision not to scrub a particular paper changed the relationship between him and his supervisor.

Liguori: I am just looking for your definition is. Would scrubbing ever include putting a dot in a Lewis dot structure?

Mr. Matucci: I know that equation very well. It's very easy to put just one little dot in the pen, would scrubbing include that? I think that's more illegal than scrubbing. I think that's more

criminal than scrubbing is. I think that goes passed what scrubbing what scrubbing would be, I see my view, scrubbing is you know, really looking into that answer and you're really interpreting that answer in a different...what you said is more criminal where you're actually changing the answer without. Hey, there's one test that 3 years ago, 2 years ago, that my administrator asked me to mark because the pen was in 2 different pens and 2 different inks and 2 different handwritings and I refused, and I said I'm not touching it. And my AP and I got into a very heated argument and you know I just refused to do it. I was not going to put my name on something. The test was already graded. It was like weird. One person graded the test, just one person and they sent it in form another school and they asked us just to sign off on it. So, my AP came to me and said just put your initial on here and sign. I said absolutely not. I said I'm not putting my initial on that. I didn't grade it. And I said and I could see it's 2 different people's handwriting and 3 different pens.

Liguori: What was the final grade?

Mr. Matucci: The final thing was, I think it was passing. It turned out that...My AP didn't tell me this, the kid had a para, it sounded very fishy with the writing and whatever. I had nothing to do with it, which caused a big problem, someone else did it and that was it.

Liguori: Did you feel a lot of pressure from your AP to sign off on it at that time?

Mr. Matucci: Well, no, because I just said no. I'm not going to do anything I'm not going to do. But it did cause problems later on, because there was a little bit of animosity that I didn't listen to him and just do what he said.

Mr. Calabria, 66, Social Studies Teacher. Has been teaching for 7 years. Was Previously assigned to a high school, but was sent to a reassignment center, or "Rubber Room," after being exposed as a whistle blower of a large scrubbing scandal. Mr. Calabria mentioned that he felt that there was no pressure directly on him to scrub because there was always someone else the administrator could convince to scrub.

Liguori: Why do people do it?

Mr. Calabria: They did it for a number of reasons? Some would do it simply to be helpful to the kids, others would do it because other teachers were doing it, they wanted to be part of the team, others did it because they were afraid that the supervisor would punish them if they didn't and others did it because they wanted a certain kid that they taught, or that they knew, that they liked, to pass.

Liguori: What was the supervisors' role in all of this?

Mr. Calabria: At my old school a Supervisor was the inspiration for the scrubbing, she directed the scrubbing, she would take exams in this pile close to passing and hand it to a couple of teachers and say "here take care of these. Pass these exams." and so on, that's how it was done under her direction.

Liguori: So she would say look at these here with the implicit idea to just scrub them?

Mr. Calabria: Yeah, right. Implicit and explicit.

Liguori: What was explicit?

Mr. Calabria: Well, if you read the report by the office of special investigations, it interviewed the teachers in the grading room, she would hand exams to certain teachers and say "here pass them." Simple as that. "Give them the points they need."

Liguori: What would happen if someone didn't scrub for your old AP?

Mr. Calabria: Well, we don't actually because she only gave them, in most part, she only gave them to teachers she knew would scrub. One was her boyfriend whom she later married and the other main scrubber was a good friend of hers and so on. Um, and I didn't see any pressure to scrub for people who didn't want to.

These respondents showed that many teachers scrub because of the pressures placed upon them by school administrators. The pressure ranges from a mild suggestion to review exams to administrators forcing teachers to change their interpretations. Administrators are often themselves under a lot of pressure from the city and the state to achieve or maintain a high passing/mastery percentage on the regents. While these pressures and scrubbing are nothing new, they may be exacerbated by the educational accountability movement. These pressures may also be increased if the current monetary incentives (Medina 2009; Otterman 2009) increase for administrators in the NYCDOE.

Teachers often scrub because they want to help students.

Because of the time teachers spend with students and are significant in influencing their students' aspirations (Sewell, Haller and Portes 1969; Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf 1970), teachers relate to their students and want to see them do well. Many participants in the study mentioned that they "wanted to do right by the kids." They wanted to pass the students and help them as much as they could to get the passing score so they could graduate high school or move to the next class. These teachers had not mentioned that they had internalized their students' successes as their own nor were they pressured into increasing test scores by administrators. The school's regents passing percentage was not a major factor in these respondents' motivation to scrub test papers.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn discusses how teachers scrub for students because it may be their last chance at passing the exam.

Liguori: What do you think those teacher's motivations are for doing that?

Ms. Penn: I don't know that I think that it's actually to raise passing rates in general, I think that the number of kids that it happens for each year is maybe like 5 at most 10 out of we're talking about like 500 kids. So I don't know that it changes the percentages for the school that much I think that it's actually done with individual students in mind, Like this kid worked really hard, they sat for this 3 hour test, they maybe passed the class and so they're not going to take the class again, 2and by the time they take the test again, they would have forgotten everything if they take it next year in January, so just let the kid pass now, so that they don't have to take it again a later time when they have less of a chance of passing.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien justifies scrubbing because it would be disheartening for students and the tests are very subjective in nature.

Liguori: Now you mentioned before with grading papers, that if students got a 63, you would feel some pressure on you, would you elaborate? .

Mr. O'Brien: Just because the students, you know, their self esteem as well, a 63 is like you know, getting eliminated the round before the Super Bowl. It's crushing for them. They really need, some of them really deserve to get those extra points. You know it's all kind of subjective anyway when you're grading English things, with essays. Like they give you a rubric, but there's still a lot of grey area in it.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz feels that he scrubs because he feels compassion for his students.

Liguori: Did anybody teach you how to do it?

Mr. Arnaz: No if anything I think, sometimes I would encounter colleagues who were maybe not as favorable to that and if I knew they had a very high level of academic integrity and that's what they were trying to maintain, I wouldn't question them on it. But, you know, when you work in school, with children of color and low SES and you work on a staff with middle SES and staff members not of color, you do run into teachers who aren't emotionally invested, and when I ran into colleagues like that in regents grading situations, I would lean on them a little bit to be a little bit more compassionate.

Ms. Santini, 51, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years She was previously assigned to a failing school. Ms. Santini claims that one of her colleagues scrubbed in order to have his students score higher, but it was not done out of competition with the other teachers.

Liguori: What are the practices that might have happened?

Ms. Santini: I've seen a teacher actually change, like let's say on a multiple choice change a 2 to a 3.

Liguori: In order to get a kid to pass?

Ms. Santini: Yes. Not with the knowledge of the Assistant Principal, but you know. See the whole thing is you shouldn't be alone when you're marking the regents exam, and we're not here, but in other schools I've seen it. I've seen a teacher go out of the room with the regents papers.

Liguori: And everyone knew what he was doing?

Ms. Santini: Well, no, because you're all busy, so you might have seen it, you might not.

Liguori: Did people report him?

Ms. Santini: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. Santini: It's just...it wasn't my business, and I was hoping my assistant principal would see it or whatever, but, if she didn't see it, or he didn't see it, it wasn't my business.

Liguori: What was his motivation?

Ms. Santini: He wanted his kids to do better.

Liguori: Better than your kids?

Ms. Santini: Oh, no. He just wanted his kids to do better.

Liguori: Would you ever consider doing anything like that?

Ms. Santini: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. Santini: Uh, my morals, my upbringing, what I was always taught-to be honest. What I teach my kids.

Ms. Dimaggio, 36, Assistant Principal Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. A former Social Studies teacher, she has been in Education for 15 years and an administrator for 9 years. Ms. DiMaggio claims that scrubbing used to be more widespread; however, it has diminished now that many teachers can name somebody who has been dismissed because of scrubbing allegations.

Liguori: Have you seen [scrubbing] happen?

Ms. DiMaggio: In another school, which is more than 9 years ago and it was a different time period then.

Liguori: Why was it done then?

Ms. DiMaggio: Why was it done? Because there wasn't that much emphasis placed on the regents exam. Because kids were going into again autoshop, kids were going into, you know, Catherine Gibbs. They weren't going into Harvard or Yale, or this kid barely passed, he got 65s, and that was a gift. You know it was a different time then.

Liguori: What were the motivations for teachers to scrub?

Ms. DiMaggio: Um, Because they want to see a kid graduate, you know, it will stop you from graduating right in your tracks, you can't graduate without it.

Liguori: Were there any pressures from APs for teachers to scrub?

Ms. DiMaggio: I would say there was.

Liguori: Is it that "It's Joe, I like this kid, you should give him a point" or is it like for everyone?

Ms. DiMaggio: Years ago. That's exactly what happened, now it's "is it worth your job." We can all name someone who's been fired because of tampering on the regents exam.

These teachers felt that they were scrubbing because it was in the best interest of the child. They felt that their students should not be punished because they had a bad day or conversely students should be rewarded because they tried hard in their other endeavors. This behavior seems to be heavily entrenched in the mindset of teachers throughout the sample. By keeping teachers in charge of grading the exams, this motivation for scrubbing will continue or may increase as more teachers may rebel against what they deem to be unfair practices of the state.

Teachers often scrub because that's just what is done.

Many teachers who were grading regents were socialized into scrubbing behaviors from their first year of teaching. The scrubbing norms that develop were instilled in them from the time they were new teachers and are passed down to newer teachers by more experienced teachers. Many older teachers who have been at several schools indicated that their old schools had a culture that was conducive to scrubbing, contrasting it to their current school where there was less scrubbing. Other teachers noted that they did not look at any of the names on the papers that they scrubbed. They just routinely scrubbed because "that is what is done." These teachers felt that there was little pressure put on them to scrub from administrators, but there was some from other teachers in their school to scrub.

Mr. Hanratty, 28, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 5th year teaching. He was previously assigned to Kosciusko High School. Mr. Hanratty claims to have learned how to scrub his first time marking the regents exams.

Liguori: How does it wind up happening, how were you introduced to it?

Mr. Hanratty: Well basically, nobody actually ever told me about it, I learned about it as we were grading, this is from veteran teachers who were around. Basically what we do is as we're entering scores and we have a couple of people looking at the grading scale, matching the multiple choice up with the essay scores and getting a particular score, and if we look and the kid's getting a 63 or a 62 or a 64, and that one point, or half a point is going to boost them up to the next level, then that's an essay we would technically scrub.

Liguori: This is done among teachers not..

Mr. Hanratty: I never knew about it coming from the higher ups.

Mr. Klein, 27, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Klein discusses how he and his colleague decided to scrub without any directives.

Liguori: Is that the norm in grading?

Mr. Klein: Well there's only a couple of math teachers [here], but we both look and we pretty much have the same policy.

Liguori: Did you guys develop this policy on your own?

Mr. Klein: Yeah, we just sort of, me and the other math teacher were first year teachers, so we both just sort of just did it as we...you know what I'm saying...we just realized that's what we were going to do. Speaking from my personal experience, it was just the 2 of us just being like well this what we're going to do type of thing, we never, I have a pretty good relationship with the administration, they kind of know that I know what I'm doing, so it's not really a problem.

Ms. Bales, 26, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Bales discusses how older teachers introduced her to scrubbing.

Liguori: Even though you've never seen it or been in the room when it happened, how did you hear [about scrubbing]?

Ms. Bales: Grading the English regents actually. We had a couple kids who had a 61, 64, and someone was like "are you going to go in and scrub?" Scrubbing? No I just graded the test. So that's how it was.

Liguori: So other teachers introduced you to the term?

Ms. Bales: Right, but they weren't being in any way judgmental or putting pressure on me for not doing it, but they were like, oh, don't you go back now, so.

Liguori: I am just looking at the norms like was it a teacher or was it an administrator?

Ms. Bales: It wasn't administrative in that way no.

Liguori: So it was teachers just talking and teachers teaching it to other teachers.

Ms. Bales: Seeing the grades because we were logging in the grades that the kids got and I remember one was a 64 itself, and "oh, aren't you going to go back and check?"

Liguori: Did you feel a little bit of pressure from the teacher?

Ms. Bales: No, because it wasn't any way judgmental or anything, it was just this is what happens.

Liguori: Was it an older or younger teacher?

Ms. Bales: A vet, yeah, it was a vet.

Liguori: More than 10 years?

Ms. Bales: I don't even know that there's a teacher of more than 10 years here outside administration. 5-10 years.

Liguori: Where do you think that person learned it?

Ms. Bales: From either other older teachers, or an AP who was helping grading. It could be common sense too. It could be like kid has a 64, maybe I missed something, let me go recheck the multiple choice, which is something that you do and that's not scrubbing.

Liguori: What about that word?

Ms. Bales: I would have to say that came from a vet and eventually that came from someone who was able to not discipline, but someone of authority who was like go back and scrub.

Ms. Testaverde, 40, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 17 years. Ms. Testaverde discusses how at her old school scrubbing was routine among teachers.

Liguori: Have you done it before in other schools?

Ms. Testaverde: Yes.

Liguori: What was your motivation for it?

Ms. Testaverde: Well, we were even encouraged to scrub in the old school, and the attitude was that sometimes, it would be a graduating senior or whatever, a graduating senior that they felt that

you know, we just bumped up the grade, then they pass and they graduate, so it was commonly practiced and the word was used, whereas here it's no.

Liguori: It's a taboo word here?

Ms. Testaverde: It's a taboo word and we don't do it. We don't look at tests then scrub them. Once the grade is done, that's it, it's done. You have to respect the grade that your colleague put on that paper. It's also something that, like, I think when you're younger, you don't realize the implications, but as I've gotten older, I wouldn't do it anymore because it's not worth it, it's not worth me losing my job over, you know what I mean, and I did have friends in my old school who were called on that and put in the (different voice) "rubber room" and investigated for doing that type of thing, so it's not worth it. The Assistant Principal lost his job, so, it's just, I mean, who wants to go through that.

Liguori: There was a big scandal at your old school...

Ms. Testaverde: But after I had left.

Liguori: I don't even know if it was your department...

Ms. Testaverde: I know that at Kosciusko it went on at the Social studies, it was friends of mine.

Liguori: Did you feel that it was wrong what you were doing?

Ms. Testaverde: No, not at all. Because I don't feel the tests are necessary, so it's very easy to just say, I'm going to help this kid along, whatever, I'm going to find a point in that essay because when you feel that the test isn't needed to begin with, it's very easy to just...

Liguori: Would other people tattle on others?

Ms. Testaverde: No.

Liguori: Were you afraid that you would get caught doing it?

Ms. Testaverde: At my old school? No. Because I think everybody was doing it.

Liguori: It was just widespread?

Ms. Testaverde: Uh huh.

Liguori: When did you learn about this and how did you learn about this?

Ms. Testaverde: Like I said, at some point people would say "ok, we got to scrub" so and then when I was new at that school I just did it.

These teachers did not scrub because there was active pressure put on them from administrators, nor were they necessarily scrubbing with the intent to help students in their academic pursuits. These teachers scrubbed merely because they felt that it was part of grading the exams. This motivation for scrubbing will persist as long as New York State is ambiguous in its instructions to teachers that are grading the regents exams. If the current method of teachers grading the regents were to continue, perhaps there should

be mandatory professional development for all teachers before they mark the regents exams and clear guidelines on acceptable behavior.

Are certain schools more aware of scrubbing than others?

There were certain schools that were more aware of scrubbing than others in the sample. Some of the increased awareness arises from geographic factors. Some schools were geographically close to schools that were in the news because of scrubbing scandals that had gone on at other schools. While none of the schools that were studied had large scrubbing scandals, because of the insular nature of the NYCDOE, many of the veteran teachers had worked at several locations before they were at their current posting. While slightly flawed, this knowledge of other schools, school structures, and other administrators played a vital role in being able to discern what behaviors occurred at other schools.

Teachers at schools that were close in proximity to schools that had publicized scrubbing scandals were much more likely to know about scrubbing behaviors and much more likely to have heard of the term. Two schools in the sample, Bay View and Longshore, were close in proximity to a school that had a publicized scrubbing scandal. Teachers at these schools seemed to have the scandal on their mind when discussing scrubbing. Also, the teachers made comparisons between their school and the school that had the publicized scrubbing scandal. These comparisons drew contrasts between administrators at their school and a nearby school that had a highly publicized scrubbing scandal.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino discusses how the scandal at a local school was discussed but did not impact his school greatly.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Lomangino: Yes.

Liguori: What is it?

Mr. Lomangino: It's been in the newspaper a lot in this district because there was a principal in another school who was either looking the other way or highly encouraging it in his building and I have friends and colleagues who work there. Scrubbing is basically when you have a student who's failed the regents exam and you reexamine it looking for points or creating points. I don't think that there's anything wrong with maybe looking to see if maybe you misgraded something, but when you're trying to figure out how to pass a student who has clearly failed, that's what we call scrubbing.

Liguori: Just in general with scrubbing, you mentioned that it happened in a school in this district, we both know...

Mr. Lomangino: Sure [names local school].

Later

Liguori: How big was the scandal...

Mr. Lomangino: It was huge.

Liguori: Did that have repercussions here?

Mr. Lomangino: No, because we follow the letter of the law.

Liguori: Was it discussed at all?

Mr. Lomangino: It was discussed and there was a lot of other things going on at that building that were scandalous in themselves and that's basically what brought, like usual that's how they were able to reveal those things, but the fact is that there were a number of incorrect things going on at that building; administration abuse in essence of their power.

Ms. O'Grady, 31, Social Studies Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 9 years. Ms. O'Grady makes the distinctions between her school and a nearby school that had a highly publicized scrubbing scandal. She claims that her school is less likely to scrub because there are fewer administrative pressures than at the other school.

Liguori: Where did you hear the term scrubbing?

Ms. O'Grady: It was in the [local Paper], like [that local school] when they got in trouble, what was it, last year, they got in trouble when the AP was taking the exams home and scrubbing them, and that's when the term came up in newspapers and just hearing it from other teachers and everything like that, you can hear that.

Liguori: Does that happen to some extent here?

Ms. O'Grady: No. No. I have to say with her, no, she doesn't allow anything like that. No, because we get audited by the state, the state looks at the exams and it's just not worth the risk.

Liguori: Why is it different here as compared to [that other school where there was a highly publicized scandal]? Why would it happen there and not here?

Ms. O'Grady: I guess it depends on your administrator, like I said, I don't feel pressured by her to have passing marks and everything like that and she doesn't allow anything like that to happen and at [another school, which had a highly publicized scrubbing scandal], I guess it all depends on the, like I said the administrator, I guess that administrator in that school felt pressure, I guess she felt pressure for these kids to pass, you know and that's what she was doing. We never felt it here.

Ms. Campbell, 31, Biology Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been a teacher for 6 years. Ms. Campbell discusses how she feels that it is unfair to be compared to schools that scrub.

Liguori: Have you seen it happen at other schools?

Ms. Campbell: I've heard it other teachers talk about it, I heard it happened at [a local school], and I knew they were talking about it as a big deal because they were taking the untenured teachers and they were getting them to change the scores, which is like horrific, so they had these, like 85 percent pass rates, which are bullshit, and we knew they were bullshit and they couldn't prove it and then someone called 311 and ratted them all out...one of the teachers. They're gone, the whole thing. Can you imagine, that's going to impact the kids, because that scrubbing won't even go on, that basic looking for points, which is totally allowed and totally legal, they will not allow you to do, because it's going to be like "well, now we're under scrutiny for doing it" you know what I'm saying?

Teachers who were previously assigned to failing schools also have a greater knowledge of scrubbing and scrubbing behaviors. This may be because at their previous schools there may have been more opportunity and reasons to scrub. Administrators in failing schools are under a lot of pressure to succeed; therefore, they may put more pressure on teachers to scrub. Teachers may also become sympathetic to their students and may scrub in order to correct perceived injustices against their students. Finally, bad norms may arise in these institutions and become institutionalized over time and taught to newer teachers.

Mr. Ben Zion, 31, Math Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Was previously at a failing school. Mr. Ben Zion mentions why it is more likely that failing schools may be more likely to scrub.

Liguori: Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?

Mr. Ben Zion: Laughs. Yeah, I had that going on in my old school. Changing grades. I would never do it, never participated in, I think it's wrong. What advantage is that for a kid to change grades.

later

Liguori: How often do you think it happens?

Mr. Ben Zion: Sighs. It's hard to say. It really is, I don't know, I couldn't, I don't know, you want to improve the results and you have to go on and you're a principal of a failing school and you're in jeopardy of either losing your position you can use that edge to get it, maybe, I don't know. It's hard to say.

Also, in smaller schools where there are virtually no departments and all the teachers work together, there is a greater chance that the school administration can have an effect on the amount of scrubbing that happens. A difference was seen between the three small

schools in the sample. They all dealt with scrubbing in different ways. It may be that it is because of their administrators they deal with the topic differently. In Atlantic High School, there is little administrative support for scrubbing. In Parkview High School there was a lot of administrative pressure on teachers to scrub papers in a certain range. In David Dinkins Academy, norms for scrubbing were enforced among the teachers instead of the administrators. The administrations' involvement in scrubbing formed much of the teachers' opinions of scrubbing. While scrubbing went on to some extent in all three schools, in Parkview, where administrators directed much of the scrubbing, teachers felt that scrubbing was solely to boost numbers, while in the two other schools teachers felt that it was done more to help students and that it was an honest process.

Mr. Klein, 27, Math Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 2 years. Mr. Klein does not feel administrative pressure to recheck his grading in order to get students to pass.

Liguori: Does it ever come from the administration to do this stuff?

Mr. Klein: No. Not to change... look if they see if there's a 62, or 63, can you find any more points, blah blah, blah, that kind of stuff, but there's no pressure. Never once have I given them a paper and they're like look again, look a third time, I have to double check, but they wouldn't say "well, look again, look again, look again, look again."

Ms. Smith, 32, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing school. She has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Smith talks about how administrators in her school pressure her to get more students earning mastery scores on the regents.

Liguori: Why does that happen?

Ms. Smith: Um, Well, it comes back to that pressure, pride, ego. I mean our goal is always for our school to reach the 85 percent of the students reaching the 85, mastery level. I think at this point now that we've gone beyond that in the 90s, it's more of a matter of ego and bragging rights for people.

Liguori: Other people such as administration, teachers?

Ms. Smith: Yes. Administration people say that we get this grade and that grade on the regents. It's constantly cited, we kind of feel, I kind of feel ridiculous when at open houses, "our students get 98 percent passing" and maybe in the administrative world that's a really great thing, but given how basic these tests I believe to be is, and how strong our students are supposed to be, it's really not that great of a feat, but I feel like it's really not that big of a deal.

Liguori: Have you ever felt pressure to change interpretation?

Ms. Smith: Um, of the score or the grade?

Liguori: Yeah, like try to find an extra point, let's try to make this an 85.

Ms. Smith: In the past someone has asked me, not just in the English in grading other things, it's happened. It's just that we need to look this over, we need a 3rd person.

Liguori: Who is it normally who would ask you?

Ms. Smith: A person above me would say that.

Liguori: An AP?

Ms. Smith: In the past an AP or again the lead teacher, even though technically we're colleagues.

Liguori: Do you feel that's wrong?

Ms. Smith: Yes. I feel it's wrong. I mean I understand that sometimes in grading 400 essays, I could get that someone could read something through more quickly and you should reconsider. I've done that in my own classes, kind of reconsider a student's paper a couple of days later when I don't have 80 others to grade, so I realize that teachers reading, especially with an essay, it's not like a math example, so I think there's a little bit of leeway and room, and if I thought the grade was fair then I would absolutely not change it.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. Ms. Raapetti was introduced to scrubbing by other teachers in a relatively stress free way.

Liguori: Who introduced you to the term? Was it a teacher? Administrator?

Ms. Rapetti: Another teacher, an administrator was not involved.

Liguori: So it wasn't like an Administrator said would you mind scrubbing this paper, it was just the teachers saying "we've got to scrub these?"

Ms. Rapetti: I don't even know how. I think I heard them say scrub, scrubbing. I really don't remember, I know I learned it from last summer when one of the teachers were going over the tests.

Liguori: Does scrubbing ever happen in a Spanish exam?

Ms. Rapetti: I don't scrub my exams.

Ms. Osman, 36, Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 6 years. Ms. Osman feels that the idea to scrub always comes from teachers in the grading room.

Liguori: Did teachers or administrators tell you to scrub?

Ms. Osman: I know, I never heard, I really never heard it from administration, never. It was always from the group that I was with grading the regents, and again, it's always been a group of teachers.

Liguori: Do you feel that most teachers are honest in grading the regents exam?

Ms. Osman: The teachers that I have been with, yes.

These teachers were all aware of scrubbing, but the way it was introduced to them had impacted their view of the practice. Individuals who seemed to feel it was more teacher centered felt that there was less pressure to scrub and that it was done for the students and

had a neutral to positive view of scrubbing. Individuals who were pressured by administrators felt that scrubbing was solely done to boost the school's passing percentage and held a negative view of scrubbing. Teachers who developed scrubbing norms on their own felt that it was done out of compassion for their students and not to boost numbers and had a more positive view of the practice.

Teachers at certain schools are more aware of scrubbing than others. Much of this awareness is due to geographic factors and proximity to other schools that may have their own problems with scrubbing. Administrators also have an impact on teachers' knowledge of scrubbing behavior. This can be seen in the different management styles of the 3 small schools in the sample where at David Dinkins Academy the teachers enforced scrubbing norms, at Parkview High School administrators enforced scrubbing norms and at Atlantic High School the norms were not introduced. Finally, teachers who were previously at failing schools seemed to be more aware of scrubbing than other teachers. This may be because failing schools may be more likely to scrub and therefore those norms have followed these teachers.

Are teachers at certain schools more likely to scrub?

Throughout the sample there were certain schools that were more likely to have teachers who scrubbed. One important factor in scrubbing is having many students that are near a particular benchmark score on the regents; therefore, schools that were larger afforded teachers more of an opportunity to scrub and a larger faculty from which to find a willing staff member. While scrubbing behaviors were mentioned by teachers at all schools, this may be why there were more instances of hard scrubbing mentioned at the larger schools. Another factor in determining scrubbing behavior was whether or not

there was administrative support for scrubbing behavior. Schools where there was administrative support for scrubbing were more likely to scrub than schools where administrators were not supportive of scrubbing.

The two high performing schools in the sample were different in their approach to scrubbing. While Bay View High school was geographically close to a school that had a large scrubbing scandal, and the teachers were well aware of scrubbing behavior, the school did relatively little scrubbing. This may be because of the administrators' lack of support for such behaviors. At Bay View, there are few students who are near the cutoff score for passing on any of the regents exams, this in and of itself gives little motivation for teachers to scrub. Parkview High School, the other high performing school in the sample, was not geographically close to any schools with large scrubbing scandals and had several teachers who were unaware of scrubbing that went on at other schools. Like Bay View High School it had very few of its students that were close to the 65 passing benchmark; however, unlike Bay View, Teachers at Parkview felt a great pressure to scrub from their direct supervisors. At Parkview, the teachers were scrubbing in order to get their students to achieve mastery scores on the regents. This was in contrast to Bay View and the other schools where no such effort was made to get students to achieve mastery. The schools were managed differently with teachers claiming that the administration at Parkview compelled them to scrub in order to get them to Mastery, while the administrators at Bay View did not encourage scrubbing behavior. The other differences between the two schools were the size, how established the schools were, and the racial/ethnic makeup of the school. Bay View, the school that did not scrub, was

mostly white and middle class while Parkview, the school that did scrub, was diverse and had students from many different class backgrounds.

Mr. Brannigan, 35, former Science Teacher, Principal, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been in education for 12 years and has been an administrator for 4 years. Mr. Brannigan mentions that many similar schools will also look at scores close to mastery in order to get them to that level.

Liguori: What about 84 to 85? Is that possible in your peer horizon?

Mr. Brannigan: In my peer horizon, a lot of the schools do do a second read for exams in that 83-84 range, just as we're required to do it in the 60-65 level, we do it on the other level. That's something that we've done here at this school since before it really benefitted the school in any measure. When we first started that practice it only benefitted the students, it only had an impact on the students. Now with NYC looking at mastery rates and on some level, the state takes mastery rates into account, I don't know if there's any scrubbing on, but I will say we do take a look at the student's grades that come in that are the 83s and the 84s.

Ms. Gonzalez, 61, Biology Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching 27 years, was formerly an administrator. Ms. Gonzalez never thought to scrub for mastery.

Liguori: I know you look at 64 to 65, do you ever look at 84 to 85?

Ms. Gonzalez: No, we don't. I don't think I had any 84s. I never thought of looking at it.

Mr. Lomangino, 28, Social Studies Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years. Mr. Lomangino does not feel his school will scrub for mastery in the near future.

Liguori: When do you go finding things?

Mr. Lomangino: OK, I've done it once. In 7 years I've done it once, a student had a 64. I went and looked to see whether or not I misgraded one of my essays, only because it was the difference between failing or passing. It has never been done in the 7 years that I've been here to go from an 84 to an 85, or an 89 to a 90. I have never seen it done that way, and I don't anticipate seeing it.

The size and management of a school can impact the amount of scrubbing that goes on in the school. While teachers do scrub and develop scrubbing norms on their own, when school administrators encourage teachers to scrub, they become much more likely to scrub and are much more aware of the process. In discussing scrubbing for mastery scores at the two high performing schools, it was seen that even though teachers at Bay View were likely to have heard the term scrubbing they were unlikely to have engaged in the practice. The exact opposite was true at Parkview High School where teachers had not heard of the term scrubbing but had engaged in the practice because school administrators at the school encouraged them to raise the mastery percentage of their students. If a student scores mastery on the regents it has no impact on their graduation,

but it does have an impact on the school's standings. This may be a harbinger of things to come in this current era of accountability where teachers may be encouraged to scrub on behalf of students merely to have their statistics look good in a way that is only meaningful to state investigators.

Are certain subject teachers more likely to scrub?

Among the teachers that were interviewed, the teachers least likely to scrub were Foreign Language teachers. This may be because the foreign language regents is not required for graduation and is only required to attain an "Advanced Regents Diploma," which not all students will qualify for; furthermore, in many schools the Foreign Language regents is only offered to students who are likely to pass the regents by a large margin. While many foreign language teachers were supervised by the same administrators that encouraged English and History teachers to scrub, many foreign language teachers had not heard of scrubbing or felt that the administrators did not emphasize their subjects enough to have a need to scrub.

Ms. Stabinski, 54, Foreign Language Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 29 years and was previously an administrator in another state. Ms. Stabinski feels that her administrators do not put any pressure on her to scrub. This is in stark contrast to teachers with the same administrator in other departments that feel that they need to scrub for mastery.

Liguori: What about your AP, does he put pressure on you?

Ms. Stabinski: Um, no, not in terms of levels of achievement no.

Later

Liguori: Have you ever scrubbed?

Ms. Stabinski: Pretty much the only place there would be any leeway would be in the writing section of the exam and we have a rubric that we go by and generally I think the first time we read their writing, we give it a score and we have a second reader that give it a score. I think as Foreign Language teachers we tend to be harder on the students to begin with. And as long as our 2 people scoring reach the same conclusion the grade stays the way it is, if we disagree we have a 3rd person read it and we fight back and forth about what grade that essay should receive, but once the grades are tallied, it is what it is.

Liguori: What if a student got a 64, would you look it over?

Ms. Stabinski: I think I would look at it. But not just, I would look at the multiple choice, just check everything over to make sure there wasn't an error in correcting anywhere.

Liguori: Would you ever change your interpretation?

Ms. Stabinski: Um, It's possible, it's possible, if I was the 3rd person reading, if 2 other people graded the writing for example and it wound up a 64 and then asked "would you read this one?" Um, I might disagree with what they had to say, but not based on it being a 64 or 65. I feel very strongly about the integrity of the test and the integrity of the results, so I don't want to mess with that.

Liguori: Do you ever feel pressure...

Ms. Stabinski: Absolutely not. Absolutely not. No.

Ms. Rapetti, 25, Foreign Language Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching 4 years. Ms. Rapetti feels that there is no pressure on her to raise the passing percentage on the Spanish regents nor is there any pressure to scrub exams.

Liguori: Does the principal here put more pressure on you for a higher passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: No. No I wouldn't say so

Liguori: Does she put any pressure on you for a higher passing percentage on the regents?

Ms. Rapetti: Well, since I am the only Spanish teacher, it all reflects back on me, so I gotta put the pressure on myself more than she puts it on me. She really hasn't had the conversation with me like "oh, you need to..." But she did have the conversation with me as "only sit the kids who are going to pass, because anyone else there's no need for them to sit."

Liguori: Do you feel that there was another motive other than we don't want the kid to feel bad?

Ms. Rapetti: Oh, no no.

Liguori: Like I don't want it to look bad on my record sheet?

Ms. Rapetti: Possibly, you know. I don't really think so though. To me it just sounds like "there's no reason, let's not even think about it, it's just another thing, if they're not going to pass, just don't really..."

Liguori: Is there any pressure on you from the AP to raise regents scores?

Ms. Rapetti: No.

Later

Liguori: Does scrubbing ever happen in a Spanish exam?

Ms. Rapetti: I don't scrub my exams.

Liguori: Why wouldn't you?

Ms. Rapetti: Just because I don't know, even when I do my tests and their huge tests, I fail kids with a 64, I don't grade them until all the way in the end, so I mark them and put how many points off and go back and give it a grade, could I scrub, yeah, but I just don't, I don't it just never crossed my mind.

Liguori: Why not?

Ms. Rapetti: It's just not in my thought process.

Another factor that increased the likelihood of scrubbing is having an exam that was more conducive to scrubbing. While hard scrubbing could be done throughout the sample, soft scrubbing requires an exam that includes teachers' interpretations while grading. The English and History regents exams are notable in their extensive use of essay questions and require teachers' interpretations in scoring essays. This makes these exams much more susceptible to soft scrubbing than science and math exams which do not include many student constructed responses.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn feels that some exams are more prone to hard scrubbing behaviors.

Liguori: So I'm asking you, how would you define scrubbing? From, what would you say is the all the way...I used to teach physics, so you must understand you could get credit for putting an arrowhead on something and sometimes a student would put a line for a vector and the teacher.... the arrowhead is one point, would it be like that?

Ms. Penn: I would say any time that you are actually changing, I would say anytime that you're giving students credit for an answer that they didn't actually write, so like doing that, putting an arrowhead would be considered scrubbing or just literally changing a score without changing anything on the paper. When you're giving kids credit for an answer that's sort of questionable, like this happens more with living environment I see than in Earth Science and physics, because they do a lot of like short essay answers and it's sort of like you can be like "yeah well I could see what the kid was trying to get at," but you don't actually like change any of the words, but you're like "yeah, ok, I'll give them the benefit of the doubt, for what they were going for here" I am not sure if I would count that as much in scrubbing.

Liguori: Is there a lot of thought given to who should receive help and who should not receive help do you think?

Ms. Penn: I don't think so, not in the Earth Science that I've seen. I know that I know 1 teacher who did it once in Living Environment, they tend to do it less in Living Environment, and I think it is because as I was saying in Living Environment you can get away with giving them more of the like subjective "oh maybe they were..." and maybe you can get points that way and that's less ethically questionable, umm, but I do know one teacher who I know who did it once in Living Environment, It was the case where she gave a lot of thought to this particular student and how this student had worked so hard and this was the third time they were taking the class and they needed to graduate, but what I've seen of it being done in the earth science is it's done sort of indiscriminately, it's like "Oh, we have a test in front of us and we don't even know this kid but this kid has a 63 or 64 so yeah, put in the X and..."

Liguori: Magic..So in Biology it's more thinking it through and in Earth Science it's routine. With Earth Science, do they need it to graduate?

Ms. Penn: I think that the difference is that simply that uh.. it's a lot harder to do it in Biology as I said, there aren't X's or dots it's a lot of like essay writing, I also think that it's easier to do it the other way in Biology where you give the kid the benefit of the doubt in the answer, and so they just don't find themselves in situations in biology as often, where they're like "Oh, if I could find just one more point, I can't find it anywhere." That just doesn't happen as much in Biology where in Earth Science you're like "there are no essays here there's no way I could look for a point." So I

think that it actually just has to do with the structure of the test more than with any sort of like external factors like what the test is used for.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi previously discussed how he used to change answers on scantron bubble sheets; now that there are more essays, he claims essay scores are changed.

Liguori: Was it discussed somehow?

Mr. Askenazi: It was never discussed, it was just said, 63 can someone wash this, somebody look at it, and now it's with essays, let's give the kid a 2 instead of a 1 on that essay or a 4 instead of a 3.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien claims he would not consider changing answers as it is easier to change his interpretation of essay questions.

Liguori: Would you ever change answers on the regents?

Mr. O'Brien: No.

Liguori: Why not?

Mr. O'Brien: I feel like with the essays, there is that grey area and you could read into things to maneuver either way, but changing an answer, that's just cheating at that point. You're not helping the student. There's a difference between reading into their work and completely changing their work.

Ms. Shriver, 29, English Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 6 years. Claims she has never seen anyone change answers because it is easier to change scoring interpretation, which is less egregious.

Liguori: Erase a scantron bubble.

Ms. Shriver: No, I don't think so. I don't think that that occurs. If it has, I've never seen it happen and I never got the sense. I feel like there's more pressure to tweak the stuff that can be tweaked. Like there's more pressure to like, the stuff that's sort of like, really what's the difference between a 4 essay and a 3 essay and we tweak where there are subjective areas, but on the multiple choice, I don't get the sense that anyone would ever change an A to a C.

Mr. Calabria, 66, Social Studies Teacher. Has been teaching for 7 years. Was Previously assigned to a high school, but was sent to a reassignment center, or "Rubber Room," after being exposed as a whistle blower of a large scrubbing scandal.

Liguori: You said you saw other teachers scrub. What did they do?

Mr. Calabria: In our social studies exams, I never saw anybody erase multiple choice answer and give a correct answer where an incorrect was not, but the way it was done at cobble hill was to change the essay scores. There were 2 essays, one based on documents and the other based on themes and the rubric was from 0-5 and usually the first grading was accurate and fair, let's say some would get a 1 for an essay and then all the scores would be added up and maybe this kid would get a 63, wow, when in order to scrub this exam, you would go back to that essay, erase the 1 and give it a 2 or a 3 deepening on the weight that it needed to get from 63 to 65 or above, so scrubbing in my old school involved mainly, maybe exclusively, erasing the subjective grades for the essays on the lower grades and moving them up on the scale so the kids could pass.

Not surprisingly, it was found that teachers only scrub in ways that are meaningful for either the school or the students. Because the current accountability movement in education stresses the importance of achievement in Math and English, other exams are

not prioritized to the same extent. Within NYS, the only regents exams that are not required for graduation are Foreign Language regents. Not surprisingly, there is a lack of pressure on foreign language teachers to increase regents scores and it is less likely that they would scrub. It is also more likely for teachers to scrub exams that have many points that depend on teachers' interpretations of students' free responses. This means that perhaps multiple choice exams that are less expensive to administer and score would be more palatable if the desire is to minimize or eliminate scrubbing.

Which students benefit from scrubbing most?

Much of the decisions made by teachers on students' preparation for college is tied to family background (Sewell 1971). One possible explanation to the effect of family background on performance outcomes is the cultural capital that students from privileged backgrounds have (Bourdieu 1973; Lareau 1987). Because of these differences in cultural capital, teachers favor the students of parents from middle class backgrounds because they mirror the worldview of the teachers themselves. These preferences by teachers for students who are similar to them can lead to situations where students are graded based on these preferences (Dumais, 2002; Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder 2004; Downey and Pribesh 2004).

Teachers as members of the elite have been criticized for perpetuating the predominating class structure (Valenzuela 1999). Students who are not part of the elite often suffer for not having the adequate cultural capital in the eyes of their teachers (Bourdieu 1973). The link between cultural capital and classroom outcomes has been previously discussed in the literature (Lareau 1987); however, whether or not scrubbing can be linked to increases in the cultural capital of students remains to be seen. Part of

this may be because the students who benefit most from scrubbing do not normally come from privileged backgrounds.

The students who benefitted most from scrubbing were borderline students. While there was support for the notion that teachers rewarded students who worked hard or had some attribute that the teacher liked, many teachers scrubbed for all students in a mechanical manner. One teacher claimed that no names were looked at when making a decision to scrub and that all papers were given the same treatment by hard scrubbers. Scrubbing seemed to be done for all students regardless of their status in classroom demeanor.

Ms. Penn, 26, Biology Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Had taught for 4 years and was leaving teaching the following year. Ms. Penn feels that scrubbing was not done to raise regents passing percentages but to help any student who needed help getting to the passing threshold

Liguori: What do you think those teacher's motivations are for doing that?

Ms. Penn: I don't know that I think that it's actually to raise passing rates in general, I think that the number of kids that it happens for each year is maybe like 5 at most 10 out of we're talking about like 500 kids. So I don't know that it changes the percentages for the school that much I think that it's actually done with individual students in mind, Like this kid worked really hard, they sat for this 3 hour test, they maybe passed the class and so they're not going to take the class again, and by the time they take the test again, they would have forgotten everything if they take it next year in January, so just let the kid pass now, so that they don't have to take it again a later time when they have less of a chance of passing.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi felt as if instead of helping an individual student pass, teachers were helping the test paper pass.

Liguori: Was that something that happened frequently, infrequently...

Mr. Askenazi: No. No. Because yeah, because you're not getting that many kids that are getting that grade, because usually they either pass or they fail. But for that one or 2 kids that you might see out of 100, or so that you think you could do them a favor to pass them, yeah.

Liguori: Now what were your motivations?

Mr. Askenazi: It was never one person sitting...Motivation is just saying that let's push this kid maybe over the hump to help them. Let this not be the thing that's going to force this kid to have to take this exam again. And again, I'm not sure how I feel about it. I don't feel guilty about it, and I don't think it was a terrible thing. I've never seen anyone take a kid that got a 55 and say let's find 10 points. I've basically seen...

Liguori: You'd be surprised.

Mr. Askenazi: I don't doubt that it's happened, I've never been around that. I've never been around anything like that, I've never been around certainly the opposite happening, where they

maybe try to fail, and I've never been around where they even said "who is this child?" You know like what child is this? It's basically what's the number on this test, let's help this test.

Liguori: It never happens, where...

Mr. Askenazi: ...Will a teacher maybe say maybe "I know that kid, he's a good, kid he worked hard..." Yes.

Liguori: How do you feel about that?

Mr. Askenazi: I don't have a problem with that at all.

Liguori: In a situation like that there are possible sanctions that can be taken out on the teacher.

Mr. Askenazi: Yes.

Liguori: Why would certain teachers engage in that? Why would you engage in that if you would be sanctioned somehow?

Mr. Askenazi: I never even thought of it that long, I just thought we were doing you know I thought we were doing the right thing by the kid. You know and I can't remember anyone changing more than one short answer to make that difference, I've never seen a wholesale or even, it was usually if one short answer would make a difference, it was one short answer and there but for the grace of God go you and I.

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz felt that he scrubbed out of compassion for all his students.

Liguori: Do you ever feel that certain students benefitted more than others? I know that at [your old school] it was a homogeneous population. Were there certain students that benefitted more than others.. Is it Joe, he's a good egg, I'm going to find him the 2 points.

Mr. Arnaz: I think that depends on the individual teacher.

Liguori: With you?

Mr. Arnaz: I check my problems at the door when I come into school, and I try to do the same things with kids. In a given year, there's a couple of kids that drive me up the wall...

Liguori: Would you find points for them?

Mr. Arnaz: I try. Sure, if I didn't they'd have me again anyway. Laughs. If I like the kid I'd try to find points for him, if I didn't like the kid, I'd try and find points for him. I was the only game in town.

Liguori: Where did you pick up this type of behavior?

Mr. Arnaz: I think it's called compassion, I think there are other people who would argue with me and disagree and say that I'm disserving the kids or helping them at this gate in their lives will only set them up for future failure, and I get all that, I realize there's a flip to the argument. But when you work at a school like that and you're truly emotionally invested in the futures of these children and graduating or not graduating high school will dramatically affect the futures of these children, then if you care, you're going to do it. I don't need to rationalize it at all, it's very clear, and I would say that to any other teacher or administrator.

Many teachers indicated that scrubbing was done for all students in an even handed manner. However, other teachers felt that despite trying to be evenhanded, their personal judgments got in the way from time to time. These teachers felt that students'

personalities sometimes encouraged them to be more or less likely to scrub for that student. Some teachers felt that they would scrub more vigorously for students who had either overcome great difficulty in getting to the cusp of passing or exhibited good interpersonal skills in the classroom. On the other hand, other teachers felt that they would not go out of their way to help students who they disliked. However, none of the teachers felt that there was a racial or class component in their propensity to scrub.

Ms. Hurwitz, 24, Social Studies Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is her first year teaching. Ms. Hurwitz feels that the exams of students that work hard may be scrubbed over those of students that do not work hard.

Liguori: What about “I like Joe, he’s a good kid?”

Ms. Hurwitz: Not in that way, only in that a kid was you knew that they were learning disabled in some way or you knew that there was, there was, you knew that they were genuinely working super, super hard and their answer was almost there, and like you could see what they were thinking and if they explained it to you, they probably would be able to say it, then like that would be ok. That would be different.

Mr. O’Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O’Brien feels that in order to egregiously scrub a student’s paper, that student had better have put in the “extra mile” in the classroom.

Liguori: Would you ever consider going from a 3 to a 5 in that situation?

Mr. O’Brien: It would really depend on why the student was and knowing their background work. Did they deserve me going the extra mile to help them pass?

Liguori: Let’s say they were a good kid?

Mr. O’Brien: Yeah, if they were a good kid, they’ve been doing their work for a year, and you know we know something happened that week and they were having an off week. I think that you have to take that into account. That comes back to the idea that you know, we’re not just making a product, we’re dealing with people, and they’re constantly changing and we have to account for that.

Ms. Woods, 55, English Teacher, Bay View High School, a medium sized, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 27 years.

Liguori: What are people’s motivation for scrubbing would you say?

Ms. Woods: I guess if they feel the student is a hard working student, really done everything they possibly could to give it another chance. The student put in all the effort. I guess that would be the only reason. A really good kid, who’s not a slacker, who’s really trying, really interested in working. Maybe in that sense. He deserves a break for it. Not a cheating break, but at least it’s worth another look.

Liguori: Does passing percentage of the school go into it?

Ms. Woods: No. No. Not here really because the city has a pretty good sense...it’s not like we’re worried that the stats are going to look bad. Maybe it would with another teacher.

Ms. Bales, 26, English Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 2 years. Ms. Bales feels that students with IEPs should be given more help while grading.

Liguori: What is the motivation for scrubbing?

Ms. Bales: I find that if a kid who we think could pass the regents normally who wasn't really and just had a bad test, I think they would be less likely to scrub than if our lowest level kid, or a kid with an IEP somehow managed to get a 61, which is 20 percent higher than they ever got, I think we would be more likely to go back for that kid, who is like this is as high as this kid is ever going to get, this is his last chance, let's get him a score.

Dr. Wang, 31, Physics and Math Teacher, David Dinkins Academy, a small high school that is replacing a high school that is being closed down due to performance issues. Has been teaching for 5 years. Was formerly assigned to James Buchanan High School. Dr. Wang mentions that students that are not liked may not get their regents exams scrubbed.

Liguori: Does that ever happen that this kid is worth scrubbing and this kid is not worth scrubbing?

Dr. Wang: Well, when we first start the scrubbing process we base it upon the grade itself, so a 53 and a 54 would get a second look, but for the teachers who do the scrubbing, they would say this kid doesn't deserve to be scrubbed because he's awful in my class and then it's up to the other teachers to pick up that slack and say ok this is your personal opinion we're going to scrub this guy. Depending on how many teachers are there that dislike the kid, he might not get scrubbed.

Mr. Briscoe, 61, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Briscoe felt that he would not scrub for a "rotten" student because s/he would not deserve it.

Liguori: Does it ever happen that you have Joe's paper, Joe, he's a wonderful boy, tried really hard, I'll find an extra point for him?

Mr. Briscoe: Yeah.

Liguori: What about Jack, He's not a good boy, would you find it for him?

Mr. Briscoe: That happens sometimes. To me, I tell the kids it's important to behave and be a decent person and be likeable, if you're not likeable to me you don't get any benefits. Looking over tests like that is really you don't have to do it, it's a benefit, so if a kid's rotten I'm not going to go out of my way to help them. They should know there are consequences for everything, that's a consequence of being a rotten student.

Mr. Calabria, 66, Social Studies Teacher. Has been teaching for 7 years. Was Previously assigned to a high school, but was sent to a reassignment center, or "Rubber Room," after being exposed as a whistle blower of a large scrubbing scandal. Mr. Calabria mentioned that at his old school the only papers that were left between 60-64 were those of students that were dislike by the teachers grading the exams.

Liguori: Would it ever happen that good kids would get scrubbed more? Like "Who has Joe, is he a good kid, should I look for points for him?"

Mr. Calabria: Yeah, there were discussions just like that. Like, I remember one of the teachers said "hey, here's so and so's exam" and another teacher would say "no, don't pass him, he's not a good kid. There were a couple of instances of that quoted in the investigation.

Liguori: Was that followed through with, like "screw him he's a bad egg"

Mr. Calabria: Yeah, because in 2003, in terms of 2 exams, 97 kids passed, between 65 and 69, and only 7 flunked between 60 and 64 and among those 7 were kids who weren't liked by somebody in the group.

Liguori: Is there ever for example a racial or class aspect to it?

Mr. Calabria: No.

The subject of race did not come up much among teachers in discussions about scrubbing; however, the teachers that did discuss race mention that there was no racial component to scrubbing. This may be due to the already segregated nature of American schools (Kozol 1991) where urban students attend school with individuals of similar race and class status. While race did not seem to be a motivation, there were 2 different types of scrubbing that occurred. There was democratic scrubbing that was done for all students regardless of their likability. While teachers still felt like they were in control of the process, this type of scrubbing may become more likely when there is pressure from administrators to raise scores. The other type of scrubbing that occurred was dependent on a student's likability. Teachers were the ones who controlled this type of scrubbing almost completely. In essence they are the gatekeepers of who passes and who does not. Student's cultural capital may influence whether or not teachers scrub for students. This type of scrubbing may favor students with middle class values. This type of scrubbing may become less prominent if there is a greater divergence in the cultural capital of teachers and students.

How widespread is scrubbing?

Some form of scrubbing was found in each of the schools that were studied; however, the extent to which scrubbing was found varied by school and by department. All respondents were asked the extent to which they believe that scrubbing existed in the school system. Teachers who engaged in scrubbing behavior were more likely to feel that scrubbing was pervasive while teachers who did not engage in scrubbing behavior were less likely to think of scrubbing as pervasive. Another factor in teachers'

perceptions of scrubbing in other schools was whether or not there was a scrubbing scandal that had occurred at a nearby school.

Teachers were asked whether or not they should grade the regents exams of students in their schools. While many teachers felt that the regents exams should have been graded off site, an overwhelming majority of teachers expressed the sentiment that the exams should be graded in house. Teachers were also asked whether or not they should grade their own students' regents exams. Despite previously discussing the possibility of scrubbing on the exams, many teachers overwhelmingly responded that they should remain as the graders of the regents exams. Despite many teachers acknowledging that there may be pervasive scrubbing, many teachers opted for the status quo.

Mr. Askenazi, 56, History Teacher, John Basilone High School, a large comprehensive high school. Has been teaching for 33 years. Mr. Askenazi feels that even if somebody did not know a student, they would try harder to get them to pass if they were close to passing.

Liguori: Do you think that teachers should grade their own student's exams?

Mr. Askenazi: First off the only part that they grade is the essay, and you don't even see the name when you're first starting to do it. It's not like...you get so many tests in front of you, once you get 35, 40 tests, 50 tests to mark, within a day or 2 days, you're not saying who am I marking for, and it's also another teacher who will read it as well, so you know. Here at Basilone, at least in the mainstream you're meeting these kids 4 times a cycle, so there's a good chance that you know the kids.

Liguori: Do you think that maybe teachers shouldn't grade their own?

Mr. Askenazi: I don't think it had a...I can't recall that it's ever a personal thing, and again I think we were being nice, I don't think that there was anything negative about it.

Liguori: Do you think that teachers should grade exams of students in their own schools?

Mr. Askenazi: I think that the people here are just trying to be nice, and I think that if they graded another school and they came across a 63 and they knew they could give this kid that they didn't know a right answer to give him 65, I still think they would do it.

Mr. O'Brien, 22, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. This is his 1st year teaching. Mr. O'Brien feels that a teacher's familiarity with a student's work would make them an ideal choice to mark that student's state exam.

Liguori: Do you believe that teachers should grade their own students' exams?

Mr. O'Brien: I think that it's fine. I don't see...Normally they have a better idea. They've been grading these kids' papers for months now. So they have an idea what this student's work should

be. That comes into things like being able to tell if a student cheated. A teacher gets a student who's been doing poor for 10 months and then they're reading their essay and it's really good, then questions would pop up for that teacher where they might not for teachers who had no knowledge of these students.

Ms. Hunter, 54, English Teacher, Atlantic High School, a new, small, high school. Has been teaching for 11 years. Ideally Ms. Hunter feels that tests should be marked by people other than the classroom teachers, but is happy that she is able to grade the exams.

Liguori: Do you feel that teachers should grade their own students' exams?

Ms. Hunter: In some ways yes, and some ways no. There has to be some standards that we all agree on, but there also needs to be some humanization about this. You know, I mean we have a lot of, most of the kids speak a different language at home so with English, if they come in and they're really just out of ESL, you know they're just really gotten out of ESL, there's still huge syntax problems and things like that, and I'm not going to grade them like I'm going to grade a kid who spoke English from day 1, but if I don't know that, if I don't know the kid or whatever I might and I don't think that would really be fair. I mean that's my opinion.

Liguori: Should teachers grade exams of kids in their own school?

Ms. Hunter: You know preferably in an ideal world, not, but I'm glad we do (laughs).

Mr. Arnaz, 28, Biology Teacher, Parkview High School, a small, high performing, high school. Has been teaching for 7 years and was previously at a failing school. Mr. Arnaz feels that it is important to think of students as human beings in order to mark their exams.

Liguori: Should teachers grade their own regents?

Mr. Arnaz: You could solve the problem easily if they didn't.

Liguori: Should they solve the problem?

Mr. Arnaz: I guess the nice thing about having a teacher grade their own student's exams is that teacher knows the context in which the concepts were taught and in a given year, in the Living environment, they always showed the female reproductive system as a straight on view and then they changed the orientation 90 degrees, and with a sideways view it looks like a totally different animal, literally, and I didn't teach it that way, and I know I didn't teach it that way and a lot of kids got it wrong and I didn't fake it, I marked it wrong, I felt bad, I felt like I had let them down, I feel that somehow though, maybe that helped me, not that I changed their grades, but it reinforced to me wow, I better make sure I teach it both ways next year.

Liguori: Is there a benefit?

Mr. Arnaz: The benefit is there, you're going to help the kids you feel need help, that's the only benefit.

Liguori: Should that benefit be there?

Mr. Arnaz: Laughs. Great question. In a perfect world no.

Liguori: Should you grade the exams in your own school?

Mr. Arnaz: There should be more work done to maintaining anonymity, I don't see why we can't have ID numbers assigned, why the kid's name is so visible. There's a lot of simple tweaks you can do to correct this.

Liguori: You mentioned that you would do it for whoever?

Mr. Arnaz: I enjoy that I have the ability to do it, but if the question is should [I have that ability], I guess the answer is no.

Mr. Briscoe, 61, Math Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Briscoe feels that if exams are sent out they may be lost.

Liguori: Should teachers grade their own students regents exams?

Mr. Briscoe: Yes.

Liguori: Why?

Mr. Briscoe: Because we grade everything our students does, so it's hypocritical not to grade the regents, give them a final we grade our own, In a perfect world if they wanted us not to grade our own, we shouldn't grade any of our own tests, everything should be passed around like that. O me, it's all or nothing.

Liguori: Should teachers grade the exams of students in their school?

Mr. Briscoe: Yes, why should we grade students from other schools, we work here, we work for our students, that's all we should be worried about.

Liguori: What about sending them to Albany?

Mr. Briscoe: How would that work? That would be chaos, you don't want the regents leaving the school, they could be lost, it would be disaster, they have to stay in the school.

Mr. Eisenberg, 56, English Teacher, Longshore High School, a large, comprehensive, high school. Has been teaching for 30 years. Mr. Eisenberg feels that it's important for teachers to see their students' results in person so they can make adjustments in their teaching.

Liguori: Should teachers grade their own students' exams?

Mr. Eisenberg: You know what, take that pressure off of them, there's no need for them to grade their own, let other teachers do it, they're just as competent, why be even accused of favoritism. There's no need to it. There's nothing wrong with them reading and actually seeing what they wrote. Can I see what my student wrote and they may be surprised at the grade.

Liguori: Should teachers grade their own school's exams?

Mr. Eisenberg: I think that it's encouraging to see the fruits of your labor or the non fruits of your labor. There is something to be said for being familiar with one's writing or having someone there who's familiar with one's writing so you can always ask for a reference and say hey is this what they meant or am I interpreting it wrong.

This acceptance of the status quo may mean that the teachers in the sample either cannot envision the logistics of changing the system or enjoy the role that they play in determining their students' grades. Despite many teachers acknowledgement of scrubbing, most teachers feel that teachers be in charge of grading students' regents exams. The current system allows teachers to have a stronger hand in deciding the fates of their students and push back against standardized tests that some of them may feel are unfair. After years of ceding control of many domains typically left to teachers over the

past few years, many teachers feel that entrusting them with determining their students' regents grades is important and respects their professionalism as teachers.

Summary

Scrubbing seems to be a phenomenon that occurs with great frequency in the NYCDOE. Whether or not it occurs in other regions of the state remains to be seen as more interviews would need to be done. Scrubbing has gone on for several years, predating the accountability movement. Much of the scrubbing that was done previously was due to personal ties to students and the desire to see them graduate or move on to the next level. Because of the new accountability measures, there is now more pressure placed on administrators and teachers to have their students achieve higher scores on the regents. The increased attention to test scores can potentially increase the amount of scrubbing that occurs in the NYCDOE; however, the scrubbing that is likely to go on will benefit students of different backgrounds equally.

Whether or not scrubbing should be allowed to continue is debatable. To some extent, all actors benefit from scrubbing. The state education department gets the tests scored on site by the local school districts, which saves money. The local school districts can pressure teachers and administrators to raise scores, which increases their standing. Teachers and administrators are able to help out their students, which they would be unable to do if the tests were marked off site. Because of this relationship, there is no impetus to change the current marking practices. If any group did not want scrubbing to occur, there would be more safeguards put in place to prevent it by either having the tests marked off site or stricter audits put in place.

High Stakes Testing and Teacher Resistance:
New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability
Chapter 6:

Summary of Conclusions:

This project aimed to describe the effect of the accountability movement on teachers' working conditions and behaviors. There are several different aspects of the accountability movement that impact teacher behavior and working conditions. The No Child Left Behind act (NCLB) with its mandated testing has had a noticeable impact on what is taught and how teachers behave in the classroom. The small schools initiative, a byproduct of the accountability movement, has had a dramatic impact on teacher working conditions in large and small schools alike. The changes in the New York State testing regime have had profound effects on teacher and administrator behavior. Now that schools are held accountable through school report cards and school closings, teachers and administrators have found different coping mechanisms to deal with the new pressures imposed by NCLB and increased state standards.

While all of the schools selected for the study were in NYC, the schools within the sample were selected to be a semi representative subset of both the city and state. Included in the sample were schools that were overwhelmingly white, overwhelmingly black, and evenly split among NYC's 4 major racial/ethnic groups (white, black, Hispanic and Asian). The schools ranged from working class to middle-upper middle class and from almost all boys to almost all girls. While none of the schools were in immediate danger of closing when the study was conducted, there was a broad range of academic achievement at the schools. The academic achievement of the schools in the sample varied; there were schools that were among the most elite schools in the nation and there were schools that were struggling to remain open or were just opened replacing

schools that had previously closed. These schools were a cross section of the NYCDOE, the state and the city.

Effects of No Child Left Behind on teachers and Administrators

This project studied the working conditions of teachers and administrators in the new accountability paradigm instituted by the NCLB. NCLB has mandated many changes to the testing regimes of many states. One aspect of NCLB that has been both lauded and derided is its high stakes testing requirements. Under NCLB, in order to get federal funding, all states are required to include high stakes testing provisions in their curricula. This high stakes testing requirement, while controversial is the result of a nationwide movement at the state level for high stakes testing accountability. One state that pioneered the use of high stakes tests for graduation is New York State.

Prior to NCLB's enactment New York State (NYS) began to mandate changes to its own to curricula and testing regimes. These changes to the testing regime have complied to NCLB's universal testing mandate. One major change to NYS's testing regime was making the NYS regents exams compulsory for all students. The New York State Regents exams have been used since the 19th century. Previously the NYS regents exams were reserved for only elite students, but starting in the late 1990s and ending in the late 2000s, the universal regents regime was phased in for all students graduating high school. The initial change in graduation requirements began in the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), the largest school district in the state and nation. Along with NCLB, this change in graduation requirements has had a profound impact on New York City (NYC) schools in the early part of this century.

One area in which NCLB was intended to actuate change was in the teaching profession. NCLB now mandates that all teachers need to be licensed and requires minimum standards for state licensing. NCLB also impacts teachers by imposing high stakes testing standards on students for graduation. Many teachers in the sample did not support NCLB. One reason many teachers did not agree with NCLB is its reliance on high stakes tests. Teachers felt that reliance on high stakes tests diluted the curriculum, did not allow students to study topics in any depth and was an affront to teachers' professionalism. Some teachers felt that their professionalism was called into question since teachers' organizations were largely left out of the drafting of NCLB, while other professional groups have been consulted in drafting legislation that affects their respective professions. Among the teachers and administrators that supported NCLB, their praise for the law lay in its targeting of previously disenfranchised groups (Special Education Students, Limited English Proficiency, etc.) and equality for all students.

The most surprising finding about teachers views of NCLB was that many teachers who did not support NCLB knew little about the law other than they did not like it. Despite agreeing with key principles and goals of NCLB such as ending social promotion and more rigorous standards for students, many teachers felt that NCLB was against these principles simply because teachers supported them. The disinformation may simply come from teachers ascribing traits to NCLB simply because of its name, equivocating the terms "left behind" and "left back." Other teachers blame many other systemic ills, such as student discipline, on NCLB despite it not having a basis in truth. This may be because NCLB has been demonized by teachers' organizations as a bad law. While not all teachers follow the news regularly, they all receive copies of union

magazines and newsletters, which typically denounce NCLB. One suggestion would be to further educate teachers on the actual scope and purpose of NCLB, while many teachers may still disagree with NCLB, there would be much less disinformation. This could be done with in-service professional development seminars or preservice courses for licensure.

One negative drawback to NCLB's focus on testing and the enfranchisement of all students in the regents testing regime is the possible dilution of the tests and the curricula. Many teachers complained that the regents have become easier for the average students to pass. Allegedly, the regents exams that were required for graduation were either too easy to fail or they had become significantly easier than the years prior to the enactment of a universal regents testing regime. Conversely, teachers claimed that the regents exams that were not required for graduation were either more difficult to pass or maintained the same standards that existed before the regents testing regime was made universal. Anecdotal evidence of this can be found in the grading scales for science exams required for graduation and those that were not. Students need a much lower raw score percentage in order to pass the Living Environment regents exam than they do for the Chemistry or Physics regents exams. The same is true for the Math A exam (an exam required for graduation), which teachers complained was too easy to pass when compared to the Math B regents (an exam that was not required to graduate), which teachers felt was more indicative of students' actual knowledge of the subject matter. This is one way in which the State Education Department may be gaming the assessments in order to raise "achievement" without actually raising student performance. There is already evidence to support this claim in lower grades. New York City during the period of 2005-2009

had seen dramatic increases in the percentage of primary school students deemed proficient in math on state assessments; however, when compared to students' performance on the NAEP, these gains were mollified or disappeared entirely (Otterman 2010).¹ This is an important matter that should be investigated more fully in subsequent studies.

Despite the perceived weaknesses of the universal regents regime, many teachers have great support for the regents exams themselves. This may be because of the longtime association between the regents exams and academic excellence in the state of New York. Many teachers and administrators feel that the best solution would be to go back to the previous paradigm where all students would be required to take a high stakes test in order to graduate, but the regents exams would be maintained exclusively for elite students. This would satisfy the high stakes testing component of NCLB and would increase the rigor of the regents exams. This would allow for students who are not looking to pursue academic careers to take more vocational courses, a need that many teachers felt was not being met by the current system. It would also prevent many students from falling through the cracks of the current system when they are unable to pass all their required regents exams. Whether or not these changes to the current testing regime would be politically feasible remains to be seen.

One drawback of NCLB and the accountability movement that was echoed by teachers and administrators alike was that while teachers and administrators were held accountable, parents and students were not. Teachers and administrators felt that students were not working hard enough to meet common goals. Many teachers felt that their students were ill prepared to meet the challenges of their classrooms and did not have the

¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/30/nyregion/30tests.html?ref=nationalassessmentofeducationalprogress>

requisite skills entering their classes in order to pass the high stakes exams at the end of their classes. This would be a very difficult to remedy unless there was a change in the way state laws viewed the obligations of parents vis a vis their children's educational well being.

Pressures Faced by Teachers and Administrators:

Teachers and administrators have been placed under pressure from many different sources. The accountability movement has placed new pressures on the teachers in the form of school report cards and other data that are crucial to schools maintaining their good standing. These report cards with their data have supplanted traditional methods of rating schools and their administrators. This shift in the school and administrator ranking system has led to new pressures placed on teachers and administrators. While teachers are not yet held accountable for the data produced by their students, their administrators are by and large slaves to these data with their employment hanging in the balance. Because principals are under pressure from several different accountability measures they pass these pressures to the teachers. One significant finding was that although schools and teachers may subscribe to a particular model of school organization for instruction, when looking at high stakes testing, most teachers feel that their school follows a top-down nested layers model where directives are coming straight from the state and filtering down to the classrooms.

While many of the teachers felt that their schools operated in a top-down manner with many directives coming straight from their superintendents' offices, according to the principals the schools operated in a very different fashion. With the advent of mayoral control of schools in NYC, a trend that mirrors other large cities throughout the United

States, principals have a much more prominent role in the running of their individual schools. In fact, all of the principals that were interviewed in the study made mention of the fact that they had seen their superintendent only once in the current school year. The role of superintendent, while legally mandated, has faded into obsolescence. Superintendents have been replaced by the school report cards and quality reports organized by the mayor's office. The role of superintendent, which used to be a leadership role, has become that of a rating officer rubber stamping the seemingly objective quality reports and school report cards. One recommendation would be to legally define a new role for superintendents in this new accountability paradigm as they seem to be an anachronism of the *ancien régime*. Furthermore, teachers need to be more aware of the organizational structure of the NYCDOE; knowledge of this organizational structure can assist them in becoming more productive within the district's organizational framework.

Despite this lack of oversight from superintendents, administrators feel pressure directly from the NYCDOE and from parents. While high achieving schools have high parental pressure, they have very little to no pressure from the NYCDOE. The opposite is true of low achieving schools where administrators feel little pressure from parents, but a lot of pressure from the bureaucracy at the NYCDOE. These pressures all filter down in some manner to teachers.

Teachers felt pressures from many different actors in order to increase student learning. The pressures teachers experienced conformed to one of several different models of school organization. Some teachers felt that the pressures that they felt came from a chain of command that emanated from the NYCDOE and filtered was down to

them through their school administrators, conforming to the nested layers model of school organization posited by Barr and Dreeben (1983). Other teachers felt that student achievement was unrelated to the schools organizational resources and their students would achieve or fail despite the teachers best efforts, which is typical of the input-out model of school organization that is most exemplified by Coleman's (1966) research on the equality of educational opportunity (Gamoran, Secada and Marrett 2000). Other teachers subscribed to the loose coupling model where teachers enacted their agency within their classrooms and were largely socialized into their roles as teachers with minimal direction from administrators. There were also teachers who felt that their schools followed a dynamic, multidirectional model of school organization where the pressures to raise student achievement came from both teachers and administrators and those pressures interacted in order to increase test student learning; these teachers were the teachers who most "bought into" the high stakes testing regime that was brought about by the accountability movement. One variation that was seen was where teachers felt that the pressures came directly from the NYCDOE hierarchy bypassing the school's administration, while similar to the nested layers model, this was a distinct pathway to pressures being exerted on teachers in order to effect changes in student performance. These teachers seem to have more isolated views of their classrooms and of their roles as teachers.

Despite there being a diverse view of school organization regarding classroom instruction, many teachers felt that high stakes testing pressures were much more hierarchical. Most teachers felt that the high stakes testing pressure they felt followed a chain from the state and/or federal governments, which exerted pressures on the

NYCDOE, which exerted pressures on school principals, who exerted pressures on assistant principals who put pressures on teachers. This closely follows the nested layers model of school organization. This in and of itself is not surprising; however, many teachers felt that high stakes testing pressures followed this hierarchical model despite feeling that their school followed the loose coupling model for student learning. This would mean that different organizational pathways exist for student learning and high stakes testing pressures within a school.

The small schools initiative that has been reintroduced by Mayor Bloomberg has been seen as linked to the accountability movement. These smaller schools were introduced to be more responsive to the needs of students. While there is no evidence of “cream skimming” where smaller schools take the more talented students, the small schools initiative has placed tremendous pressure on larger schools. Many of the respondents felt that the small schools movement diverted resources away from larger schools and led to overcrowding at large comprehensive schools. Not surprisingly, those most critical of the small schools initiative were administrators at the 2 large comprehensive high schools in the sample. The administrators felt that there was too much inertia in large schools that made it difficult to increase the passing percentages for the school. Conversely, small schools felt pressure because their size made it much more susceptible to outliers affecting the passing percentages within their schools. There was also a sense of muted animosity between smaller schools and larger schools. In order to reduce the friction between the two types of school and the pressures felt at these schools, there should be some sort of binding commitment to maintain both types of schools with funding fairly dispersed to both types of schools. Without a commitment to reducing the

pressures facing administrators and teachers in the NYCDOE, there may be an increase in behaviors that resemble Test Score Pollution.

Test Score Pollution

Test Score Pollution (TSP), a concept advanced by Haldyna, Nolen and Haas (1991) refers to any factor that affects the truthfulness of test score interpretation. Test Score Pollution can include both ethical and unethical acts. Included in TSP are such behaviors as: Teaching to the test, dismissing low performing students on test day, changing interpretations when scoring exams, and changing students' test papers. Almost all respondents admitted to engaging in TSP behaviors to some extent or knowing someone who had. The most common TSP behavior reported among teachers was teaching to the test.

Teaching to the test in NYC is almost expected. In NYS, there is a symbiotic relationship between the high school curriculum and the regents exams, where they are each used to define the other. While the regents are expected to test students on what they learned in the curriculum, the regents exams are used to demonstrate state standards to teachers. However, the decision to teach to the test is made by one of two actors, the administration, which may mandate teachers to teach to the test or teachers themselves, who feel that they are doing it in their students best interest.

Teachers who taught to the test because they were encouraged to do so by administrators were less likely to support high stakes testing. Conversely, teachers who taught to the test on their own accord were very likely to align themselves with the goals of high stakes testing. One sentiment echoed by both groups was that they were teaching to the test in the best interest of their students, who needed to pass the tests in order to

graduate. Both groups' motivation for teaching to the test was that they felt that they would be doing their students a disservice if they did not teach to the test. While most teachers who taught to the test did so in their students' best interest, some teachers felt that they taught to the test in order to improve their own self worth. These teachers felt that since their teaching was judged based on their students' performance on state exams, they wanted to be judged as good teachers.

While there have been claims that teachers dismiss low performing students on test day in order to improve school and teacher statistics, there was little evidence of this on a grand level in the sample. The main reason students were not dismissed from testing was that along with passing percentage on regents exams, participation rates are used to determine a school's report card grade. This has led to many administrators and teachers encouraging students regardless of their preparation to take the regents exams. One exception to the enfranchising of all student in taking the regents is that students are only encouraged to take exams that will help increase the school's ratings; therefore, foreign language exams, which are not required for graduation, are only taken by a school's elite students. The policy of making sure all students take the regents exams is one example of public policy being used in order to reduce TSP. If it is possible to reduce one type of TSP, it may be possible to reduce all TSP that occurs throughout the state education system.

Scrubbing

Scrubbing is a form of TSP that occurs within the context of the New York States regents exams. Scrubbing involves changing the grades of students near passing in order to ensure that they pass the exam with a score of 65 or greater. Scrubbing behaviors

varied throughout the sample and there were gradations of scrubbing. Since scrubbing was not previously well defined in the literature, a definition was elicited from participants during the semi structured interviews. The definition of scrubbing is as follows:

Scrubbing: Any action taken by teachers or administrators in an attempt to raise the grades of their students while grading the New York State regents exams. Scrubbing most often occurs around benchmark scores such as 55, 65, and 85.

Because there is a large range of scrubbing behavior, gradations of scrubbing were also ascertained from the sample. Soft scrubbing refers to behaviors that do not ethically compromise practitioners. Examples of soft scrubbing include rechecking one's math in determining a score and making sure that items were scored correctly (without changing one's interpretation in scoring). Hard scrubbing refers to behaviors that are more ethically incorrect and teacher centered. Hard scrubbing behaviors include changing one's interpretation in rescoring an exam and changing a student's test paper.

One reason teachers engaged in regular scrubbing was because they felt that they were helping their students. Many teachers felt that they would be more likely to scrub for a student if that student needed that exam in order to graduate. While most scrubbing was performed to raise scores, one type of scrubbing that was described by some respondents was negative scrubbing, where scores were lowered. Even though scores were lowered, teachers still felt that they were helping their students. While no teachers admitted to changing grades from passing to failing, some teachers changed students grades in order to have them fail with lower scores. At face value this seems damaging as the students had lower scores after the scrubbing than before the scrubbing; however, it is indicative of the system wide attitude that scores on the exams are not important.

The only thing that is important is whether a student passes or fails an exam. Furthermore, teachers who claimed they engaged in negative scrubbing claimed that they did it in order to protect their students' self esteem. They felt that students would feel worse about themselves if they were so close to passing, but did not pass. While negative scrubbing took away points from students exams, the methods used are fundamentally similar.

All scrubbing was done in much the same way. After grading all the tests, papers that had grades close to a certain benchmark were removed and were scrubbed. The most frequent method of scrubbing that was mentioned was the re-evaluation of exam papers that were approaching benchmark scores for passing or mastery. Teachers would reread a free response and depending on the type of scrubbing (hard or soft) would regrade the exam in an attempt to get the student to pass. In cases of soft scrubbing, teachers may just look to see if the student conformed to prior grading standards. In instances of hard scrubbing teachers may reinterpret the essay using a standard developed to get a student a particular grade. Changing student answers was another type of hard scrubbing mentioned by teachers. The method of hard scrubbing that was used mostly depended on the type of exam that was graded. Tests with many free responses were more vulnerable to having their grading reinterpreted; tests that had few free response questions were more likely to have teachers change student responses.

Teachers who taught subjects that were required for graduation were more likely to scrub for those exams. For example, scrubbing was not seen to be an issue for the foreign language teachers in the sample as foreign language exams are not required to graduate. Not only are teachers of certain subjects more likely to scrub than others, but

within these departments, there are individual teachers who are more likely to scrub than others. In most of the schools that were selected, at least one individual admitted to being the “designated scrubber” for their department. Not surprisingly, the teachers who are in charge of the scrubbing may be the one with the most lax interpretation of the scoring rubrics. Even if certain teachers are not likely to scrub themselves, they may hand their papers off to these individuals to scrub for them. This may be evidence of the long entrenched nature of scrubbing in the NYCDOE. In order to see how other roles develop in a grading room, a period of participant observation may be used where a scientist embeds with a department for a grading period and observes the different roles that develop within the grading room.

The motivation for teachers to scrub comes from a variety of sources. Some teacher scrub because they feel pressured into scrubbing from their administrators. Several teachers mentioned that they had administrators ask them to change their interpretation in scoring an exam. The pressures range from mild suggestions to coercion. These pressures may increase as the monetary incentives for administrators increase in the NYCDOE. Other teachers feel that they scrub in order to help students. These teachers feel that they want to “do right by the kids.” For these teachers the school’s passing percentage did not really matter much. Motivations for these teachers include helping students graduate, feeling that they would not have another opportunity to pass the regents, and a love for their students. These teachers may be more likely to scrub in the near future as more graduation requirements are added and if exams are made more difficult.

Some teachers scrubbed because they felt it was part of the grading ritual and it has always been done. Many teachers cited being introduced to scrubbing as novice teachers or recalling instances where they feel their teachers may have scrubbed for them when they were in high school. These teachers may not have been fully aware that what they were doing may have been wrong as it has gone on for a long time. Perhaps teacher awareness of scrubbing may lead to lower rates of scrubbing. Some factors that affected teacher awareness of scrubbing was being in close proximity to a school that had a scrubbing scandal, having administrators that discussed scrubbing with their teachers, and teacher socialization. By addressing these three pathways of scrubbing awareness, the amount of scrubbing in the NYCDOE could be reduced. If there were more enforcement of the current testing protocols, there would be more schools that would serve as examples of egregious scrubbing. Administrators who take the scrubbing issue seriously are more likely to pass along their concerns to their staffs. Finally, if teachers are socialized properly into acceptable testing behavior, they may be less likely to commit certain acts and more likely to report them when they arise. While these seem like common sense solutions, there needs to be an impetus for these changes to occur.

School performance did not necessarily play a large role in determining whether or not teachers at a particular school were likely to scrub. Among the 2 high achieving schools in the sample, Bay View and Parkview, the amount of scrubbing that occurred was quite different. This can be attributed to attributes of the staff and administration. While both sets of school administrators put a lot of emphasis on student achievement, one school had an administration that put a lot of pressure on teachers to have their students achieve mastery scores on the regents (Parkview), while the other school seemed

to be ambivalent about scoring mastery on the regents (Bay View). This led to an increase in the amount of scrubbing that occurred at the schools.

School structure also plays a role in how scrubbing norms arise and how teachers react to scrubbing. Among the small schools each of the schools displayed a different model for scrubbing to be introduced to new teachers. In one small school, Atlantic High School, teachers developed scrubbing norms on their own and there was little administrative support for scrubbing; in this school scrubbing was introduced to the teachers in a loosely coupled model. Administrators had mentioned that their goal was to raise regents scores and teachers in some departments had developed scrubbing norms in order to meet the need set out by administrators. In another small school, Parkview High School, the administration thrust scrubbing norms on the teachers; this was similar to the nested layers model of school organization. In this school, the administration had directed the teachers to raise scores going so far as to give directions on how borderline essays are to be scored (always in favor of the students). In the third small school, David Dinkins Academy, teachers developed and enforced scrubbing norms on their own, though there was administrative support for the practice; in this school the development of scrubbing norms followed a dynamic-multidirectional model of school organization. It is interesting to note that scrubbing can follow the same pathways that student instruction follows; furthermore, unlike high stakes pressure, which follows a nested layers model, the development of scrubbing norms can follow several different models. It was also found that teachers who felt that scrubbing was imposed on them by administrators (nested layers model) generally felt that scrubbing was done solely to boost numbers and make the school look good and had a generally negative view of scrubbing. Conversely,

teachers who felt that the practice was more teacher centered (dynamic multidirectional and loose coupling models) felt that scrubbing was a practice implemented to help students and had a neutral to positive view of scrubbing.

Since many teachers felt that scrubbing was a practice designed to help students, there was some investigation as to which students seemed to benefit most from scrubbing. Not surprisingly, according to teachers, the students who benefitted most from scrubbing were those students who were borderline students as their scores were more frequently near benchmark scores. Among these students, most teachers felt that scrubbing was done in an evenhanded manner, with all students getting the benefit of the doubt. However, some teachers felt that there was some favoritism shown to students who had displayed a good work ethic, had good interpersonal skills and lack of favoritism shown to students who were disruptive or were disliked by teachers. There seemed to be no racial/ethnic component used in determining which students' papers were scrubbed.

Some form of scrubbing was found in each of the seven schools in the sample. In order to stop scrubbing completely, teachers should no longer be in charge of scoring their students regents exams. While many teachers would welcome that type of change, other teachers feel content with the status quo. The logistics of changing the system and having the papers graded off site would mean that there would be too long of a gap between the exams being administered and the last day of school. There would be many instructional days lost or thought of as inconsequential to students. Other teachers cited their ability to have compassion for their students and their familiarity with their students' writing styles. While these are legitimate concerns, in reality teachers do not

want to give up control of a situation and are fearful of what may happen if they are no longer holding that release valve where they can affect their students' regents scores.

Discussion of the questions posed by the study:

How do accountability standards within schools put pressures on teachers and administrators? How does the school's organization affect teachers' behaviors in relation to high stakes exams?

As expected, it was found that there were differences in the way teachers and administrators viewed the new accountability standards. Because administrators were in charge of implementing accountability standards in their school they were more likely to support accountability measures, while teachers were more likely to feel that these measures were unnecessary or did not help. What was surprising was that many teachers were against many accountability measures because they were associated with NCLB despite knowing very little about NCLB. This may be because they view NCLB as a threat to their autonomy and professionalism.

School organizational structure was much more difficult to determine as there were many different opinions of a school's organizational structure within the same school. Teachers and administrators often felt differently about the way their schools were run and there was also inter and intradepartmental variance on how schools were organized. In order to determine whether or not school structure had an effect on teacher behavior regarding standardized exams, teachers were asked to report their own opinions of the school structure. It was found that teachers perceived different school structures for instruction and high stakes testing. When discussing high stakes testing pressure most teachers felt that the high stakes testing pressure came from a nested layers school structure even when they may have felt that the school structure was loosely coupled in

regard to pupil instruction. This may mean that teachers are decoupling instruction from high stake testing.

Does the subject taught by a teacher affect the pressures placed upon them?

At the time of the interviews there were no new or revamped tests issued by New York State. One surprising result was that there was little difference in the pressure faced by teachers who taught different classes within the same subject. One reason this may be is that teachers felt that the exams that were required for graduation were made sufficiently easy for almost all students to pass and the more difficult exams did not have many high stakes attached to them for the teachers or students (students would still graduate, but they may not have an advanced designation on their diplomas). One departure from this finding was at the high achieving schools. Parkview and Bay View, where there was more pressure placed on teachers in more difficult subjects such as Math B, Chemistry and Physics. As expected teachers that taught subjects that are not mandatory for graduation did feel less pressure placed upon them when compared to teachers that taught subjects with exams that are required for graduation. This would explain the difference in pressures felt by foreign language teachers who were least inclined to scrub in the sample population.

Does the phenomenon of scrubbing exist? If so, what are the prevailing methods of scrubbing and test-score pollution? Why do/don't teachers engage in these behaviors?

The phenomenon of scrubbing did indeed exist. It was found that most teachers were familiar with and/or engaged in scrubbing behaviors regardless of the instructions given to them by the state in grading exams. This may be because teachers have been engaging in this type of behavior long before any state mandates to revisit exam papers

between certain scores. In speaking to teachers it was found that the state merely mandated something that was already common practice in many schools. The type of scrubbing that was carried out also varied on the type of exam that was administered.

Teachers that scored exams with items that require more subjective evaluation of students, like essays, did have more opportunities to act upon the pressures that are placed upon them. Teachers marking the English and History regents were more likely to engage in soft scrubbing exams where they changed their initial scoring interpretation of exams that scored between 60 and 64. Also, teachers who graded the science and math exams, which were much less subjective, were more likely to engage in hard scrubbing than teachers in the humanities.

While it was found that some teachers engaged in scrubbing because of pressures put on them from accountability standards and supervisor pressure, what was surprising was the extent to which many teachers were engaged in the practice of scrubbing on their own accord. The reasons many teachers gave for participating in scrubbing behavior was to help their students and that it was a practice that was performed without much thought to the consequences attached to getting caught scrubbing. The fact that scrubbing predated the mandate to reexamine borderline test scores indicates that the rationale for scrubbing was teacher centered and perhaps teachers initially engaged in scrubbing in order to exercise professional discretion in their students' best interest. With the new accountability measures in place and more pressure from administrators to scrub there seems to be a shift in the reasons for teachers to scrub where administrator pressure has become much more prevalent than in past years.

Does scrubbing favor particular racial/class groups over others? If so, which groups are favored and why?

It did not seem that teachers included race or class background to determine whether or not to scrub a student's paper. Teachers claimed to scrub for everyone equally. This may be because teachers are pressured by administrators to raise passing percentage for all students or that teachers wanted to be as impartial as possible when determining grades. Another possibility may be that teachers did not want problem students back in their classroom the following year and were simply pushing these students off on to the next teacher. When teachers claimed they gave certain students preferential treatment, they said it was based on personal characteristics such as hard working nature or good behavior, which are not necessarily race or class specific.

Do increased administrative pressures on teachers result in more scrubbing on the part of teachers? Does it change teachers perception of scrubbing?

Teachers did respond to the pressures put on them by administrators to scrub students' papers. In the schools where there was more administrative pressure to scrub, teachers were more likely to view the practice as disdainful. Teachers at the schools with less administrative pressure to scrub were less likely to scrub and when they did, they felt that they mainly scrubbed in the students' best interests; whereas, teachers in the schools with higher pressures to scrub felt that they had scrubbed only to boost numbers and to make the school or administrator look good. This could be seen in the interviews that were conducted.

In schools where there was increased pressure such as Park View High School there was more awareness of scrubbing behavior than at schools where there was less pressure to scrub such as Bayview High School. While these two schools are high

achieving, the same reaction to pressure could be seen at low achieving schools such as Longshore and Basilone. Basilone, which was more likely to be closed had teachers that were more aware of scrubbing techniques and felt that they were under more pressure to scrub than at Longshore where there was less threat of being closed down and teachers, while aware of scrubbing, felt less administrative pressure to scrub and were less likely to engage in scrubbing behaviors. In the other schools this can be seen to a certain extent where JP Morgan Tech, which is more established, has less scrubbing than Atlantic and Dinkins, 2 newer schools that are trying to forge their own identities.

Has media pressure had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that goes on in schools?

While it is not fully known if media pressure has an effect on the amount of scrubbing that occurred, the media have changed teachers' perceptions of scrubbing along with teachers' awareness of the practice of scrubbing. This can already be seen as there is more awareness of the term scrubbing and scrubbing behavior in schools in close proximity to schools with prominent scrubbing scandals (Longshore and Bayview). Teachers in these schools were more likely to be aware of scrubbing; furthermore, these teachers were more likely to view the practice of scrubbing as cheating, a view that has been

Have the New York State Education Department (NYSED) mandates to regrade certain exams had an effect on the amount of scrubbing that occurs? Do teachers perceive scrubbing differently now that there is a mandate to regrade certain regents exams?

The NYSED mandate to regrade exams has had an effect on scrubbing and teachers perception of scrubbing. This can already be seen in the science and math exams where there is a NYSED mandate to regrade the exams. Like the pressure that

comes from administrators to scrub, NYSED's mandate to regrade exams is seen as something done to raise numbers and make the state look better among math and science teachers. In these exams there is very little soft scrubbing that occurs and there is a feeling that scrubbing is cheating. On these exams there is also more of a sense that hard scrubbing is much more common than in other exams. In the English and Social Studies Exams, where there is no NYSED mandate to regrade, and they are required for graduation, there is much more soft scrubbing that goes on where teachers may be using their professional discretion in order to improve the educational outcomes of their students. Among Foreign Language teachers where there is no mandate to regrade exams and there are few high stakes attached to the exams, there was little mention of scrubbing in either a positive or negative light.

Policy Implications:

Scrubbing can be seen to have a detrimental impact on teaching and learning. Because the accountability movement places so much emphasis on results, there is much coercion that occurs in scrubbing. Teachers feel pressures to scrub from administrators, other teachers, parents and even students. This pressure takes away a lot of focus from the actual learning that is supposed to take place in the classroom. Furthermore, hard scrubbing is generally seen as dishonesty. High stakes testing depends in large part on the accuracy of measurement. If the numbers that high stakes decisions are based on are not completely honest, the entire system is suspect.

If the current high stakes testing paradigm were to be continued, the role of test score pollution and scrubbing would need to be acknowledged and examined. The current laws have been developed in order to build in accountability into the system;

however, an unintended consequence has been an increase in test score pollution and dilution of test standards. Throughout the country, dilution of curricula and standards, teaching to the test and other instances of test score pollution has been on the rise. Many of the test results that have been obtained through initiatives like NCLB have been inflated and do not necessarily reflect what students are actually learning. As in quantum mechanics where observation of a subatomic particle may change its position or momentum leading to imprecise measurements, one cannot accurately measure what students have learned using high stakes testing. The more importance that is placed on testing, the more test score pollution may distort the outcomes of that test. This can already be seen where there is a difference in school organization for instruction and high stakes testing pressure.

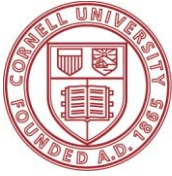
Scrubbing was found to be a common behavior in the grading of the regents exams. Whether or not scrubbing is a positive or negative behavior depends on one's viewpoint. Scrubbing can be seen as a positive behavior because it empowers teachers who have lost much of their autonomy in the accountability movement. Students, especially borderline students, benefit from extra attention paid to their tests and perhaps receive the benefit of the doubt on a much more regular basis. Inherent in all tests is measurement error and scrubbing goes a long way in correcting measurement error and it is done by the individuals most familiar with the students' work.

Scrubbing is something that teachers have traditionally performed in order to exercise their professional expertise/autonomy. At times it has been used in order to correct some inequalities that may have existed in students' backgrounds; however, in the most recent era of accountability, beginning in the late 1990s, where NCLB and

increased state standards have increased pressures on teachers and administrators, scrubbing has changed in character into something that teachers are being forced/coerced into doing by administrators and the state education department in rigidly mandated fashions. This, along with media portrayals of scrubbing as cheating, has made scrubbing a practice which is seen by some teachers as a negative consequence of the increased emphasis on high stakes testing and the school report cards on school administration. Because of this added emphasis on rescoring exams from the New York State Education Department (NYSED), there has been less scrubbing that has gone on in schools. Scrubbing could decline because teachers no longer feel that their professional expertise is trusted in order to make these decisions and that they will be unduly scrutinized if they do make these decisions; however, because of the pressure that teachers and administrators are under to improve test scores, scrubbing will not disappear. If the status quo continues, with scrubbing will be relegated to teachers who cheat and teachers who would exercise proper educational expertise would be discouraged to do so meaning that all parties involved: teachers, administrators, NYSED, and most importantly the students will not benefit from teachers engaged in proper educational practice.

Appendix A:

Packet Sent Out to School Principals



Cornell University

College of Arts and Sciences

Bartolo José Liguori

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of Sociology

323 Uris Hall

Ithaca, NY 14853

Tel: 917-623-5611

bjl33@cornell.edu

Date

High School Principal
High School
333 Street Address
New York City , NY 10000

Dear High School Principal,

I am writing to submit a proposal to do a pilot study in your school. This will be a part of a larger study that I am conducting in New York City Public Schools. The project is entitled "High Stakes Tests and Teacher Resistance: New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability," and is intended to be my doctoral dissertation. Included in the enclosed packet are: my dissertation proposal, a packet sent out to Cornell University's Committee on Human Subjects, a letter from my advisor stating that my dissertation proposal was accepted, a letter from Cornell University's Committee on Human Subjects stating that the project had their approval, my informed consent form, my interview script, an abridged curriculum vitae, and a summary of my proposal.

I have already obtained permission from the New York Department of Education and require only your permission to move forward in conducting interviews in your school. The project requires interviewing approximately 10-12 teachers and 1 administrator from your school. The interviews are entirely voluntary and completely confidential on the part of the teachers. I would work around the schedule that you would allow me to in order not to intrude on instructional time.

If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. My telephone # is 718-946-2224 and my cellular # is 917-623-5611. My local address is:

Bartolo Liguori
3610 Bayview Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11224

Thank You,

Bart Liguori

P.S.

My fingerprints are on file with the DOE. My file # is 733405.

Proposal Summary for Principals

Proposal Summary:

This study aims to study the effect of new laws and standards mandated by No Child Left Behind and state laws on teachers in New York City and how they cope with pressures that are placed on them by students, parents, administrators, and other teachers. Based upon the results of an analysis of New York City School Report Card data, schools will be selected in order to conduct interviews with teachers in each school in order to study the types of pressures faced by teachers in response to changes in the schools' structure, administration, other teachers, and student body.

A further review of the relevant literature can be found on pages 6-20, and a review of the hypotheses/questions asked by this project can be found on pages 24-30 of the attached prospectus.

Research Design and Methodology:

The first level of analysis will be at the city wide level and includes quantitative data obtained from the New York City Department of Education School Report Cards (Public Use). Using the data, changes in test scores will be looked at to see if there was a corresponding change in staff, parental involvement or student demographics. Using this information, schools will be selected in order to complete the next level of analysis, which will include interviews with teachers and administrators at selected schools. The interviews will focus on the motivations of the teachers, the conditions faced by teachers in a high-stakes testing environment, and test score pollution along with other issues that are relevant to teachers.

Schools will be selected in order to conduct interviews with the relevant school staff. After schools are selected, the individuals that will be interviewed at the schools include teachers, administrators and superintendents. Students will not be interviewed because of the added precautions that must be undertaken in order to interview minors. Interviews will be conducted with approximately 120 teachers and administrators in the schools in which they teach. The contact with the participants will last for approximately a couple of hours. There will be approximately 10 high schools included in the sample. It will take approximately 20 weeks to complete the field work for this project. An interview script is attached to the proposal. A further review of the methodology can be found on pages 31-40 of the attached prospectus.

Discussion:

There are no immediate benefit to the individual subjects; however, there may be improved working conditions in years to follow due to this study and others like it. The Education community as a whole may benefit from knowledge gained through this study about the validity of standardized tests. The findings of this project could be used to add to the debate surrounding different topics in the Sociology of Education.

The City of New York can gain a lot of information on how teachers cope with increases in high stakes exams. This information could be used in teacher and administrator training. Furthermore, the City of New York can gain valuable insight into how tests are graded and the pressures teachers face in preparing their students for regents exams and grading regents exams.

Teacher Interview Template

Interview ID # _____

1. Introductions and general biographical information:

- a. Male/Female
- b. Age _____
- c. Race/Ethnicity _____
- d. Did you go to high school in New York State?

2. General career information:

- a. How long have you been teaching?
- b. How long have you been at this school?
- c. Do you have tenure in the New York City Department of Education?
- d. What is your highest level of Education?
- e. Are you looking to become an administrator in the future?
- f. What subject(s) do you teach? Are you certified to teach in that subject area?
- g. Do you prepare students for a regents exam? If so, which ones?
- h. Do you teach any Academic Intervention Services (AIS) classes? If so, in what subjects?
- i. Do you grade regents exams? If so, which ones?

3. Teacher perceptions of their students and their background:

- a. What is the racial/ethnic makeup of your students?
- b. What percentage of your students is male?
- c. How would you describe the SES of most of your students? (working, middle, upper-middle class).
- d. How would you rate the ability of your students on a scale from 1-10 (10 being highly able)?

4. Teacher perception of school organization

- a. Does the Principal have a well-stated goal or mission statement for the school? Were teachers involved in developing that goal/mission statement? Do the teachers stay true to that mission statement? Does the schools goal or mission statement filter down to the students?
- b. How well do administrators interact with teachers?
- c. Do the decisions made by the administration affect your teaching? How?
- d. Do the decisions made by the administration affect student learning? How?
- e. Do teachers have an effect on the decisions administrators make?
- f. Does access to resources matter in the effectiveness of your teaching?
- g. How effective is your principal? AP?

5. The teachers opinions regarding high stakes tests

- a. What are your opinions concerning the regents exams?
- b. Do you believe that all students should be required to take and pass regents exams?

6. The teacher's opinions about the exam in their subject being a good or fair test

- a. Is the regents exam in your subject area a good test?
- b. Is the regents exam in your subject area a fair test?
- c. How well does the regents exam measure student performance?
- d. Does the regents exam test what is taught in the classroom?
- e. Do you model your class exams after the regents exams?
- f. If there is something that you would add to the test structure of the regents, what would it be?

7. The teacher's expectation is for their own students passing the tests

- a. Approximately what percentage of your students do you expect to pass the regents exam in your subject this year?
- b. Do you feel that certain students will definitely pass the exam? Why?
- c. Do you feel that certain students will fail the exam? Why?

8. The expectations that administrators have for their students and its effect.

- a. Do you feel that there is a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage in your subject area?
- b. What, if any, pressures are placed upon you by the principal to increase the passing percentage?
- c. What, if any, pressures are placed upon you by the assistant principals to increase the passing percentage?
- d. What, if any, pressures are placed upon you by the department chair (if applicable) to increase the passing percentage?

9. The expectations parents have for their students and its effect on teachers.

- a. What is the role of parents in this school?
- b. Do parents pressure you to raise the class grades of students?
- c. Do you ever feel pressured by the parents' association to increase the regents passing percentage in your subject area?
- d. Are there pressures from individual parents?

10. How the teachers modify their curriculum in order to accommodate the tests

- a. Do you ever find yourself leaving out material because it may not be tested on the regents?
- b. Do you feel you emphasize certain points more because you know it will be tested on the regents?

11. What measures teachers may have taken in order to accommodate newer testing standards

- a. How has the move to all regents classes affected your teaching?
- b. Have you changed the way you teach now that there are more testing requirements?
- c. Have you changed your lesson plans now that there are more testing requirements?

12. How accountability standards have influenced their behavior in the classroom.

- a. Do you know whether your school is under review or not?
- b. Has/would (not) being under review influence your teaching/changed your teaching style?
- c. Do you feel more at ease because your school is not under review?
- d. Do you feel more pressure because your school is under review?
- e. Do you feel more pressure put on you because of laws like NCLB?
- f. Do you feel that laws like NCLB are fair to teachers? Why?
- g. Do you feel that laws like NCLB help students? Why?
- h. Do you feel that laws like NCLB change your teaching?

13. If the teachers have engaged in any Test Score pollution, and which techniques

- a. Do you ever find yourself teaching to the test?
- b. Why do you teach to the test?
- c. Have you ever asked a student not to show up for a regents exam? Why?
- d. Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?
- i. Have you ever given a student the benefit of the doubt in class exams?
- j. Have you ever considered engaging in scrubbing a class exam? Why?
- k. Have you considered engaging in scrubbing behaviors on the regents? Why?

14. Motivations of teachers to engage in test score pollution.

- a. Do you engage in behaviors to increase the passing percentage of the school?
What kinds of behaviors?
- b. Why do you engage in these behaviors?
- c. Do you feel that certain students benefit more than others in these behaviors?

15. The opinion of teachers concerning test score pollution

- a. What is your opinion concerning teaching to the test?
- b. Do you feel that most teachers are honest in grading state exams?
- c. How do you feel about dishonesty on the regents exams?
- d. Do you believe that teachers should grade their own students exams?
- e. Do you believe that teachers should grade the exams of students in their school?

Administrator Interview Template
Interview ID #_____

1. Introductions and general biographical information:

- a. Male/Female
- b. Age_____
- c. Race/Ethnicity_____
- d. Did you go to high school in New York State?

2. General career information:

- a. How long have you been teaching? How long have you been an administrator?
- b. How long have you been at this school?
- c. Do you have tenure in the New York City Department of Education?
- d. What is your highest level of Education?
- e. What subject(s) did/do you teach?
- f. Does the school have any Academic Intervention Services (AIS) classes? If so, in what subjects?

3. Perceptions of their students and their background:

- a. What is the racial/ethnic makeup of your students?
- b. What percentage of your students is male?
- c. How would you describe the SES of most of your students? (working, middle, upper-middle class).
- d. How would you rate the ability of your students on a scale from 1-10 (10 being highly able)?

4. Perception of school organization

- a. Does the school have a well-stated goal or mission statement for the school? Who was involved in developing that goal/mission statement? Do you stay true to that statement? Do the teachers stay true to that mission statement? Does the schools goal or mission statement filter down to the students?
- b. How well do administrators interact with teachers?
- c. Do the decisions made by the administration affect teaching? How?
- d. Do the decisions made by the administration affect student learning? How?
- e. Do teachers have an effect on the decisions administrators make?
- f. Do Administrators have an effect on the decisions superintendents make?
- g. Does access to resources matter in being an effective administrator? Effective teaching? Student learning?
- h. How effective is the superintendent? How effective do you feel you are as a principal? How effective are your APs?

5. Opinions regarding high stakes tests

- a. What are your opinions concerning the regents exams?
- b. Do you believe that all students should be required to take and pass regents exams?
- c. Are the regents exams good tests?
- d. Are the regents exams fair tests?
- e. How well do regents exams measure student performance?
- f. Do the regents exams test what is taught in the classroom?
- g. Should teachers model their class exams after the regents exams?

6. The expectations that administrators have for their students and its effect.

- a. Do you feel that there is a lot of pressure for you to raise the passing percentage on regents exams in your school?
- b. What, if any, pressures are placed upon you by the superintendent to increase the passing percentage?
- c. What, if any, pressures are placed upon you by parents to increase the passing percentage?
- d. What, if any, pressures do you place on assistant principals/departments chairs to increase the passing percentage?
- e. What, if any, pressures do you place on individual teachers to increase the passing percentage?

7. The expectations parents have for their students and its effect on administrators.

- a. What is the role of parents in this school?
- b. Do parents pressure you to raise the class grades of students?
- c. Do you ever feel pressured by the parents' association to increase the regents passing percentage in your school?
- d. Are there pressures from individual parents?

8. How the schools modify their curriculum in order to accommodate the tests

- a. Do you ever encourage teachers to leave out material because it may not be tested on the regents?
- b. Do you instruct your teachers to emphasize certain points more because you know it will be tested on the regents?

9. Measures administrators may have taken in order to accommodate newer testing standards.

- a. How has the move to all regents classes affected your school?
- b. Have your teachers changed the way they teach now that there are more testing requirements?
- c. Have teachers changed their lesson plans now that there are more testing requirements?

10. How accountability standards have influenced their.

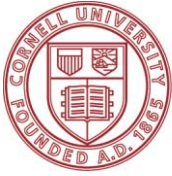
- a. Is your school is under review?
- b. Has/would (not) being under review influence your teaching/changed your leadership style?
- c. Do you feel more at ease because your school is not under review?
- d. Do you feel more pressure because your school is under review?
- e. Do you feel more pressure put on you because of laws like NCLB?
- f. Do you feel that laws like NCLB are fair to administrators? Why?
- g. Do you feel that laws like NCLB help students? Why?
- h. How did the Enactment of NCLB change your management of the school?

11. If the teachers have engaged in any Test Score pollution, and which techniques

- a. Do teachers in your school teach to the test?
- b. Why do they teach to the test?
- c. Are students ever asked not to show up for a regents exam? Why?
- d. Have you ever heard of a practice called scrubbing?
- e. Do you believe it goes on in this superintendence? Why?
- f. Do you believe it goes on in this school? Why?

12. The opinion of teachers concerning test score pollution

- a. What is your opinion concerning teaching to the test?
- b. Do you feel that most teachers are honest in grading state exams?
- c. How do you feel about dishonesty on the regents exams?
- d. Do you believe that teachers should grade their own students exams?
- e. Do you believe that teachers should grade the exams of students in their school?



Cornell University

College of Arts and Sciences

Bartolo José Liguori

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of Sociology

323 Uris Hall

Ithaca, NY 14853

Tel: 917-623-5611

bjl33@cornell.edu

Date

New York City High School
123 Street Address
New York City, NY 10000

Dear Teachers,

My name is Bart Liguori and I am looking forward to doing a pilot study in your school. This pilot study will lay the groundwork for a larger study that I am conducting in New York City Public Schools. The project is entitled “High Stakes Tests and Teacher Resistance: New York City Schools in an Era of Increased Accountability,” and is intended to be my doctoral dissertation. The pilot study requires interviewing approximately 10-15 teachers and 1 administrator from your school. The interviews will be conducted in a private session, are entirely voluntary and completely confidential. The interviews will take approximately one hour and will focus on the conditions faced by teachers in a high-stakes testing environment along with other issues that are relevant to teachers. I would work around your schedules in order not to intrude on instructional and personal time. For the teachers involved in the interviews there will be a raffle of a \$100 gift card at the end of the study. Because the focus of this study is on high-stakes testing, only teachers who teach subjects that have a regents exam associated with them (Science, Math, History, English, and Foreign Language) will be interviewed.

This study aims to examine the effect of new state laws and standards mandated by “No Child Left Behind” on New York City teachers. At interest is how teachers cope with pressures that are placed on them by students, parents, administrators, and other teachers. The Education Community as a whole may benefit from knowledge gained through this study about the validity of standardized tests. The New York Department of Education can gain valuable insight into the pressures teachers face in preparing their students for regents exams and grading regents exams.

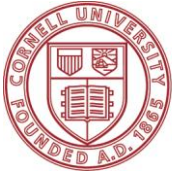
As a former New York City high school teacher, I appreciate the work that teachers do and would like to help others understand the issues teachers face. I thank you very much for your consideration and look forward to working with you on this project.

Thank You,

Bart Liguori

Ph.D. Candidate

Cornell University



Cornell University

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Sociology
323 Uris Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

You are invited to take part in a research study of how teachers manage pressures that are placed upon them due to their workplace environment. We are asking you to take part because of your first hand experience teaching and grading regents exams. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to learn how teachers react to the increased emphasis on standardized tests by the city, state and federal governments.

What we will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, we will conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about your job, the hours you work, your opinions about regents exams, how you prepare your students for regents exams, how regents exams are graded, and your relationships with other teachers/administrators. The interview will take about 30 minutes to complete. With your permission, we would also like to tape-record the interview.

Risks and benefits: There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your job conditions to be sensitive. There are no benefits to you. Teaching is a very demanding career and we hope to learn more about teachers and the pressures they face.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with Cornell University. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we make public we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. If we tape-record the interview, we will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which we anticipate will be within two months of its taping. Your interview will be assigned a code number. Your name will be attached to the code number in order to potentially contact you for clarification of some of the answers you give during this interview. Once the project is completed, there will be no link between your name and your responses.

If you have questions: The researchers conducting this study is Bart Liguori. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Bart Liguori at bjl33@cornell.edu or 917-623-5611. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the University Committee on Human Subjects (UCHS) at 607-255-5138 or access their website at

<http://www.osp.cornell.edu/Compliance/UCHS/homepageUCHS.htm>.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I **DO** consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

I cannot give consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked; however, I **DO NOT** consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the UCHS on January 10, 2008."

Appendix B: Chapter 2 Tables

Table 2.1. Approximate demographics of the selected schools in the period of the interviews.

School	School Size	% White and Asian	% Black and Hispanic	% Free Lunch	% ELL
Basilone	Large	50	50	37	14
Atlantic	Small	45	55	100	11
Parkview	Small	50	50	18	0
Bay View	Medium	95	5	7	1
Dinkins	Small	15	85	75	1
Longshore	Large	40	60	37	6
JP Morgan	Medium	40	60	60	6

Large > 2500 students > Medium> 500 students >Small

Table 2.2. Graduation statistics of students in the selected schools.

School	Graduation Rate	Regents Diplomas	Regents Diplomas with advanced designation	Graduates planning to attend 4 year college
Basilone	59%	79%	31%	54%
Atlantic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Parkview	100%	100%	86%	94%
Bay View	99%	100%	98%	98%
Dinkins	NA	NA	NA	NA
Longshore	67%	67%	22%	69%
JP Morgan	82%	66%	29%	81%

NA= Not Applicable as they have not graduated a class yet.

Table 2.3. Percent of students attaining 55 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

School	English	Math A	Global History	American History	Living Environment	Math B	Chemistry
Basilone	89	90	80	93	81	69	87
Atlantic	96	96	84	99	77	89	50
Parkview	100	100	100	100	100	96	92
Bay View	100	100	100	100	100	99	100
Dinkins	80	79	57	63	50	33	23
Longshore	90	82	69	83	76	54	69
JP Morgan	94	90	76	95	84	70	78

Table 2.4. Percent of students attaining 65 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

School	English	Math A	Global History	American History	Living Environment	Math B	Chemistry
Basilone	78	72	66	88	65	55	63
Atlantic	93	83	83	93	64	69	24
Parkview	100	100	100	100	100	93	83
Bay View	100	100	100	100	100	98	99
Dinkins	72	56	47	48	30	21	9
Longshore	81	59	49	69	58	39	35
JP Morgan	84	74	62	88	90	60	37

Table 2.5. Percent of students attaining 85 or above on the regents in the period following interviews.

School	English	Math A	Global History	American History	Living Environment	Math B	Chemistry
Basilone	20	10	20	47	11	13	5
Atlantic	44	20	28	47	7	20	1
Parkview	100	94	90	96	74	32	13
Bay View	92	96	91	96	87	66	38
Dinkins	7	3	7	0	1	0	0
Longshore	23	4	12	29	6	6	1
JP Morgan	22	8	21	51	22	10	2

Table 2.6. Staff Characteristics of the 7 schools in the period following the interviews.

School	% with MA + 30	% with fewer than 3 years experience	Turnover Rate	New Teacher Turnover Rate
Basilone	69	5	10	25
Atlantic	22	33	20	20
Parkview	39	16	NR	NR
Bay View	66	15	18	0
Dinkins	15	62	17	0
Longshore	41	7	5	15
JP Morgan	45	18	11	10

NR= Not Reported

Appendix C: Tables for Chapter 3

Table 3.1: Demographics of the City of New York High Schools compared to the State of NY.

Demographic Groups	NYS High Schools (N=730)	NYC High Schools (N=370)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
% White	79.8 (.987)	8.2 (.717)	48.46**	1098
% Black	10.2 (.707)	39.7 (1.27)	-21.99**	1098
% Hispanic	6.8 (.386)	43.3 (1.18)	-36.41**	1098
%Asian	2.3 (.153)	8.2 (.662)	-11.38**	1098
% LEP	1.3 (.122)	11.5 (.866)	-15.96**	1098
% Free Lunch	21.3 (.724)	58.0 (1.23)	-27.33**	1098

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.2: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the State of NY.

Demographic Groups	NYS High Schools	7 Target schools	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
% White	79.8 (.987)	28.3 (8.35)	5.09**	735
% Black	10.2 (.707)	27.1 (6.98)	-2.34*	735
% Hispanic	6.8 (.386)	25.7 (4.21)	-4.79**	735
%Asian	2.3 (.153)	18.6 (4.52)	-10.0**	735
% LEP	1.3 (.122)	5.6 (2.03)	-3.40**	735
% Free Lunch	21.3 (.723)	33.4 (10.4)	-1.62	735

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.3: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the City of NY.

Demographic Groups	NYC High Schools	Target	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
% White	7.8 (.700)	28.3 (8.35)	-3.96**	368
% Black	40.0 (1.28)	27.1 (6.98)	1.38	368
% Hispanic	43.6 (1.20)	25.7 (4.21)	2.06*	368
%Asian	8.0 (.666)	18.6 (4.52)	-2.18*	368
% LEP	11.6 (.881)	5.6 (2.03)	.950	368
% Free Lunch	58.5 (1.23)	33.4 (10.4)	2.79	368

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.4: Demographics of the 7 selected schools compared to the City and State of NY.

Demographic Groups	All NYS Schools	Target	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
% White	55.9 (1.24)	28.3 (8.35)	1.77	1098
% Black	20.1 (.765)	27.1 (6.98)	-0.736	1098
% Hispanic	19.0 (.708)	25.7 (4.21)	-.0758	1098
%Asian	4.2 (.256)	18.6 (4.52)	-4.45**	1098
% LEP	4.7 (.337)	5.6 (2.03)	-2.02	1098
% Free Lunch	33.7 (.825)	33.4 (10.4)	.024	1098

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.5: 2008 NYS regents results for the City of NY compared to the rest of the State. (allnyc)

2008 Regents exams	% Grade	NYS High Schools	NYC High Schools	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>
English N=1063	0-54	4.9 (.285)	18.0 (.681)	-20.99**	1061
	55-64	6.1 (.212)	14.2 (.434)	-19.06**	1061
	65-84	49.3 (.478)	52.0 (.705)	-3.27**	1061
	85 and up	39.8 (.645)	15.7 (.912)	21.51**	1061
Math A N=1072	0-54	5.8 (.350)	20.4 (.666)	-21.4**	1070
	55-64	7.5 (.297)	22.2 (.574)	-25.17**	1070
	65-84	52.0 (.555)	47.9 (.820)	4.14**	1070
	85 and up	34.8 (.753)	9.4 (.963)	20.1**	1070
Math B N=956 (not required for graduation)	0-54	18.2 (.639)	44.2 (1.61)	-18.1**	954
	55-64	11.3 (.266)	12.4 (.545)	-2.00*	954
	65-84	47.0 (.490)	35.0 (1.20)	11.05**	954
	85 and up	23.5 (.591)	8.6 (.789)	14.21**	954
Global History N=1066	0-54	13.0 (.465)	32.9 (.963)	-21.1	1064
	55-64	10.3 (.248)	18.1 (.470)	-16.2	1064
	65-84	42.5 (.374)	36.8 (.734)	7.69**	1064
	85 and up	34.2 (.651)	12.2 (.907)	19.5**	1064
US History and Government N=1044	0-54	4.3 (.276)	18.6 (.755)	-21.83**	1042
	55-64	5.0 (.208)	15.3 (.507)	-22.16**	1042
	65-84	35.0 (.468)	44.2 (.703)	-11.00**	1042
	85 and up	55.7 (.695)	22.2 (1.17)	26.06**	1042
Living Environment N=1062	0-54	6.3 (.392)	22.8 (.765)	-21.34**	1060
	55-64	7.0 (.223)	20.8 (.552)	-27.5**	1060
	65-84	53.3 (.476)	47.7 (.833)	-27.5**	1060
	85 and up	33.3 (.673)	8.6 (.857)	21.7**	1060
Chemistry N=934 (not required for graduation)	0-54	7.0 (.431)	29.1 (1.52)	-18.98**	932
	55-64	17.2 (.412)	27.0 (.838)	-11.6**	932
	65-84	61.3 (.547)	40.2 (1.51)	16.37**	932
	85 and up	14.6 (.408)	3.5 (.500)	14.94**	932
Integrated Algebra (first administered 6/2008)	0-54	8.7 (.505)	27.3 (1.13)	-17.35**	852
	55-64	9.0 (.319)	18.0 (.602)	-14.45**	852
	65-84	68.9 (.668)	48.8 (1.23)	15.64**	852
	85 and up	13.5 (.629)	5.9 (.784)	7.22**	852

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.6: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the State. (NYS)

2008 Regents exams	% Grade	NYS High Schools	7 Target schools	t	df
English N=721	0-54	4.9 (.285)	7.3 (2.67)	-.084	719
	55-64	6.1 (.212)	5.9 (1.79)	-.1022	719
	65-84	49.3 (.478)	42.9 (10.22)	1.30	719
	85 and up	39.8 (.645)	44 (14.1)	-.632	719
Math A N=720	0-54	5.8 (.350)	9 (3.14)	-.9047	718
	55-64	7.5 (.297)	13.1 (3.69)	-1.87	718
	65-84	52.0 (.555)	44 (10.2)	1.40	718
	85 and up	34.8 (.753)	33.6 (16.0)	.153	718
Math B N=685 (not required for graduation)	0-54	18.2 (.639)	27.1 (9.06)	-1.41	683
	55-64	11.3 (.266)	10.9 (2.58)	.175	683
	65-84	47.0 (.490)	41.1 (5.13)	1.21	683
	85 and up	23.5 (.591)	21.0 (8.45)	.430	683
Global History N=727	0-54	13.0 (.465)	19.1 (5.93)	-1.3	725
	55-64	10.3 (.247)	8.6 (3.16)	-.670	725
	65-84	42.5 (.374)	33.9 (6.61)	2.24*	725
	85 and up	34.2 (.651)	38.4 (13.7)	-.627	725
US History and Government N=717	0-54	4.3 (.276)	9.7 (5.23)	-1.93	715
	55-64	5.0 (.208)	6.6 (2.27)	-.728	715
	65-84	35.0 (.468)	31.6 (7.24)	.722	715
	85 and up	55.7 (.695)	52.3 (13.1)	.482	715
Living Environment N=722	0-54	6.3 (.392)	17.3 (6.72)	-2.76	720
	55-64	7.0 (.223)	10.0 (3.10)	-1.29	720
	65-84	53.3 (.476)	42.8 (7.61)	2.15*	720
	85 and up	33.3 (.673)	29.7 (13.4)	.523	720
Chemistry N=690 (not required for graduation)	0-54	7.0 (.431)	28.7 (10.16)	4.97**	688
	55-64	17.2 (.412)	21.0 (5.23)	-.926	688
	65-84	61.3 (.547)	41.4 (8.40)	3.63**	688
	85 and up	14.6 (.408)	8.6 (5.19)	1.48	688
Integrated Algebra N=577 (first administered 6/2008)	0-54	8.7 (.505)	14.7 (8.31)	-1.19	575
	55-64	9.0 (.319)	8.0 (3.45)	.318	575
	65-84	68.9 (.668)	58.7 (12.2)	1.54	575
	85 and up	13.5 (.629)	18.7 (13.3)	-.824	575

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.7: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the City. (nycc)

2008 Regents exams	% Grade	NYC High Schools	7 Target schools	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
English N=349	0-54	18.2 (.688)	7.3 (2.67)	2.26*	347
	55-64	14.4 (4.37)	5.9 (1.79)	2.79**	347
	65-84	52.2 (.689)	42.9 (10.22)	1.87	347
	85 and up	15.1 (.864)	44 (14.06)	-4.56**	347
Math A N=359	0-54	20.6 (.671)	9 (3.14)	2.43*	357
	55-64	22.4 (.577)	13.1 (3.69)	2.23*	357
	65-84	48.0 (.814)	44 (10.2)	.673	357
	85 and up	9.0 (.918)	33.6 (16.0)	-3.59**	357
Math B N=278 (not required for graduation)	0-54	44.6 (1.63)	27.1 (9.06)	1.70	276
	55-64	12.4 (.555)	10.9 (2.58)	.4562	276
	65-84	34.8 (1.23)	41.1 (5.13)	-.820	276
	85 and up	8.2 (.774)	21.0 (8.44)	-2.56*	276
Global History N=346	0-54	33.2 (.970)	19.1 (5.93)	2.06*	344
	55-64	18.3 (.469)	8.6 (3.16)	2.95**	344
	65-84	36.8 (.738)	33.9 (6.62)	.573	344
	85 and up	11.7 (.864)	38.4 (13.7)	-4.25**	344
US History and Government N=334	0-54	18.8 (.761)	9.7 (5.23)	1.72	332
	55-64	15.5 (.511)	6.6 (2.27)	2.53*	332
	65-84	44.5 (.696)	31.6 (7.23)	2.65**	332
	85 and up	21.3 (1.14)	52.3 (13.1)	-3.85**	332
Living Environment N=347	0-54	23.0 (.769)	17.3 (6.72)	1.04	345
	55-64	21.0 (.554)	10.0 (3.10)	2.83*	345
	65-84	47.8 (.837)	42.8 (7.61)	.836	345
	85 and up	8.2 (.820)	29.7 (13.4)	-3.59**	345
Chemistry N=251 (not required for graduation)	0-54	29.2 (1.55)	28.7 (10.15)	.049	249
	55-64	27.2 (.849)	21.0 (5.23)	1.22	249
	65-84	40.2 (1.53)	41.4 (8.40)	-.129	249
	85 and up	3.4 (.493)	8.6 (5.19)	-1.71	249
Integrated Algebra N=283 (first administered 6/2008)	0-54	27.6 (1.14)	14.7 (8.31)	1.64	281
	55-64	18.2 (.605)	8.0 (3.45)	2.45*	281
	65-84	48.6 (1.23)	58.7 (12.2)	-1.18	281
	85 and up	5.6 (.749)	18.7 (13.3)	-2.41*	281

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3.8: 2008 NYS regents results for the 7 target schools compared to the rest of the State and City combined. (target)

2008 Regents exams	% Grade	All High Schools	7 Target schools	t	df
English N=1063	0-54	9.1 (.351)	7.3 (2.67)	.439	1061
	55-64	8.8 (.234)	5.9 (1.79)	1.01	1061
	65-84	50.2 (.395)	42.9 (10.2)	1.50	1061
	85 and up	31.8 (.628)	44.0 (14.1)	-1.56	1061
Math A N=1072	0-54	10.7 (.387)	9.0 (3.13)	.3536	1070
	55-64	12.4 (.349)	13.1 (3.69)	-.1646	1070
	65-84	50.6 (.462)	44.0 (10.2)	1.15	1070
	85 and up	26.2 (.696)	33.6 (16.0)	-.8467	1070
Math B N=956 (not required for graduation)	0-54	25.7 (.758)	27.1 (9.05)	-.160	954
	55-64	11.6 (.248)	10.9 (2.58)	.270	954
	65-84	43.5 (.526)	41.1 (5.14)	.388	954
	85 and up	19.1 (.527)	21.0 (8.44)	-.298	954
Global History N=1066	0-54	19.5 (.529)	19.1 (5.92)	.050	1064
	55-64	12.8 (.253)	8.6 (3.16)	1.36	1064
	65-84	40.7 (.356)	33.9 (6.61)	1.55	1064
	85 and up	27.0 (.613)	38.4 (13.7)	-1.50	1064
US History and Government N=1044	0-54	8.8 (.370)	9.7 (5.23)	-.195	1042
	55-64	8.3 (.263)	6.6 (2.27)	.547	1042
	65-84	38.0 (.411)	31.6 (7.23)	1.27	1042
	85 and up	44.9 (.777)	52.3 (13.05)	.780	1042
Living Environment N=1062	0-54	11.7 (.435)	17.3 (6.72)	-1.05	1060
	55-64	11.5 (.308)	10.0 (3.10)	.407	1060
	65-84	51.6 (.428)	42.9 (7.61)	1.64	1060
	85 and up	25.2 (.639)	29.7 (13.4)	-.566	1060
Chemistry N=934 (not required for graduation)	0-54	12.8 (.608)	28.7 (10.16)	-2.25*	932
	55-64	19.8 (.403)	21 (5.23)	.249	932
	65-84	55.8 (.647)	41.4 (8.39)	1.92	932
	85 and up	11.6 (.365)	8.6 (5.19)	.724	932
Integrated Algebra N=854 (first administered 6/2008)	0-54	14.9 (.589)	14.7 (8.31)	.029	852
	55-64	12.0 (.327)	8.0 (3.45)	1.02	852
	65-84	62.2 (.385)	58.7 (12.16)	.437	852
	85 and up	10.9 (.505)	18.7 (13.3)	-1.27	852

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$. Standard Errors appear in parentheses below means.

References

- Abrams, Lisa M., Joseph Pedulla, and George Madaus. 2003. "Views from the Classroom: Teachers' Opinions of Statewide Testing Programs." *Theory into Practice* 42:1 18-29.
- Airasian, Peter W. 1987. "State Mandated Testing and Educational Reform: Context and Consequences." *American Journal of Education*, 95:3 (May) 393-412
- Amrein-Beardsley, A. A., & Berliner, D. C. 2003. "Re-analysis of NAEP math and reading scores in states with and without high-stakes tests: Response to Rosenshine." *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 11:25. Retrieved from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v11n25/>
- Barr, Rebecca and Robert Dreeben. 1983. *How Schools Work*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Beadie, Nancy. 1999. "From Student Markets to Credential Markets: The Creation of the Regents Examination System in New York State, 1864-1890." *History of Education Quarterly*, 39:01 (Spring) 1-30.
- Belfield, Clive R. 2005. "The Teacher Labour Market in the US: Challenges and Reforms." *Educational Review*, 57:2 (May) 175-191.
- Bernal, Ernesto M., Valencia R. R. 2000. "The TAAS Case: A Recapitulation and Beyond" *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 22:4 (Nov) 540-556.
- Bishop, John H. 1998. "Do curriculum-based external exit exam systems enhance student achievement?" (CPRE Research Rep. RR-40). Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.
- Bishop, John H. 2000. "Curriculum-Based Exit Exam Systems: Do Students Learn More? How?" *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 6:1 199-215.
- Bishop, J. H., & Mane, F. 1999. "The New York state reform strategy: The incentive effects of minimum competency exams." Philadelphia: National Center on Education in Inner Cities.
- Bishop, John H. and Mane, F. 2001. "Do High Stakes Graduation Tests Improve Learning Outcomes?" In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.
- Bishop, John H., Moriarty, J. Y., Mane, R. 2000. "Diplomas for Learning, Not Seat Time: The Impacts of New York Regents Examinations." *Economics of Education Review*, 19 333-349.

Blumenthal, Richard. 2006. "Why Connecticut Sued the Federal Government over No Child Left Behind" *Harvard Educational Review*, 76:4 564-569.

Bolger, Niall; and Thomas Kellaghan. 1990. "Method of Measurement and Gender Differences in Scholastic Achievement." *Journal of Education Measurement*, 27:2 (Summer) 165-174

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1973 "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction." Pp. 71-112 in *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education* edited by Richard Brown. London: Tavistock Publications.

Bridgeman, Brent and Charles Lewis. 1994. "The Relationship of Essay and Multiple-Choice Scores with Grades in College Courses." *Journal of Education Measurement*, 31:01 (Spring) 31-50

Bridgeman, Brent; and Charles Lewis. 1996. "Gender Differences in College Mathematics Grades and SAT-M Scores: A Reanalysis of Wainer and Steinberg." *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 33:3 (Autumn) 257-270

Bryant, Amy J. 2010. "Perception of High Stakes Tests by National Board Certified Teachers." Ph.D. Dissertation. Department of Education, Faculty of the School of Education Northern Arizona University, Prescott Valley, AZ.

Bryk, Anthony, Lee, V., and P. Holland. 1993. *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryk, Anthony, Thum, Y.M., Easton, J.Q., and S. Luppescu. 1997. "Assessing School Academic Productivity: The Case of Chicago School Reform." *Social Psychology of Education* 2:1 103-142.

Buck, Stuart and Jay P. Greene. 2010. "Blocking, Diluting and Co-Opting Merit Pay" (PEPG Working Paper 10-14). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School.

Buckman, Adam. 2007. "School Gains: Don't Drop NYC Reforms." *New York Post* 9/24/2007. Retrieved electronically 5/1/2011:

http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/school_gains_uFo72kTD1jHPRFSYOGuun

Burkam, David T., Lee, Valerie E., and Becky A. Smerdon. 1997. "Gender and Science Learning Early in High School: Subject Matter and Laboratory Experiences." *American Educational Research Journal*, 34:2 (Summer) 297-331

Campanile, C. 2004. "Teachers Cheat; Inflating Regents scores to Pass Kids." *New York Post* 1/26/2004 p. 15.

Cannell, J. J. 1988a. "Nationally normed elementary achievement testing in America's public schools: How all 50 states are above the national average." *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 7:2, 5–9.

Cannell, J. J. 1988b. "The Lake Wobegon Effect Revisited." *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 7:4, 1–15.

Carnoy, M., & Loeb, S. (2002). "Does external accountability affect student outcomes? A cross-state analysis." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 24, 305–331.

Carnoy, M., Loeb, S., & Smith, T. (2001). "Do higher state test scores in Texas make for better high school outcomes?" (CPRE Research Rep. RR-047). Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Carver, Susan D. 2008. "High Stakes Testing and Accountability Mandates: Impact on Central Office Leadership." Ph.D. Dissertation, College of Education, Health and Human Services, Kent State University.

Chubb, John and Terry Moe. 1990. *Politics, Markets and America's Schools*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Cizek, Gregory J. 2003. "When Teachers Cheat." *The Education Digest* 68(6): 28-31.

Coleman, James S. 1990. *Equality and Achievement in Education*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Condron, Dennis J., and Vincent J. Roscigno. 2003. "Disparities Within: Unequal Spending and Achievement in an Urban School District." *Sociology of Education*, 76:01 (January) 18-36.

Conley, Sharon, Muncey, Donna E., and Jewell C. Gould. 2002. "Negotiating Teacher Compensation: Three Views of Comprehensive Reform." *Educational Policy*, 16:5 (November) 675-706.

Cooper, Bruce S., Ehrensall, Patricia A.L., and Matthew Bromme. 2005. "School-Level Politics and Professional Development: Traps in Evaluating the Quality of Practicing Teachers." *Educational Policy*, 19:1 (January and March) 112-125.

Corbett, H. Dickson. 1990. "The Role of Stakes and Pressure in Determining Local Responses to State-Mandated Minimum Competency Testing." *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 23:4 (Summer) 204-215.

Cordero-Guzman, Hector R. 2001. "Cognitive Skills, Test Scores and Social Stratification: The Role of Family and School-Level Resources on Racial/Ethnic

Differences in Scores on Standardized Tests (AFQT).” *Review of Black Political Economy* 28:4 (Spring) 31-71.

Crocco, Margaret S., Costigan, A.T. 2007. “The Narrowing of Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Age of Accountability: Urban Educators Speak Out.” *Urban Education*, 42:6 512-535.

Crosnoe, Robert, Kirkpatrick Johnson, Monica, and Glen H. Elder. 2004. “Intergenerational Bonding in School: The Behavioral and Contextual Correlates of Student-Teacher Relationships.” *Sociology of Education*, 77:1 (January) 60-81.

Darling- Hammond, Linda. 2004. “Standards, Accountability, and School Reform.” *Teachers College Record*, 106:6 (June) 1047-1085.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. 2010. “Restoring Our Schools.” *Nation* 6/14/2010 290:23 14-20.

DeBray, E.H. 2005. “Partisanship and Ideology in the ESEA Reauthorization in the 106th and 107th Congresses: Foundations for the New Political Landscape of Federal Education Policy.” *Review of Research in Education*, Vol. 29: Special Issue on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act at 40: Reviews of Research, Policy Implementation, Critical Perspectives, and Reflections. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Diamond, John B., and James P. Spillane. 2004. “High-Stakes Accountability in Urban Elementary Schools: Challenging or Reproducing Inequality?” *Teachers College Record*, 106:6 (June) 1145-1176

Downey, Douglas B. and Shana Pribesh. 2004. “When Race Matters: Teachers’ Evaluations of Students’ Classroom Behavior.” *Sociology of Education*, 77:4 (October) 267-282.

Dumals, Susan A. 2002. “Cultural Capital, Gender, and School Success: The Role of Habitus.” *Sociology of Education*, 75:1 (January) 44-68.

Eagle, Norman and Anna S. Harris. 1969. “Interaction of Race and Test on Reading Performance Scores.” *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 06:03 (Autumn) 131-135.

Faggen-Streckler, Jane, McCarthy, Karen A., Carol K. Tittle. 1974. “A Quantitative Method for Measuring Sex “Bias” in Standardized Test.” *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 11:03 (Autumn) 151-161.

Felson, Richard B. and Lisa Trudeau. 1991. “Gender Differences in Mathematics Performance.” *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 54:2 (June) 113-126.

Figlio, D. N., & Getzler, L. S. 2002. "Accountability, ability and disability: Gaming the system" (NBER Working Paper W9307). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Fine, Michelle. 1991. *Framing Dropouts: Notews on the Politics of an Urban High School*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Folts, James D. 1996. *History of the University of the State of New York and the State Education Department, 1784-1996*. Albany, NY: University of the State of New York, State Education Department.

Firestone, William A. and J. R. Pennell. 1993. "Teacher Commitment, Working Conditions, and Differential Incentive Problems." *Review of Educational Research* 63:4 489-525.

Frederiksen, N. 1994. The Influence of Minimum Competency Tests on Teaching and Learning. Princeton: Educational Testing Service.

Freedman, Samuel G. 2005. "On Education; In Exposing a Grading Scandal, Harsh Lessons Are Learned." *New York Times* 7/20/2005 p. B8.

Freeman, Donald & Riley, K. 2005. "When the Law Goes Local: One State's View on NCLB in Practice." *The Modern Language Journal*, 89:2 264-268.

Gamoran, Adam, Secada, Walter G, and Cora B. Marrett. 2000. "The Organizational Context of Teaching and Learning: Changing theoretical Perspectives." Pp. 37-63 in Handbook of the Sociology of Education edited by Maureen Hallinan. Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. New York.

Gamoran, Adam and Robert Dreeben. 1986. "Coupling and Control in Educational Organizations." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 31:4 (December) 612-632.

Goertz, Margaret & Duffy, M. 2003. "Mapping the Landscape of High-Stakes Testing and Accountability Programs." *Theory into Practice*, 42:1 4-11.

Goldhaber, D., & Hannaway, J. 2001. "Accountability with a kicker: Observations on the Florida A+ Accountability Plan." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Public Policy and Management, Washington, DC.

Gonen, Yoav. 2010. "'Cheater' Principal Cleared After Probe." *New York Post* 11/3/2010. Retrieved electronically 5/1/2011:

http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/manhattan/cheater_principal_cleared_after_NPBR_MNZ5ItJ0NvDYLnDpjI?CMP=OTC-rss&FEEDNAME=

Goodman, Sarena and Lesley Turner. 2010. "Teacher Inentive Pay and Education Outcomes: Evidence from the NYC Bonus Program." (PEPG Working Paper 10-07). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School.

Grant, S.G. 2001. "An Uncertain Lever: Exploring the Influence of State-level Testing in New York State on Teaching Social Studies." *Teachers College Record* 103:398.

Gratz, Donald B. 2005. "Lessons from Denver: The Pay for Performance Pilot." *Phi Delta Kappan*, (April) 569-581.

Greene, Kenneth V. & Kang, B. 2004. "The Effect of Public and Private Competition on High School Outputs in New York State." *Economics of Education Review*, 23 497-506.

Haertel, Edward. 1986. "The Valid Use of Student Performance Measures for Teacher Evaluation." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 8(1):45-60.

Haertel, E. H. 1999. "Performance Assessment and Education Reform." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80. 662-666.

Haladyna Thomas M., Bobbit Nolen, S., and N. Haas. 1991. Raising Standardized Achievement Test Scores and the Origins of Test Score Pollution. *Educational Researcher*, 20:5 2-7.

Hallinan, Maureen T. (2000). *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers. Ch 1-3, 5.

Hallinan, Maureen T. 2001. "Sociological Perspectives on Black-White Inequalities in American Schooling." *Sociology of Education*, 2001 74: Extra Issue: Current of Thought: Sociology of Education at the Dawn of the 21st Century, 50-70.

Hamilton, L. 2003. "Assessment as a Policy Tool." *Review in Research in Education*. 27, 55-68.

Hamilton, L. S., & Koretz, D. M. 2002. "Tests and their use in test-based accountability systems." In *Making sense of test-based accountability in education* (pp. 13-49) edited by L. S. Hamilton, B. M. Stecher, & S. P. Klein. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Haney, W. 2000. The myth of the Texas miracle in education. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(41). Retrieved from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n41/>

Hanushek, Eric A. 1997. "Applying Performance Incentives to Schools for Disadvantaged Populations." *Education and Urban Society* 29:3 296-313.

Harris, John J. and D. Y. Ford. 1999. "Hope Deferred Again: Minority Students Underrepresented in Gifted Programs." *Education and Urban Society* 31:2 (Jan) 225-237.

Hauser, Robert M. and , Douglas K. Anderson. 1991. "Post-High School Plans and Aspirations of Black and White High School Seniors: 1976-86." *Sociology of Education*, 64:4 (October) 263-277.

Henry, Julie. 2001a. "More heads face claims of test cheating." *The Times Educational Supplement* no4441 (Aug. 10 2001) p.2.

Herszenhorn, David M. 2005. "Principal Hid Fraud on Tests in Brooklyn, Officials Say" *New York Times* 7/1/2005 p. B1.

Herszenhorn, David M. 2007. "Metro Briefing| New York: Brooklyn: Principals Ratify Contract." *New York Times* 5/17/2007 p. 4.

Heubert, Jay. 2001. "High-Stakes Testing and Civil Rights: Standards of Appropriate Test Use and Strategy for Enforcing them." In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.

Heubert, Jay and Robert M. Hauser. 1999. *High Stakes Testing for Tracking, Promotion, and Graduation*. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.

Henry, Julie. 2001b. "More schools found guilty of cheating. Testing malpractice in Great Britain." *The Times Educational Supplement* no4456 (Nov. 23 2001) p.4.

Hochschild, Jennifer and Bridget Scott. 1998. "Governance and Reform of Public Education in the United States." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 62:1 79-120.

Hoff, David J. 1999. "N.Y.C. probe levels test-cheating charges." *Education Week* 19(16):3.

Hoff, David J. 2000. "As stakes rise, definition of cheating blurs." *Education Week* 19(41): 1, 14-16.

Hoffer, T., Greeley, A.M., Coleman J.S. 1985. Achievement Growth in Public and Catholic Schools. *Sociology of Education*, 58:2 (April 1985) 74-97.

Hursh, David. 2005. "The Growth of High-Stakes Testing in the USA: Accountability, Markets and the Decline in Educational Equality." *British Educational Research Journal*, 31:5 605-622.

Iatarola, Patrice, Ammy Ellen Schwartz, Leanna Stiefel and Colin C. Chellman. 2008. Small Schools, Large Districts: Small-School Reform and New York City's Students." *Teachers College Record* 110:9 1837-1878.

Jacob, B. A. 2002. "Accountability, Incentives, and Behavior: The Impact of High-Stakes Testing in the Chicago Public Schools" (NBER Working Paper 8968). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Jacob, B. A., & Levitt, S. D. 2002. "Rotten Apples: An Investigation of the Prevalence and Predictors of Teacher Cheating." (NBER Working Paper 9413). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Jacob, Brian A. and Steven D. Levitt. 2003. "Rotten Apples: An Investigation of the Prevalence and Predictors of Teacher Cheating." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 118:3 843-877.

Jacobson, Stephen L. 1989. "The Effects of Pay Incentives on Teacher Absenteeism." *The Journal of Human Resources*. Spring (24-2) 280-286.

Jencks, Christopher and Meredith Phillips. 1998. *The Black-White Test Score Gap*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Johnson, Carol S. 2010. *History of New York State Regents Exams*. Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptive Report. Retrieved from: http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/46/4c/41.pdf

Johnston, Robert C. and M. Galley. 1999a. "Austin district charged with test tampering." *Education Week* 18(31):3.

Johnston, Robert C. and M. Galley. 1999b. "A Texas tempest: charges that officials adjusted test data." *Teacher Magazine* 10(8):16.

Johnston, Robert C. 1999. "Texas presses districts in alleged test-tampering cases. Investigation into high number of erased and corrected answers on state tests." *Education Week* 18 (27):22.

Kafka, Judith. 2008, "Thinking Big About Getting Small: An Ideological Genealogy of Small-School Reform." *Teachers College Record* 110:9 1802-1836.

Kao, Grace and Jennifer S Thompson. 2003. "Racial and Ethnic Stratification in Educational Achievement and Attainment." *Annual Review Sociology*, 29:417-442.

Kellaghan, Thomas, Madaus, George F., and Peter W. Airasian. 1982. *The Effects of Standardized Testing*. Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff Publishing.

Keller, Bess. 2001. "Dozens of Mich. schools under suspicion for cheating." *Education Week* 20(41):18- 30.

Keller, Bess. 2002. "Austin cheating scandal ends in no-contest plea, fine." *Education Week* 21(18):3.

Kilgore, Sally B and William W. Pendleton. 1993. "The Organizational Context of Learning: Framework for Understanding the Acquisition of Knowledge." *Sociology of Education*, 66:1 (January) 63-87.

Killeen, Kieran M. and John W. Sipple. 2005. Mandating Supplemental Intervention Services: Is New York State Doing Enough to Help All Students Succeed?" *Education Policy Analysis Achieves*, 13:19 Retrieved 9/15/2009 from <http://epaa.asu/epaa/v13n19>.

Kirkland, Marjorie C. 1971. "The Effects of Tests on Students and Schools." *Review of Educational Research*, 41(4): 303-350.

Kirkpatrick Johnson, Monica and Margaret Mooney Marini. 1998. "Bridging the Racial Divide in the United States: The Effect of Gender." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 61:3 (September) 247-258.

Klein, S. P., Hamilton, L. S., McCaffrey, D. F., & Stecher, B. M. (2000). "What do Test Scores in Texas Tell Us?" Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Klein, Susan S., Ortman, P. E., Campbell, P., Greenberg, S., Hollingsworth, S., Jacobs, J., Kachuck, B., McClelland, A., Pollard, D., Sadker, D., Sadker, M., Schmuck, P., Scott, E., and Joanne Wiggins. 1994. "Continuing the Journey Toward Gender Equity." *Educational Researcher*, 23:08 (November) 13-21.

Kohn, Alfie. 2000. "Burnt at the high stakes." *Journal of Teacher Education* 5(4):315-27.

Koretz, D. 1992. "State and national assessment." In *Encyclopedia of Educational research edited by M. C. Alkin*, (6th ed., pp. 1262–1267). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Koretz, D. 2003. Using multiple measures to address perverse incentives and score inflation. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 22(2), 18–26.

Koretz, D. M., & Deibert, E. 1993. "Interpretations of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Anchor Points and Achievement Levels by the Print Media in 1991." Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Koretz, D. M., Linn, R. L., Dunbar, S. B., & Shepard, L. A. 1991. "*The Effects of High Stakes Testing on Achievement: Preliminary Findings about Generalization Across Tests.*" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

- Kornhaber, M.L. & Orfield, G. 2001. "High Stakes Testing Policies: Examining Their Assumptions and Consequences." In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.
- Kozol, Jonathan. 1991. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York: Harper.
- Ladd, H. F. 1999. "The Dallas School Accountability and Incentive Program: An evaluation of its impacts on student outcomes." *Economics of Education Review*, 18, 1–16.
- Lareau, Annette. 1987. "Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Cultural Capital." *Sociology of Education*, 60:02 (April) 73-85.
- Lawler, Edward E. 1971. *Pay and Organizational Effectiveness*. New York: McGraw Hill Publishing.
- Lemann, Nicholas. 1999. *The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Linn, R. L. 2000. "Assessments and accountability." *Educational Researcher*, 29(2), 4–16.
- Mabry, Linda & Margolis, J. 2006. "NCLB: Local Implementation and Impact in Southwest Washington State." *Education Policy Analysis Achieves*, 14:23. Retrieved 9/15/2009 from <http://epaa.asu/epaa/v14n23>.
- McNeil, L. M. (2000). Creating new inequalities: Contradictions of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 81 729–734.
- McNeil, Linda and Angela Valenzuela. 2001. "The Harmful Impact of the TAAS System of Testing in Testing." In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.
- Medina, Jennifer. 2009. "N.Y. Senate Renews Mayor's Power to Run Schools." *New York Times* 8/7/2009 p. 1.
- Medina, Jennifer. 2010a. "Fewer Public School Teachers Receive Tenure." *New York Times* 7/30/2010 p 19.
- Medina, Jennifer. 2010b. "Progress Slow in City Goal to Fire Bad Teachers." *New York Times* 2/24/2010 p 1.

Miller, Gary J. 1992 *Managerial Dilemmas: The Political Economy of Hierarchy*. Cambridge Canada: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, Richard I. 1988. "Merit Pay in United States Postsecondary Institutions." *Higher Education* 17:2 219-232.

Moore, William P. 1994. "The Devaluation of Standardized Testing: One District's Response to a Mandated Assessment." *Applied Measurement of Education* 7:4, 343-367.

Murnane, Richard J. and D.K. Cohen. 1986. "Merit Pay and the Evaluation Problem: Why Most Merit Pay Plans Fail and a Few Survive." *Harvard Educational Review* 56:1 (Feb) 1-17.

Natriello, Gary and A.M. Pallas. 2001. "The Development and Impact of High-Stakes Testing." In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.

Neill, M., & Gayler, K. 2001. "Do high-stakes graduation tests improve learning outcomes? Using state-level NAEP data to evaluate the effects of mandatory graduation tests." In *Raising Standards or Raising Barriers? Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education* edited by Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber. New York: The Century Foundation Press.

New York City Department of Education. Retrieved 1/31/2010:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/default.htm>

New York City Department of Education. 2010. "Educator Guide: The New York City Progress Report." Retrieved 4/21/2011:

http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/DF48B29F-4672-4D16-BEEA-0C7E8FC5CBD5/92487/EducatorGuide_HS_2010_11_04.pdf

New York State Education Department, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs. *History of Regents Examinations, 1865 – 1987*. Albany: The State Education Department, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs, 1987. Retrieved 2/15/2010 at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/hsgen/archive/rehistory.htm>.

New York State Education Department. 2010. "Teacher Tenure Hearing (3020a)." Retrieved September 10, 2010.

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/employeremployee.html>

New York State Education Department. 2010. "Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests, and Second Language Proficiency Examinations, School Administrator's Manual, 2008 Edition." Retrieved November 10, 2010.

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/osa/sam/secondary/section3.html#rep>

New York State Education Department. 2010. "The New York State Report Card: Accountability and Overview Report 2009-2010." Retrieved 4/21/2011 at: <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-external/2010statewideAOR.pdf>

Newman, Katherine S. and Margaret M. Chin. 2003. "High Stakes: Time Poverty, Testing, and the Children of the Working Poor." *Qualitative Sociology* 26:01 (Spring) 3-34.

Otterman, Sharon. 2009. "Teachers at Some Low Performing Schools Get Bonuses." *New York Times* 11/20/2009 p 1.

Otterman, Sharon. 2010. "Confusion on Where City Students Stand." *New York Times* 7/30/2010 p 19.

Otterman, Sharon. 2010. "City gives out Fewer A's in High School Review." *New York Times* 11/4/2010 p 23.

Paris, Scott G., Lawton, Theresa A., Turner, Julianne C. and Jodie L. Roth. 1991. "A Developmental Perspective on Standardized Achievement Testing." *Educational Researcher*, 20:05 (June-July) 12-20+40.

Pilotin, Marc. 2010. "Finding a Common Yardstick: Implementing a National Student Assessment and School Accountability Plan Through State-Federal Collaboration." *California Law Review* 98 545-574.

Porter, Andrew C., Chester, Mitchell D., and Michael D. Schlesinger. 2004. "Framework for an Effective Assessment and Accountability Program: The Philadelphia Example." *Teachers College Record*, 106:6 (June) 1358-1400.

Pyke, Nicholas. 1999. "The Times Educational Supplement." *TSL Education Limited*, 43:24 (May) 4.

School Administrators Association of New York State. "Principal Tenure: What is it and How Does it Affect Education in New York State." Retrieved 5/31/2010. (<http://www.saanys.org/uploads/content/TenureQandA.pdf>).

Semel, Susan E. and Alan R. Sadovnik. 2008. "The Contemporary Small-School Movement: Lessons from the History of Progressive Education." *Teachers College Record* 110:9 1744-1771.

Sewell, William H. 1964. "Community of Residence and College Plans." *American Sociological Review*, 29:01 (February) 24-38.

Sewell, William H. 1971. "Inequality of Opportunity for Higher Education." *American Sociological Review*, 36:05 (October) 793-809.

Sewell, William H., Archibald O. Haller, and George W. Ohlendorf. 1970. "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process: Replication and Revision." *American Sociological Review*, 35:1014-27.

Sewell, William H., Archibald O. Haller, and Alejandro Portes. 1969. "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process." *American Sociological Review*, 34:82-92.

Shaul, Marnie S. & Ganson, H.C. 2005. "The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: The Federal Government's Role in Strengthening Accountability for Student Performance." *Review of Research in Education*, Vol. 29: Special Issue on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act at 40: Reviews of Research, Policy Implementation, Critical Perspectives, and Reflections. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Shepard, L. A., & Dougherty, K. C. 1991. "Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Instruction." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association and National Council on Measurement in Education, Chicago.

Shipp, Dorothy and Monica White. 2009. "A New Politics of the Principalsip? Accountability –Driven Change in New York City." *Peabody Journal of Education* 84 350-373.

Sipple, John W. and Kieran M. Killeen. 2004. "Context, Capacity, and Concern: A Direct-Level Analysis of the Implementation of Standards-Based Reform in New York State." *Educational Policy*, 2004 18:3 (July) 456-490.

Sipple, John W., Kieran Killeen and David H. Monk. 2004. Adoption and Adaption: School District Response to State Imposed Learning and Graduation Requirements." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 26:2 143-168.

Sloan, Finbarr C. and Anthony E. Kelly. 2003. "Issues in High Stakes Testing Programs." *Theory Into Practice* 42:1 12-17.

Smarick, Andrew. 2010. "Advancing Performance Pay in the Obama Administration: The Influence of Political Strategy and Alternative Priorities." (PEPG Working Paper 10-04). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School

Smith, Mary Lee. 1991. "Put to the Test: The Effects of External Testing on Teachers." *Educational Researcher* 20:05 (June-July) 8-11.

Smith, Thomas M. and Kristie J. Rowley. 2005. "Enhancing Commitment or Tightening Control: The Function of Teacher Professional Development in an Era of Accountability." *Educational Policy* 19:1 (January and March) 126-154.

Swanson, Christopher. 2005. "Organizational Coupling, Control and Change: The Role of Higher-Order Models of Control in Educational Reform." In The Social Organization of Schooling edited by Larry V. Hedges and Barbara Schneider. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Traver, Amy. 2006. "Institutions and Organizational Change: Reforming New York City's Public School System." *Journal of Education Policy* 21:5 497-514.

Tyack, David. 1974. *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tyack, David and Larry Cuban. 2001. "Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform." In *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education* edited by Jeanne H. Ballantine and Joan Z. Spade. Connecticut: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, *No Child Left Behind: A Desktop Reference*, Washington D.C., 2002.

Valenzuela, Angela. 1999. *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Waller Willard. 1961. *The Sociology of Teaching*. New York: Russell and Russell.

Walters Barnhouse, Pamela. 2001. "Educational Access and the State: Historical Continuities and Discontinuities in Racial Inequality in American Education." *Sociology of Education*, 2001 Sociology of education Extra Issue Pp.35-49.

Warren, John Robert, Krista N. Jenkins and Rachael B. Kulick. 2006. "High School Exit Examinations and State-Level Completion and GED Rates, 1975 Through 2002." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 28:2 131-152.

Weick, Karl E. 1976. "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21:1 (March) 1-19.

Whyte, William Foote. 1955. *Money and Motivation: Analysis of Incentives in Industry*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

Winfield, L. F. 1990. "School competency testing reforms and student achievement: Exploring a national perspective." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 12, 157-173.

Wong, Kenneth K. 2006. "The Political Dynamics of Mayoral Engagement in Public Education." *Harvard Educational Review* 76:2, 164-177.

Wong, Kenneth K. and Francis X. Shen. 2007. "Mayoral Leadership Matters: Lessons Learned From Mayoral Control of Large Urban School Systems." *Peabody Journal of Education* 82:4 737-768.

Zlatos, B. 1996. "The Texas Ranger of Testing." *The Executive Educator* 18:27-29.