Project Exc-EL
(Excellence for English Learners)

Project Year 4 /
Evaluation Year 3 Report

September 2017

Prepared for:
UCLA Center X, Northeast Region
40 Lindeman Drive, Suite 200
Trumbull, CT 06611
Laureen Avery
Tel: 203-365-8914
Fax: 203-365-8947
Email: avery@gseis.ucla.edu

Prepared by:
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC
34 North Granada Street
Arlington, VA 22203
Dr. Ryoko Yamaguchi
Tel: 703-243-4780
Email: ryamaguchi@plusalpharesearch.com
Web: www.plusalpharesearch.com

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Exc-EL (Excellence for English Learners) is an intervention developed to support the academic achievement and post-secondary success of students who are learning English as a new language (ELs). In New York State, students whose families speak a language other than English in their homes are eligible for English as a New Language (ENL) supports until they are able to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. Project Exc-EL focuses on current ELs as well as students who have demonstrated proficiency but were classified in the past.

Project Exc-EL intends to ensure that all ELs stay in school and graduate, and focuses on the middle and high school EL students. The core philosophy is one of enriched activities and wrap around supports focused on success, college/career readiness and high school completion. Individualized, personalized learning plans and a tiered system of interventions will be used to track and adjust student activities.

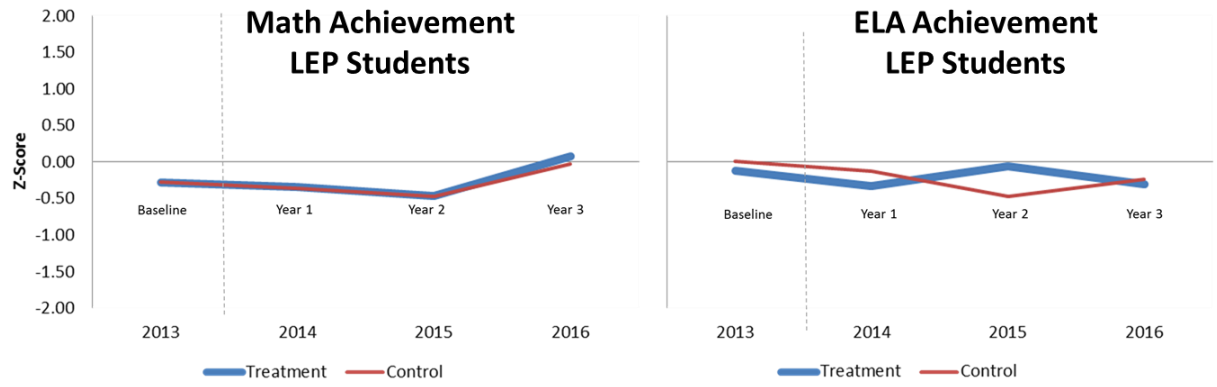
Project Exc-EL is developing and implementing an enhanced, comprehensive design that will address the unique and urgent needs of low-incidence EL population school districts – districts that are struggling to provide a comprehensive, rigorous education for the newest members of their communities. The project employs a data-driven, tiered approach to instruction that builds on community partnerships to create personalized, expanded learning opportunities for students.

External evaluators are conducting ongoing impact and implementation studies to ascertain the potential outcomes of the project and gauge the fidelity of implementation (FOI) of the project. The confirmatory evaluation questions include whether Project Exc-EL increases EL student achievement in math and English Language Arts (ELA), and how the program was implemented across four schools.

This report covers exploratory impact findings and implementation study results from the fourth project year. For the impact findings, we looked at four years of data and conducted a series of descriptive statistics (statistical analyses will be conducted in the last year of the grant). We successfully matched and created a group of 16 comparison schools, and graphed the math and ELA scores.

In math achievement among English learners, we saw a very slight increase in math achievement among the treatment schools in the 2015-2016 school year. In English language arts (ELA) achievement among English learners, the gains shown in Year 2 (2014-2015) have slipped by Year 3 (2015-2016), where the comparison schools are showing slightly higher ELA achievement scores among their English learners as compared to the treatment schools. See Figure ES-1.

Figure ES-1: Exploratory Descriptive Results



The project developer implemented ExcEL with fidelity in the fourth year of implementation. However, there are concerns regarding both a lack of momentum and fragmentation of the project at some of the schools involved as the final project year begins. Project findings and recommendations also include:

- The core work of project Year 4 / evaluation Year 3 ostensibly focused on implementing Dynamic Language Learning Progressions (DLLP) as a follow-up to the Summer Institute training provided in August, 2016. However, across the 4 treatment schools, the level of DLLP implementation seems to have lost momentum. At the school level, the larger project implementation has also lost some energy and focus as the third implementation year ended.
- All 4 project schools have core Project Exc-EL Professional Learning Community teams in place, but the number of team members and the diversity of the members (in terms of a broad range of school staff—general education, ENL, administrators, counselors, etc.) seems to have dropped at some of the schools. While some schools report diverse teams meeting regularly to meet EL student needs using Exc-EL core concepts, others report that only a few staff members meet a few times per school year.
- Project staff, partners, and participants indicated that enhanced communications between community partners and teachers have proven beneficial to providing continuous and consistent wraparound supports to students.
- As was reported in the prior year's evaluation report, it is unclear, from implementation data collections, when some personalized learning structures or environments (e.g., student advisory programs, personalized learning plans, etc.) will be implemented at all of the four project schools to serve all ENL students. Planning for these supports and several pilot programs are still ongoing at some schools as the project enters its final year of implementation.
- School and district staffing changes have continued to occur; as these have taken place, Project Exc-EL developers have worked to consistently maintain contact with new school and district leaders to ensure support and collaboration. These efforts have been met with

varying levels of success, since the level of engagement at the district and school leadership levels has waned over the 2016-2017 project year for some of the project schools.

- Moving into project year 5, implementation efforts are fragmenting, as some schools don't yet feel prepared to implement various project components, while others have implemented strategies and look forward to sustaining project components beyond the end of grant funding. As such, recommendations focus on prioritizing project activities and transitioning core components to ensure continuity of services.

As schools initiate their final year of Project Exc-EL (2017-2018 SY), we recommend that schools focus their project efforts by answering the following questions while considering the mediators and outcomes in the project logic model (p. 6):

- What Exc-EL components are too valuable to lose? How will we sustain them?
- What Exc-EL components have we not implemented fully that data tells us our EL students most need? How will we keep these moving forward?
- What Exc-EL components are we committed to developing over the long term?

1 PROJECT EXC-EL EVALUATION BACKGROUND

1.1 PROJECT EXC-EL KEY COMPONENTS

The University of California at Los Angeles' Center X applied for and received funding for Project Exc-EL (Excellence for English Learners) via an Investing in Innovation (i3) Development Grant in 2013. Project Exc-EL is a school-wide initiative that features 3 key components:

- School climate and structures to support college and career readiness;
- Teacher and staff training and technical assistance; and
- Data-driven systematic coaching.

These complementary components are designed to improve the college readiness rates and overall student outcomes of ELs. The college readiness rates of ELs are low when compared to the general population. ELs also lag behind academically resulting in significant achievement gaps. To better support EL students and their families, as they prepare to graduate from high school and enter college, Project Exc-EL is developing a school-wide initiative.

School climate and structures to support college and career readiness

Each school participating in Project Exc-EL has school coaches who help to provide leadership and guidance on creating a school-wide college-ready culture. Potential topics of the coaching sessions include co-teaching, personalized learning structures or environments, scheduling for teacher development and planning time, and parent engagement and reducing achievement gaps with additional wraparound student and family supports from both the school and community partners. Project Exc-EL developers have assembled a partnership consisting of community organizations positioned to provide additional supports, such as tutoring, financial aid and college application assistance, and parent/family supports and training. These partners are focused on providing wrap-around supports to EL students and their families to further ensure that these students are college-ready.

Teacher and staff training and technical assistance

Project Exc-EL provides teachers and other school staff with specific training, including topics such as classroom instructional support and intervention (i.e., Response to Intervention [RtI] and Dynamic Language Learning progressions [DLLP]). These trainings have been tailored to teaching and meeting the learning needs of EL students.

Data-driven systematic coaching

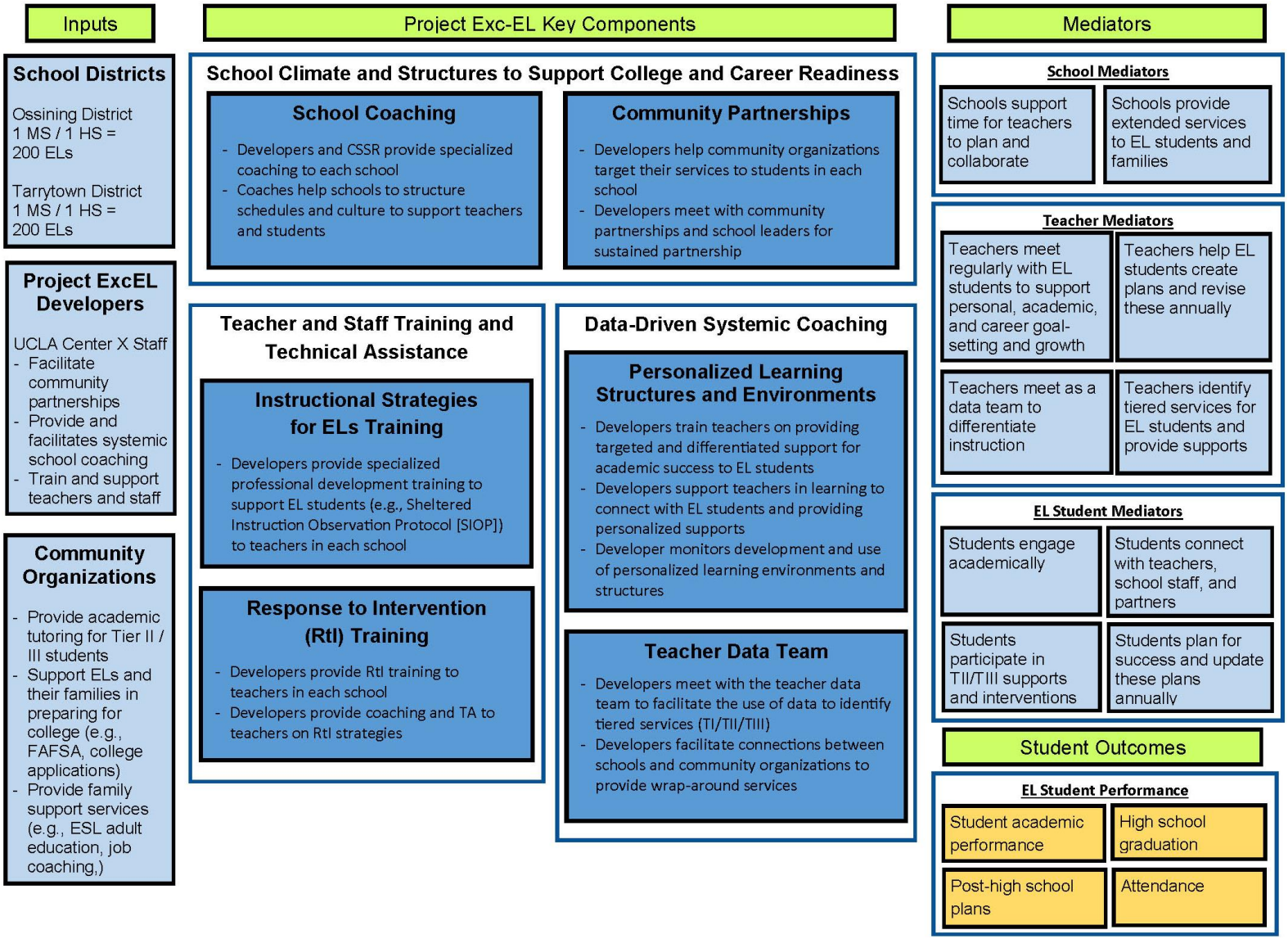
Project Exc-EL works with teachers and school staff grouped in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to review EL student data and provide more direct one-on-one supports to EL students and collaborative planning for co-teaching. PLCs meet regularly to discuss each student and identify areas of additional support needed.

1.2 PROJECT EXC-EL LOGIC MODEL

The evaluation team worked with the developer and the evaluation technical assistance provider to refine and further develop the project logic model contained in the grant application. The resulting logic model codifies the project and is available in Figure 1 below.

- Project *Inputs* are listed in the left column of the logic model and include resources, staff, and partners necessary to implement the project.
- The center column features the *Project Exc-EL Key Components* or core features of Project Exc-EL. Key components are the ideas and concepts that form the core of Exc-EL; these are intended to affect educational practice at the school level. Each key component was used to develop fidelity of implementation (FOI) indicators and definitions of these indicators (see Appendix A). The FOI study conducted as part of this evaluation focuses on the developer's actions in regards to the Key Components
- The right column, *Mediators*, lists the conduits or pathways that practices are expected to follow to ultimately manifest as *Student Outcomes*. The evaluation team used the student outcomes to discern which data would prove relevant to estimating the impact of Project Exc-EL over the life of the project.

Figure 1: Project Exc-EL Logic Model



1.3 EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Impact Study

Project Exc-EL is a school-level intervention focused on teacher training and development, school cultural changes, and teacher data teams. These key components are hypothesized to directly impact students who are learning English as a new language (ELs) as they prepare for college and indirectly impact all students in the schools. Four schools (2 middle schools and 2 high schools from 2 Westchester County, New York school districts) are implementing the intervention (treatment group).

The impact study features a quasi-experimental design (QED), wherein we will statistically match schools to be comparison group schools (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002) (see Appendix A for details). Therefore, we have four treatment schools, with a carefully matched comparison group of 16 schools (Becker, 2002; Dehejia & Wahba, 2002; Rosembaum, 1984). We compare the school outcomes of the 4 treatment schools to the 16 comparison schools on the following outcomes:

1. Math achievement for EL students in the schools,
2. Reading/ English achievement for EL students in the schools,
3. Overall school attendance.

To estimate the impacts, we first identified the comparison schools through propensity score matching techniques (See Appendix B for details). Then we conducted baseline equivalence testing to ensure that the treatment and comparison schools are similar on key outcomes one-year prior to the intervention. Our analytic approach is a short interrupted time series with a comparison group (C-ITS) design (Bloom, 2003).

For this report, we present interim descriptive findings of four points across the study sample: Baseline (2012-2013 school year), Year 1 Project Exc-EL (2013-2014 school year), Year 2 Project Exc-EL (2014-2015 school year), and Year 3 Project Exc-EL (2015-2016 school year). The final evaluation report will include Year 4 Project Exc-EL time point (2016-2017 school year).

Implementation Study

Plus Alpha worked with the project developer to design an implementation study that allows the flexibility needed for a development grant while ensuring that fidelity to the key project components is defined and assessed across the treatment group (Nelson et al, 2012). It is important to note that FOI measures the developer's actions in regards to the center area of the logic model, the Project Exc-EL Key Components. Measuring Project Exc-EL fidelity began with refining the project logic model provided in the original grantee application. This logic model was then used to guide the implementation study design. The logic model aligns with the management plan created by the developer and approved by the US Department of Education

(ED) Program Officer. Each key component consists of indicators of implementation, as can be seen in Appendix A in the Fidelity Matrices for each key component. We have provided the operational definition for each indicator as well. Protocols have been created (see Appendix C); each protocol item aligns with an indicator of implementation and therefore a key component. Each protocol item is designed to be scored either yes or no (0 or 1). Scores roll up to the school level and to the full sample. We will use the Fidelity Matrix to measure and assess fidelity for all components and indicators for each of the three years of implementation.

Implementation questions (IQ) guided the assessment of fidelity as follows:

- *IQ 1* Have the key components of Project Exc-EL been implemented with fidelity?
- *IQ 2* How has implementation varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components:
    - School climate and structures to support college and career readiness,
    - Teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and
    - Data-driven systemic coaching.

To guide data gathering in response to the implementation questions, a series of aligning documents were created to map from the project logic model to the project management plan objectives, strategies, and actions. A fidelity matrix has been designed to measure fidelity based on tangible developer-dependent activities and roles and score fidelity at both the school and treatment group levels (see Appendix A: Evaluation Methodology). Instruments and protocols have been created to obtain data annually from relevant project participants (see Appendix C: Implementation Study Protocols). Fidelity scoring and content analysis will be used to measure the FOI. Measuring fidelity is important, since it helps to better define and ascertain what implementing Project Exc-EL with high fidelity entails.

In addition to the above evaluation efforts, year 1 feedback from the developer, program officer, coaches, and a community partner indicated that site visits to the project schools would help to connect the evaluation effort to the project and build relationships between the schools and the evaluation team. As such, a site visit has been conducted in conjunction with the partner's meeting each year in September. The site visit brief that contains the most recent site visit feedback and findings (from September 2016) is included in Appendix D. The site visit brief was provided to the developer in October 2016 and served as additional formative feedback bridging year 2 and year 3.

2 FINDINGS

2.1 IMPACT STUDY

The impact study features the full sample of 4 treatment schools (2 middle and 2 high schools across 2 districts in New York) and 16 comparison schools (8 middle and 8 high schools across New York) for a total of 20 schools. The confirmatory analyses compare math and ELA achievement for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, using school report card data.[1] Our statistical analysis will be conducted in Year 5 of the grant, measuring the 4 year impact of Project Exc-EL. The final report in Year 5 of the grant will include 4 years (Years 1, 2, 3, and 4) of post-treatment data and 7 years of pre-test data, for a total of 11 time points.

This interim report features descriptive statistics of the 4 treatment schools, compared to the 16 comparison schools, for 4 time points:

- **Baseline**. The 2012-2013 school year, 1 year prior to implementing Project Exc-EL.
- **Year 1**. The 2013-2014 school year, the first year that the 4 treatment schools were implementing Project Exc-EL.
- **Year 2**. The 2014-2015 school year, the second year that the 4 treatment schools were implementing Project Exc-EL.
- **Year 3**. The 2015-2016 school year, the third year that the 4 treatment schools were implementing Project Exc-EL.

To ensure that the 16 comparison schools are similar, we conducted a series of analyses to ensure that we are comparing like to like, or 'apples to apples'. Similar schools are those schools in New York that are comparable demographically (i.e., percent LEP), academically (i.e., math and ELA performance of LEP students), and behavior (i.e., overall school attendance).[2]

In the following figures (2, 3, and 4), we provide descriptive line graphs for the baseline, Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 of the treatment and comparison schools. All achievement scores were converted into a standardized score (z-score), where zero is the mean. Scores above the mean (zero) denote test scores that are above the state average. Scores below the mean (zero) denote test scores that are less than the state average.

All outcomes for the confirmatory impact analyses met What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards for baseline equivalence; meaning, that we are indeed comparing 'apples to apples' between the treatment and comparison schools.

[1] School report card data is obtained through the New York State Department of Education, https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php

[2] According to the *What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards* (version 3.0), baseline equivalence is met if the effect size of key outcomes is less than .25 (i.e., comparing 'apples to apples'). Baseline equivalence is not met if key outcomes are over .25 (i.e., comparing 'apples to oranges'.)

Figure 2 shows the results from the descriptive statistics of math achievement for LEP students. At baseline, the treatment and comparison schools had similar math scores for LEP students, within the .25 threshold as specified by the WWC Standards. From baseline, we see some positive movement in Year 2 in both the treatment and comparison schools.

Figure 2: LEP Math Achievement

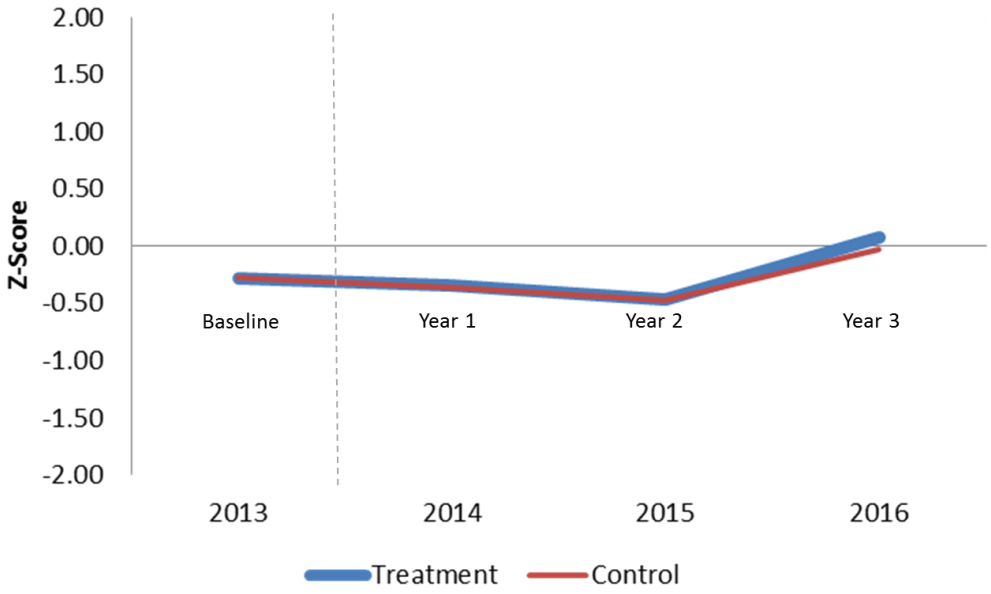


Figure 3 shows the results from the descriptive statistics of English Language Arts (ELA) achievement for LEP students. At baseline, the treatment and comparison schools had similar ELA scores for LEP students, within the .25 threshold. From baseline, we see some positive movement in Year 2 of Project Exc-EL, as compared to the comparison schools, but, by Year 3, this difference is negated. By Year 3, the treatment and comparison schools have similar ELA scores for LEP students.

Figure 3: LEP ELA Achievement

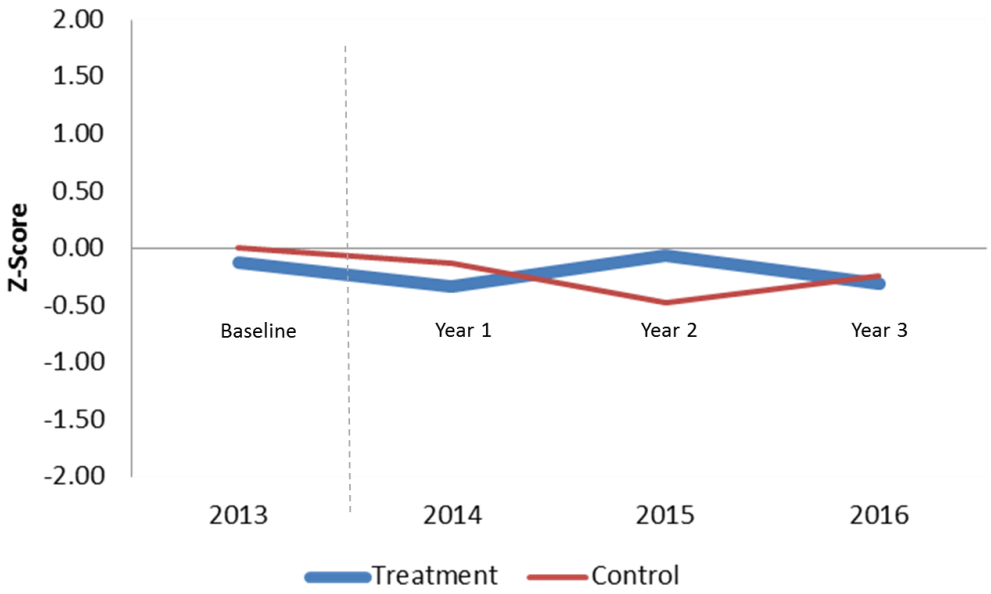
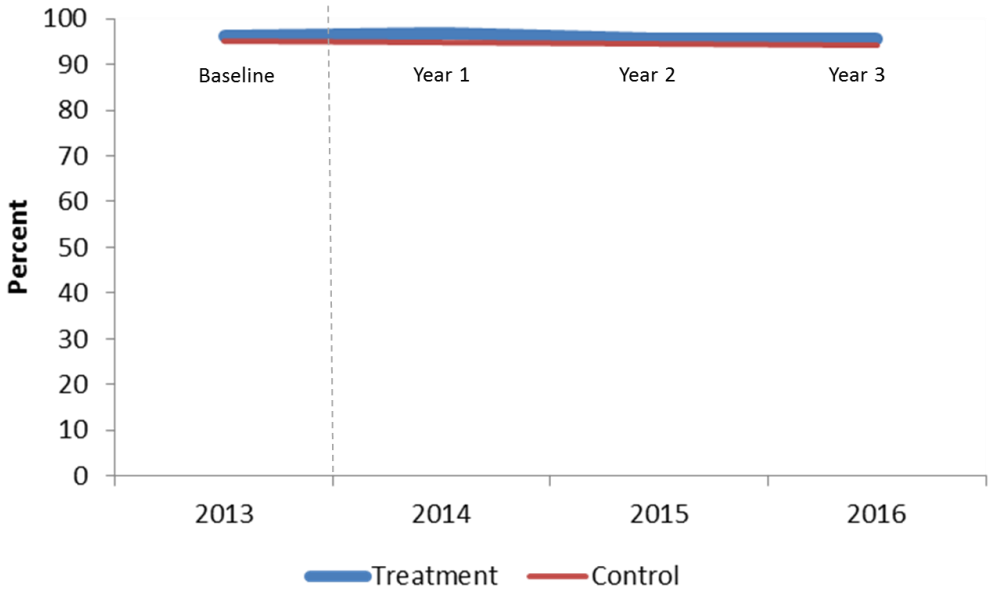


Figure 4 shows the results from the descriptive statistics of school attendance. School attendance is measured for all students; the school report card data does not differentiate or separate attendance for LEP students. As a measure of the whole school, not just for LEP students, we see that at baseline, the treatment and comparison schools had similar attendance rates for all students, within the .25 threshold. From baseline, we see attendance remaining high at the 95-97% level across all schools in the sample, with little difference between the treatment and comparison schools.

Figure 4: School attendance



Descriptive Exploratory Findings by Middle and High Schools

This section shows the descriptive statistics of the exploratory analyses, where we look at the middle and high school data separately. Given the small sample size, 2 treatment schools and 8 comparison schools, it is important to note that these results are intended merely to provide data to help schools generate hypotheses and explore additional questions to improve the program and school.

In conducting baseline equivalence to ensure that we are comparing 'apples to apples', some outcomes did not meet the WWC baseline equivalence threshold of .25 or lower. For key outcomes, particularly for high schools, we found that the effect size at baseline was over .25, suggesting that the treatment and comparison schools are different from the start.

For the middle school exploratory analyses, all outcomes met the baseline equivalence criteria. The outcomes for middle school includes math achievement and ELA achievement for LEP

students and attendance. Baseline equivalence was less than .25 effect size for these three outcomes.

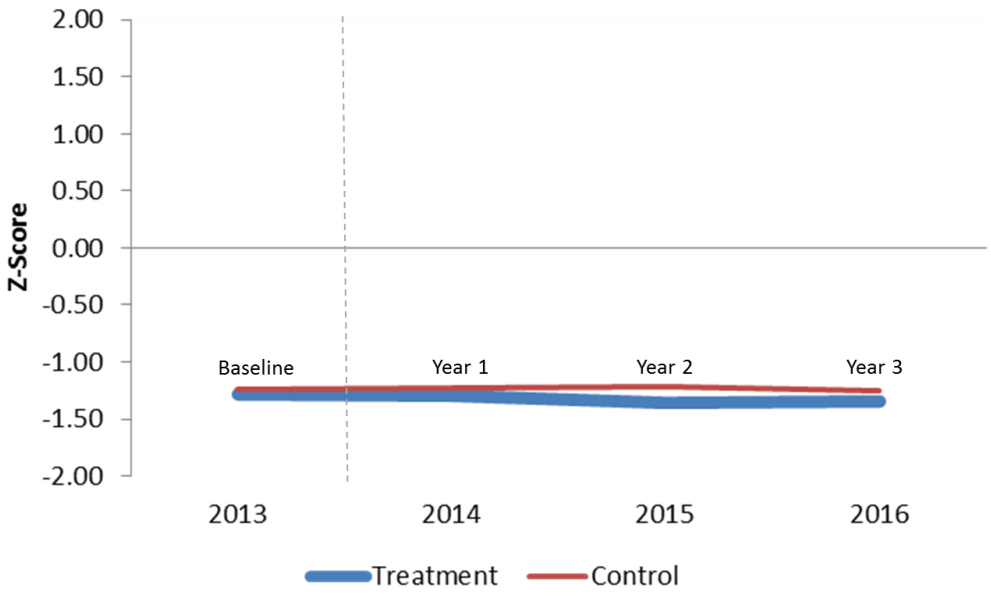
For the high school exploratory analyses, we were not able to meet baseline equivalence on ELA (Regents English exam) for LEP students, and 2- and 4-year college plans for the general education students.[3] For ELA achievement for LEP students, the effect size was -.29. For 2-year college plans for all students, the effect size was -.31. For 4-year college plans for all students, the effect size was .35. These outcomes are above the .25 effect size threshold of the WWC Standards. We were able to meet baseline equivalence for math (Regents Algebra exam) for LEP students and Regents diploma for the general education students.[4]

Descriptive Results for the Middle School Sample

In middle school, we have math scores for LEP students, ELA scores for LEP students, and school attendance rates for all students.

Figure 5 shows the descriptive results for math for LEP students. In Year 2, we were seeing a downward trend in math for the treatment schools, while we were seeing an upward trend in the comparison schools. However, by Year 3, while the comparison schools are performing slightly better, the treatment schools are showing improvement.

Figure 5: Middle School LEP Math Achievement



[3] School report card data does not disaggregate 2- and 4-year college plans by LEP sub-groups.
[4] School report card data does not disaggregate Regents diploma by LEP sub-groups.

Figure 6 shows the descriptive results for ELA for LEP students. There are no differences in the treatment and comparison schools across the treatment years.

Figure 6: Middle School LEP ELA Achievement

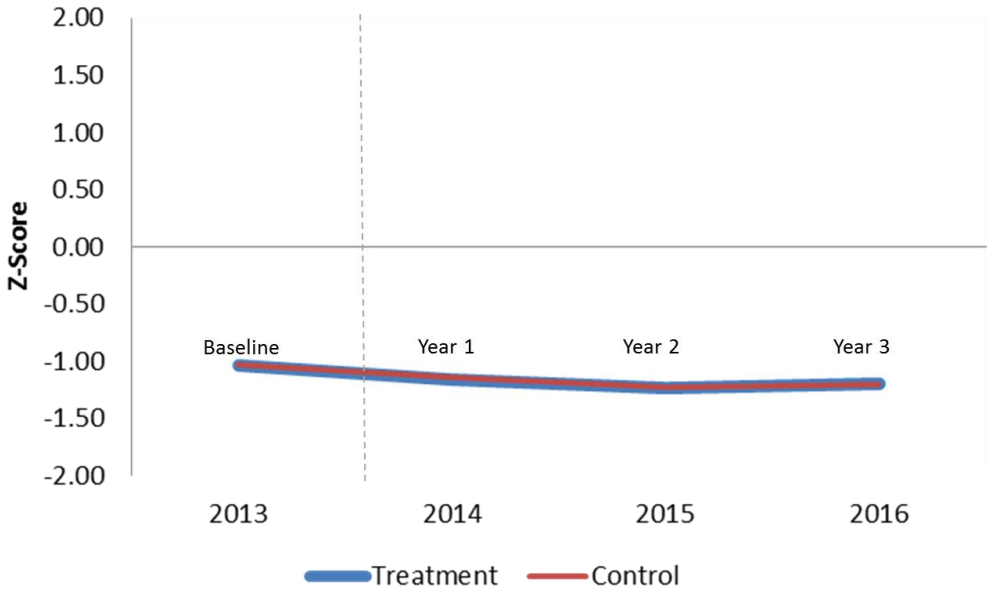
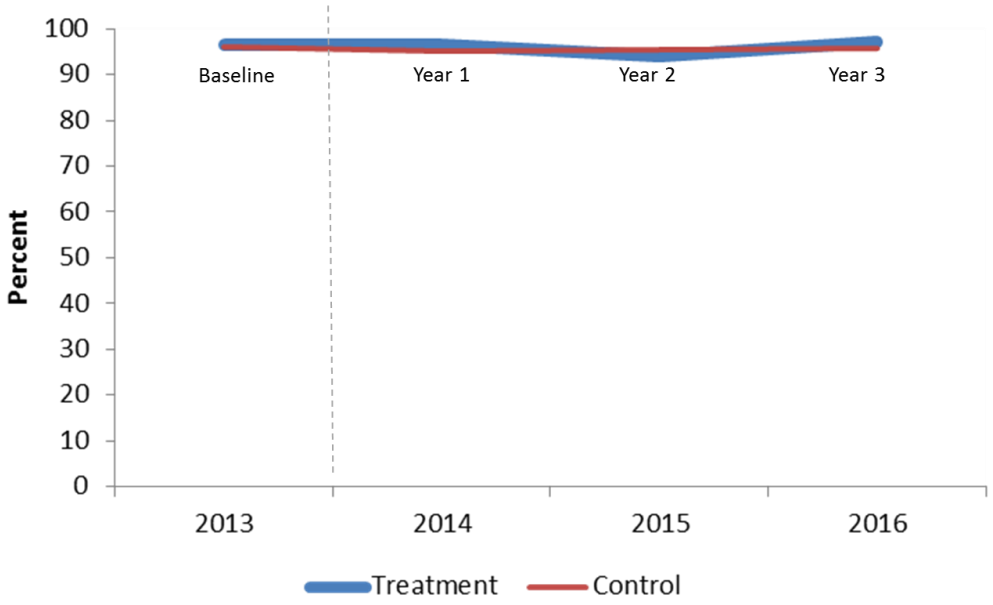


Figure 7 shows the descriptive results for attendance for LEP students. There is no difference in attendance between the treatment and comparison schools, where both schools' attendance rates remain steady at 95-97% for the middle schools in the sample.

Figure 7: Middle School Attendance



Descriptive Results for the High School Sample

In high school, we have math scores for LEP students, ELA scores for LEP students, school attendance rates for all students, as well as college readiness measures such as:

- 2-Year College Plans
- 4-Year College Plans
- Regents Diploma
- Advanced Regents Diploma

For the high school sample, we have baseline equivalence in math achievement for LEP students, attendance for all students, Regents diploma for all students, and Regents with Advanced distinction. We did not meet baseline equivalence for ELA achievement for LEP students or for 2-year and 4-year college plans.

Figure 8 shows the descriptive results for math for LEP students. At baseline, the treatment and comparison schools are nearly identical in their math performance. In Year 1 and 2, there is a slight decrease in math achievement. By Year 3, there is an increase in math performance, but the increase looks higher for the treatment schools as compared to the comparison schools.

Figure 8: High School LEP Math Achievement

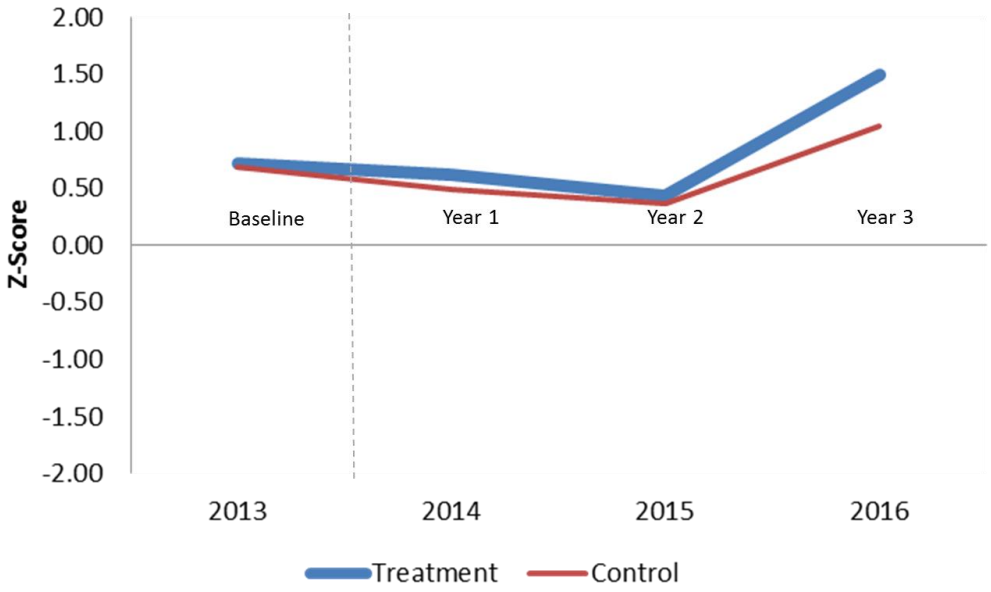
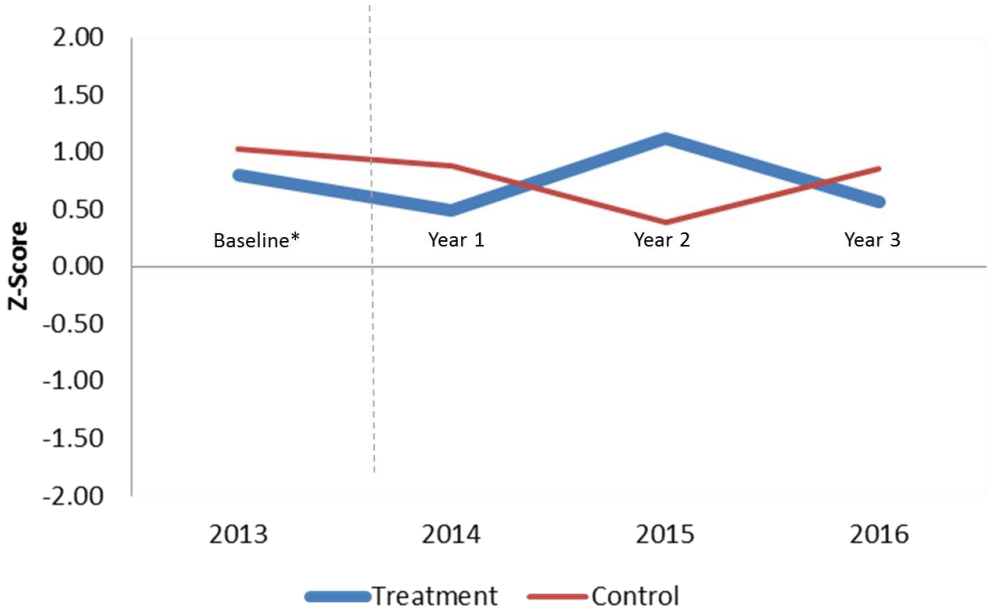


Figure 9 shows the descriptive results for math for LEP students. We were unable to establish baseline equivalence for this outcome. This means that 1 year prior to Project Exc-EL, the 8 comparison schools across New York were substantially different (above the .25 threshold) from the 2 treatment high schools. In Year 1, we see that the treatment and comparison schools had a decrease in ELA achievement for LEP students. Gains were made in the treatment schools in Year 2. However, the gains were lost by Year 3 in the treatment schools.

Figure 9: High School LEP ELA Achievement



Note: * denotes that the WWC standards for baseline equivalence between the treatment and control group was not met.

Figure 10 shows the descriptive results for school attendance. School attendance hovers between 94-97% across both the treatment and comparison schools.

Figure 10: High School Attendance

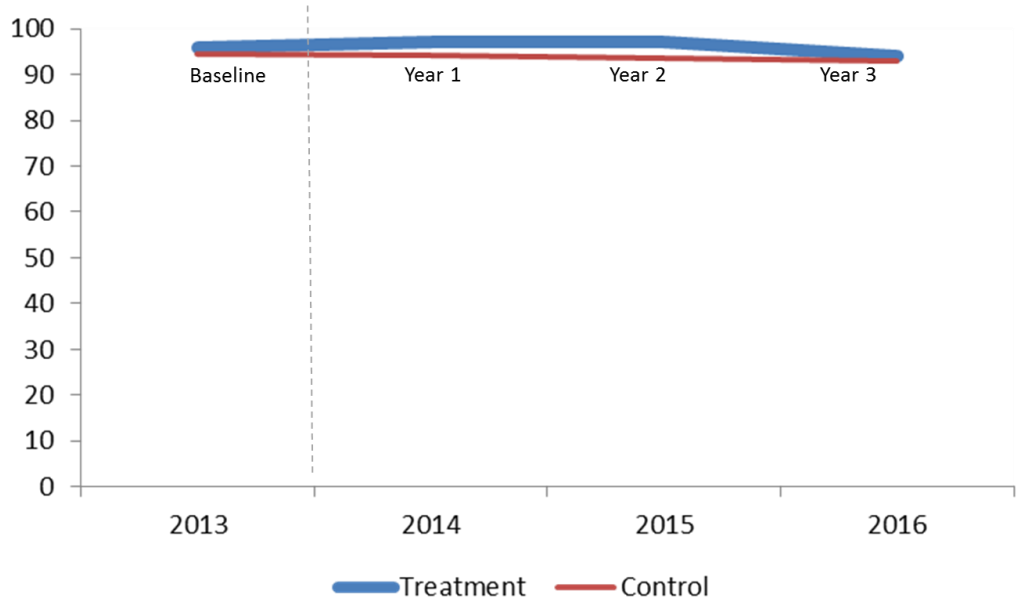
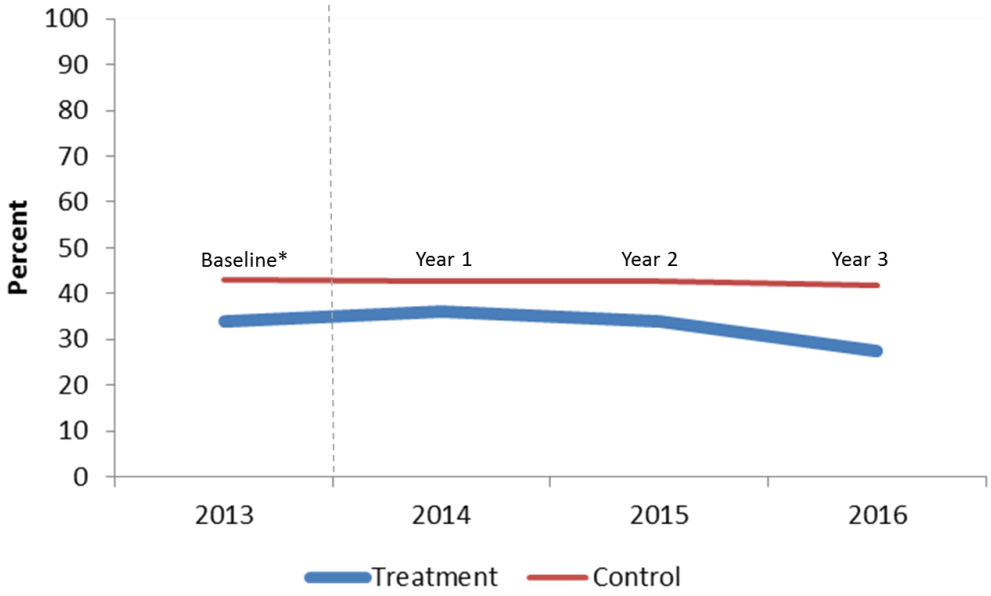


Figure 11 shows the descriptive results for 2-year college plans. As with school attendance, the school report card data only reports all students, general education students, and special education students; school report card data does not disaggregate to LEP students. Therefore, the data is focused on measuring the outcomes of all students. We were unable to establish baseline equivalence. This means that 1 year prior to Project Exc-EL, the 8 comparison schools across New York were substantially different (above the .25 threshold) from the 2 treatment high schools. Currently, we are seeing no changes in the percent of students who indicated that they are planning to go to a 2-year college in the comparison schools, which hovers between 34-43%. There appears to be a slight decrease in 2-year college plans in the treatment schools.

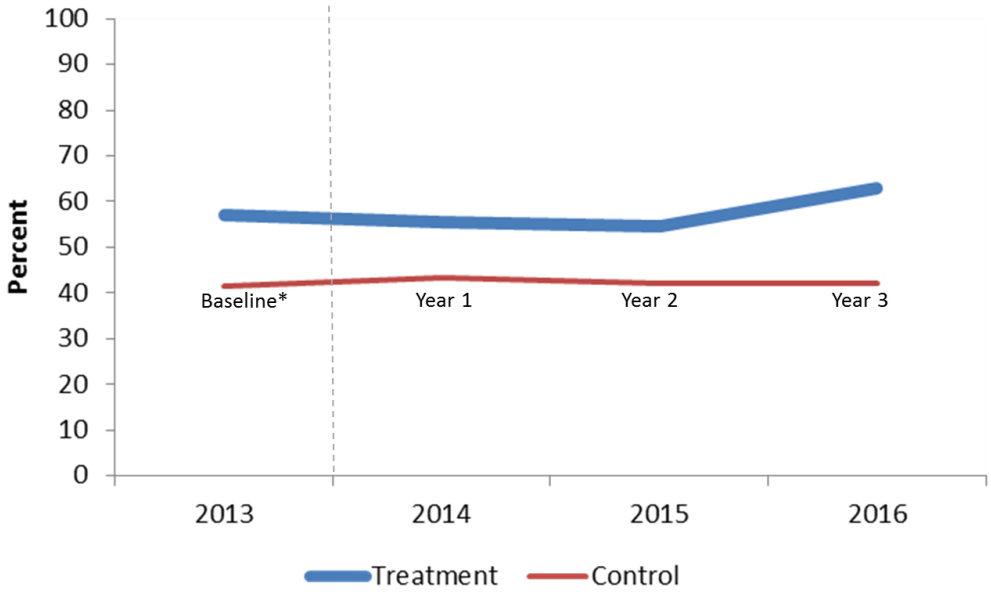
Figure 11: Two-Year College Plans



Note: * denotes that the WWC standards for baseline equivalence between the treatment and control group was not met.

Figure 12 shows the descriptive results for 4-year college plans. As with school attendance, the school report card data only reports all students, general education students, and special education students; school report card data does not disaggregate to LEP students. Therefore, the data is focused on measuring the outcome of all students. We were unable to establish baseline equivalence. This means that 1 year prior to Project Exc-EL, the 8 comparison schools across New York were substantially different (above the .25 threshold) from the 2 treatment high schools. Currently, we are seeing no changes in the percent of students who indicated that they are planning to go to a 4-year college in the comparison schools, while there seems to be an increase in students planning to go to a 4-year college in the treatment schools.

Figure 12: Four-Year College Plans



Note: * denotes that the WWC standards for baseline equivalence between the treatment and control group was not met.

Figure 13 shows the descriptive results for the Regents diploma. We were able to establish baseline equivalence, meaning that the eight comparison schools across New York were similar to the two treatment high schools. High school graduation rates hover between 93-94% across both the treatment and comparison schools.

Figure 13: Regents Diploma

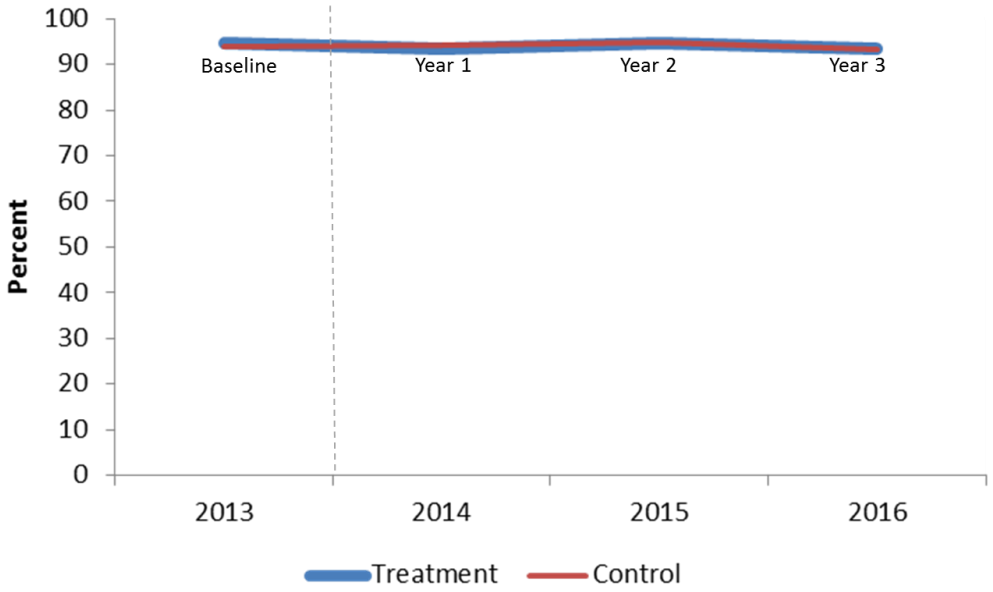
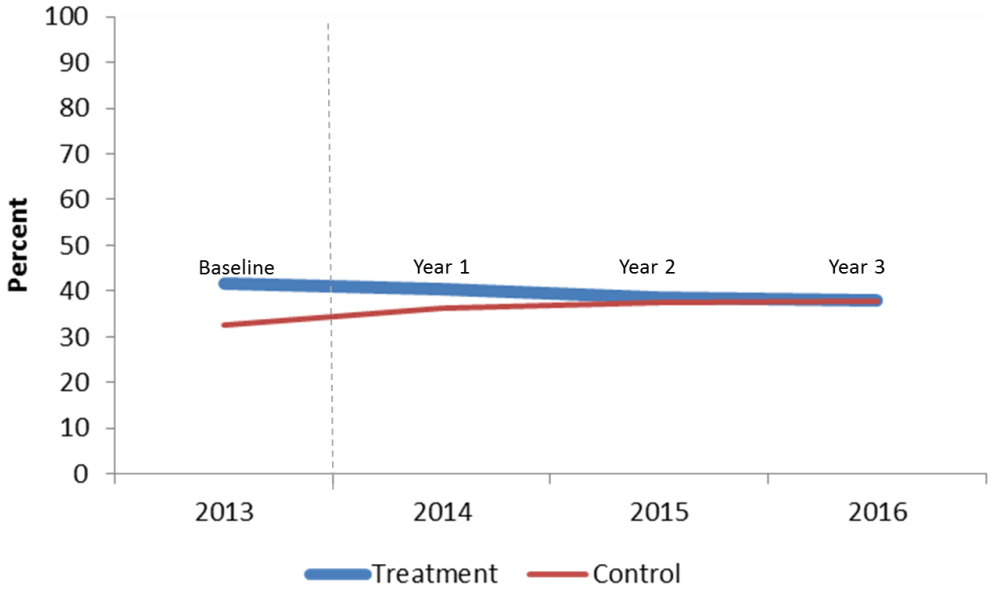


Figure 14 shows the descriptive results for the Advanced Regents diploma. We were able to establish baseline equivalence, meaning that the 8 comparison schools across New York were similar to the 2 treatment high schools. High school graduation rates hover between 32-41% across both the treatment and comparison schools.

Figure 14: Advanced Regents Diploma



2.3 IMPLEMENTATION STUDY

Based on the data collected, as outlined in Appendix A, the developer has implemented Project Exc-EL with fidelity. Fidelity indicators are based on developer-dependent roles and responsibilities, so a finding of implemented with fidelity indicates that the developer has implemented strategies and activities as outlined in the annual project management plan for project Year 3.

Figure 15: Project Exc-EL Year 3 Fidelity

Key Components on Logic Model	Definitions		Findings	
			2016-17 School Year	
	Definition of high implementation	Definition of "implementation with fidelity" at program level	Score as defined in the fidelity matrix (based on data collection during school yr)	"Implementation with fidelity" for year (calculated based on score in definition)
School climate and structures to support college and career readiness	Evidence of operational definitions as defined in the fidelity matrix	A score of 4	4	Yes
Teacher and staff training and technical assistance	Evidence of operational definition as defined in the fidelity matrix	A score of 1	1	Yes
Data-driven systemic coaching	Evidence of operational definition as defined in the fidelity matrix	A score of 1	1	Yes
Fidelity scores available for reporting (Month, Project Year)			August, 2017	

In addition to the FOI findings above, data collection activities also garnered significant information regarding implementation details from each school, each partner, each school coach, and the developer. Based on these data collection activities, the evaluation team was able to discern the core Project Exc-EL structures (Figure 16) early in the project.

Figure 16: Core Project Exc-EL Structures

Summer Training

An online Summer Institute survey was administered by the developer in June and July of 2016 at the individual school team member level. The questionnaire asked about each team member's attendance plans and potential contributions to the Summer Institute. There were 48 responses to the Project Exc-EL 2016 Summer Institute Registration survey, and 40 school and district staff and partners attended the summer training.

Ongoing School Coaching

In year 3, school coaching began at the project schools in August of 2016 and continued through July of 2017. The coaches (both UCLA and CSSR staff) worked with the project school teams in 27 coaching sessions that occurred approximately monthly throughout the remainder of project year.School team meetings and coaching sessions focused on instructional practices, RTI, and co-teaching observations.

Community Partnership and Management Team Meetings

The community partner and management team meetings serve as quarterly project update and planning sessions. During the community partner meetings, resources and supports needed by the project schools were discussed, and the group collaboratively works to meet these needs while also connecting Project Exc-EL to events, resources, and the needs of the broader community beyond the school campuses.

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 IMPACT STUDY

In project Year 1, we focused on creating a comparison group that met the *WWC Evidence Standards* criteria for the full sample of 4 treatment and 16 comparison schools across the state. In project Years 2-4 we are conducting a series of descriptive statistics to map and graph the school outcome data. We will not be conducting statistical analysis of the impact data until project Year 5 of the grant period.

Currently, we see a common trend in the descriptive results, where we are not seeing differences between the comparison and treatment schools in Year 3. For example, In the 2014-2015 school year (Year 2 of Project Exc-EL), the treatment schools showed higher ELA achievement among English learners, as compared to the 16 other comparison schools. Unfortunately, this gain was lost by the following year, in Year 3.

3.2 IMPLEMENTATION STUDY

Schools

Based on the school administrator/project team school lead, coach, and developer interviews and the school coaching activity form, it is evident that the schools have diverged in project Year 3, (project Year 4) more so than in years past.

- All 4 schools have project teams, but these teams vary in both size and composition. One school has a team composed of 2 members, both ENL teachers. Three schools have teams composed of 6-12 members per team. With the exception of the school with a team of 2 teachers, teams typically include core content area teachers, ENL teachers, and guidance counselors (in some cases, bi-lingual counselors). School administrators, school social workers, and additional student support staff are invited in on an as-needed basis. On average, teams have approximately 40 students assigned to their teachers. These students include ENL students at all levels of proficiency.
- While none of the schools have common-planning times, traditionally-defined as dedicated time during the school day for teams of teachers to meet to collaborate around meeting student needs, all 4 schools have structures in place that help to establish time for teachers to meet to work together. Three of 4 schools have Project Exc-EL teams meeting on a regular basis, with most schools meeting at least monthly. Most school team meetings take place after school, with stipends funded by grant monies. One school plans to fold the project team meetings into the department team meetings once grant funding ends. Two schools have centers for EL students and teachers who work with EL students to meet and gather to work together on a regular basis.
- All 4 schools participated in the Year 3 Summer Institute training conducted by UCLA staff.

- All 4 schools have been involved in leadership/management team meetings. However, school and district engagement in these meetings have been less consistent than in years past, as reported by school staff. One school reported that they no longer plan to attend these meetings due to the perceived lack of value of the meetings.
- All 4 schools have leveraged resources and supports from community partners. However, one school leader stated that community supports have not been used more because teachers are simply overwhelmed by their workload and existing requirements.
- A school leader stated that the community partnership meetings are, "…always great meetings to go to, the partners are very helpful." While another school leader feels that the partner meetings are, "…not as useful as they could be."
- School leaders stated that student involvement in the community partnership meetings has been a welcomed addition.
- School staff indicated that the new tutoring arrangements are an improvement over last year's and that community partners (Latino U and RSHM Life Center specifically) have worked more directly with the schools.
- Coaches stated that one district's schools connected during the Summer Institute and started a conversation regarding feeder schools, alignment, and expectations of student learning that grew over the past year.
- Most school staff members interviewed noted that Project Exc-EL—as embodied specifically by wraparound services for students and their families, co-teaching, and data-driven tiering of support services at school—is becoming integrated into both the processes of their schools and the culture of their schools' faculty.
- Coaches stated that all 4 schools have structures in place to identify, recognize, connect with, and assist EL students. The specific structures and practices in place differ, as does the effectiveness of these structures.
- Schools indicated that they have been piloting and rolling out personalized learning structures (i.e., student led conferences and mentor/mentee programs) to a larger number of students. Every school that has piloted student led conferences indicated that these would continue beyond the project funding due to the immediately recognized and inherently high value that the student led conferences have.
- Schools noted that they are increasing their services to parents, including bi-lingual offerings and services designed to assist parents of ENL students specifically. Parent Universities, workshops, and informational sessions are offered throughout the year. Similarly, school staff noted that community partners have expanded family and parent supports as well.
- School and project staff have presented at national conferences (AFT TEACH and the annual i3 Project Director's Meeting) to disseminate lessons learned from Project Exc-EL on both co-teaching and instructional practice.

Community Partners

Insights into the community partners were provided by the school administrator/project team school lead, coach, and developer interviews and the community partnership form.

- Resources provided by partners have included services (informational sessions, clinics, and trainings to students, parents, and teachers), and extended learning opportunities (i.e., scheduled tutoring sessions, mentoring, camps, and institutes serving students, parents, and school staff). Latino U has provided a wide array of college readiness and preparation services, sessions, and mentoring. RSHM Life Center continues to meet the needs of the immigrant community through legal information sessions for EL students and their families. Jacob Burns has provided students with unique hands-on learning opportunities.
- The tutoring program was transferred from one community partner to another in Year 2. Nearly all school staff stated that this has been beneficial, with tutoring sessions occurring regularly for students in both districts.
- FAFSA, college application, and immigrant information sessions have proven useful to students and their families.
- The timeliness of community partner supports has improved as communications between the partners and schools have continued to improve.

Coaches

Data regarding school coaching activities was gathered using the school administrator/project team school lead, coach, and developer interviews and the school coaching activity form.

- A total of 6 school coaches (including the developer) worked with the project schools in Year 3. These coaches facilitated the coaching sessions as part of school team meetings. Coaches included staff from UCLA's Center X (4) and CSSR (2).
- School coaches met and in some cases exceeded the requisite number of coaching sessions (a minimum of five sessions per school per year) provided to each project school. Coaches conducted 27 coaching sessions at the project schools.
- Coaching sessions typically occurred in tandem with school Project Exc-EL team meetings after school or as needed and requested by school project teams.
- Coaches noted that school project team meeting attendance has dwindled somewhat over the life of the project in many of the project schools. Coaches stated that maintaining project momentum and energy is difficult over the life of a 5 year project.
- Coaching topics often focused on instructional practice discussions, co-teaching observations and project planning sessions.
- Coaches stated that DLLP strategies provided at the SI have proven challenging to implement in the schools. While teams are discussing DLLP strategies, they have yet to implement them. Early confusion around DLLPs and state language progressions (i.e., that these were incompatible or duplicative) slowed implementation.

- Coaches indicated that few schools have fully implemented regular, thorough, RTI cycles (i.e., both tiering and subsequent interventions tailored to specific student needs) as presented as part of Exc-EL. When asked why, coaches noted that student data (the lens through which RTI asks teachers to observe students) can seem negative or present challenges that can seem daunting. As such, some teachers refocus on anecdotal or more positive student outcomes.
- School staff stated that, while they appreciated the presence of the coaches during team meetings, school team members had hoped for more direct instruction from coaches and a wider array of topical expertise.

Developer

The Project Exc-EL developer's roles, responsibilities, and leadership were addressed in every data collection protocol, including the community partnership forms, the community partner interviews, the developer interview, the school administrator/project team school lead interviews, the school coach interviews, the school coaching activity forms, and the miscellaneous event protocol.

- All school staff interviewed stated that Project Exc-EL has helped highlight the need for teachers to have time to collaborate, plan, and work together to bridge efforts to serve EL students.
- Two school staff members stated that interest in the project has waned somewhat because their teachers do not find the topics as timely or as applicable as they were early in the project. Both of these staff members requested more training on PLCs and a wider array of topical expertise.
- School staff noted that, while they enjoy the table-hopping sessions at the Summer Institutes, it is not clear that this strategy results in improvement to practice at the schools.
- All school leaders were asked what core project components they were prioritizing to ensure that they are sustained after the grant funding ends. While the specific responses were unique to each school PLCs and the time that they offer teachers to work together, after school student services (tutoring, clubs, etc.), student led conferences (at schools that have piloted them), and mentor/mentee structures were common features of school staff responses. Additionally, 2 schools noted that they are already working on school budgets to help cover core components of Exc-EL that have been deemed too valuable to lose.
- School team leaders from 2 schools stated that they do not always feel that their feedback is heard by the developer—they have concerns that there is a preconceived model of what will be offered that does not take into account the needs of the schools.
- Coaches and the developer expressed concerns regarding the apparent dearth of valuable cross-district exchanges and the fact that a greater number of stronger collaborative relationships have not developed heretofore.
- Development team members noted that some activities funded by the project grant monies (i.e., stipends, Saturday Academies, field trips, and summer programs) may prove difficult

for districts and schools to sustain beyond the life of the project, even though they have been well-received by EL students and the schools.

- As a result of developer, Program Officer, coach, and community partner feedback in Year 1, the external evaluators have conducted a school site visit at the beginning of each subsequent year. A brief was provided to the developer and is provided here in Appendix D.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 IMPACT STUDY

From the descriptive statistics, Year 3 showed an increase in math achievement and a decrease in ELA achievement. There appears to be no difference between the treatment and comparison schools. Year 4 will be the final year for analysis.

4.2 IMPLEMENTATION STUDY

During data collection activities, recommendations were collected from project participants and staff. As such, the bulk of the following recommendations are derived from this feedback.

Schools

School administrators / project team school leaders, coaches, and the developer, all provided relevant, useful, project feedback that may prove useful moving into project school Year 4.

- Coaches and school staff indicated that schools have had success with personalization activities that engage students on an individual basis. Growing student led conferences and student focus group activities may provide a clear path to more directly impacting and meeting the needs of struggling students and their families.
- School staff noted that 5 year grants are difficult to maintain, since energy and interest often decline. School leaders shared that 3-year grants with follow-ups evenly spaced beyond the original grant period may be more helpful. School leaders also wanted concrete targets for what they needed to have in place and when.
- Coaches, the evaluation team, and teachers all noted that interminable meetings and planning sessions are ineffective. Meetings (both at the schools as part of regular team meetings and as part of wide scale project management) must be concise, clearly delineated, have clear purpose(s), and should achieve the goal(s) set for them on a regular basis in a timely manner. This feedback applies equally at the school level and at the project level.
- School staff have identified core Exc-EL components that they are seeking strategies to sustain beyond the life of the grant. Additional brain-storming or planning may prove helpful to these efforts.

Community Partners

- Community partners stated that their work with project schools would continue for the most part due to the fact that their organizations were structured for this sort of assistance prior to

the grant. They also noted that Exc-EL has helped to strengthen their connectedness, contacts, and relationships with the project schools and teachers. One partner mentioned the need for future sustained funding, so further planning and partnering with Exc-EL and funders may benefit the partner organizations and the project schools beyond the life of the grant.

- The need for stronger connections, programmatic contacts, and relationships between the schools and Westchester Community College (WCC) came up during several interviews. Coaches, school staff, and district leaders have all lamented the fact that collaboration between WCC and area schools is not as strong as it could be, especially in light of the fact that, "…WCC is often the first step to college or career for EL students" in this area upon leaving high school (as recognized by school leaders and coaches).
- Community partners indicated that the value of the quarterly partnership meetings cannot be overstated. Linkages between the community organizations, resources, supports, the needs of students, teachers, and the needs of the community at large have all been created as a result of the Project Exc-EL quarterly partnership meetings. Community partners were unanimous in stating that they hoped that these meetings would continue beyond the end of Project Exc-EL.
- One community member noted that, as a result of Project Exc-EL, relationships have become more needs-based and more organic—if someone needs something, they know who to call, and what to ask for. However, the same community member also noted that this organic structure can prove weak in the face of staffing and leadership changes. As such, it may be necessary to expand the number of school staff involved in community partnership meetings (as advised by one school leader), and it may also be necessary to ensure that community partners also have plans for programmatic continuity and consistency of leadership given the high value of relationships and cross-organizational connectedness.
- The number of partners invited to meetings may need to grow in this last project year. For the work of Exc-EL to continue beyond the i3 grant and for partners to continue to work together, a wider range of partners may need to join forces to help energize and reinvigorate efforts. School staff noted that community development organizations, chamber of commerce representatives, county development officials, additional postsecondary partners, and additional faith-based partners may all aid the community's efforts to meet EL student and family needs.
- During an interview, one community partner made a relevant point regarding purpose and sustainability, "these services are necessary at this time with or without the grant". This idea of services being necessary with or without the grant may prove a useful filter as schools work to discern what Exc-EL components must be sustained.

Coaches

- Schools requested a wider range of topical experts and more engagement from coaches during team meetings. Future iterations of the project may need to tap into experts identified and assisted in the field during this first iteration of Exc-EL.
- Coaches recommended that this final year of the grant needs a clearly defined wind-down process that provides a sense of closure for school and district staff while invigorating local efforts to continue meeting the needs of EL students using ideas and practices learned from and attempted during Exc-EL.
- Coaches noted that school staff occasionally became 'bogged down' in semantics and the planning of details that might prove irrelevant if core project components don't come online. As a result, several coaches asked that teachers and school and district leaders refocus teaching efforts by focusing on outcomes (i.e., both the outcomes on the project logic model and the lifelong outcomes of the student under their tutelage).
- Coaches recommended adding new schools, new districts, or new activities and components as projects mature to maintain or even boost project momentum.

Developer

- School staff and coaches both noted that school improvement work cannot occur without the support and engagement of district leaders. While both project districts have had leaders engaged in different facets of Project Exc-EL, the Summer Institutes and the Exc-EL team meetings have seen a dwindling amount of support from district leaders over time. The winding down of Project Exc-EL provides an excellent opportunity for district leadership to pick up the mantle of EL student support.
- Coaches, the evaluation team, and teachers all noted that interminable meetings and planning sessions inevitably prove counterproductive. Meetings (both at the schools as part of regular team meetings and as part of wide scale project management) must be concise, clearly delineated, have clear purpose(s), and should achieve the goal(s) set for them on a regular basis in a timely manner. This feedback applies equally at the school level and at the project level.
- School staff and coaches noted that efforts to more strongly connect the two project districts have not been as successful as hoped. One coach noted that this may be due to the fact that there are few intrinsic reasons for two districts to aid one another as a matter of practice. Future Exc-EL efforts may benefit from less district-to-district sessions and more within-district offerings.
- Since the coaching role is a key component of the Exc-EL model, the level of engagement of coaches (e.g., in team meetings), the type of coaching provided (e.g., the depth or type of instruction, and the topical expertise of coaches may need to be more formally outlined stipulated going forward.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Impact Study Methodology

Project Exc-EL is a school-wide intervention designed to train teachers and counselors, facilitate teacher data teams, and provide school coaches. The intent of the project is to improve school supports and instruction to ultimately improve EL student outcomes. Because of the school-wide nature of the intervention, all teachers, counselors, and principals will eventually receive the treatment, and, in turn, all EL students will receive improved instruction and supports over the life of the project. Hence, the unit of intervention is the school.

The evaluation is a quasi-experimental design (QED), where the unit of analysis is the school-level. All data are collected from annual school report cards, where key outcomes include three domains: 1) achievement (math and ELA school performance), 2) behavior (attendance), and 3) college readiness (high school diploma, post-secondary plans). The developer identified the treatment schools (N = 4), and the evaluation team selected the comparison schools. There are no confounds. The treatment and comparison schools are from multiple districts, with multiple schools within the treatment and comparison conditions. Characteristics of the treatment and comparison schools are similar, except for the use of Project Exc-EL in the treatment condition. Time is not a confound since all pre- and post-test data are collected from school report cards from the same years for the treatment and comparison schools.

As indicated in Exhibit 1, school level data will be obtained for the years 2007 through 2017. School assessment scores, as well as school demographic information, are all publicly available through the school report cards as part of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) annual public reporting. In our review of the data, we have discerned that we will be able to obtain data from as early as the 1998-1999 school year. This data is consistent, in terms of reporting key school demographic information and assessment scores, starting in the 2006-2007 school year. Therefore, our pre-intervention data will begin in 2006-2007. Exhibit 1 indicates the years that are pre-treatment and treatment years for the treatment schools.

Given the multiple years of school-level data, starting with the 2006-2007 school year through the 2016-2017 school year (11 years of data), our analytic approach is a short interrupted time series with a comparison group (C-ITS) design (Bloom, 2003). We will have seven years of baseline data, and up to four years of post-intervention data.

Investing in Innovation (i3) grants are awarded by calendar years. This project started in the calendar year of 2014 and goes through December 2018. Year 1 implementation is the 2013-2014 school year. We expect to be able to download administrative school-level data from New

York State Department of Education up to the 2016-2017 school year (Year 4 of the grant), by August 2018.

Exhibit 1: Treatment Years and Pre-treatment Years for Student Outcomes of Treatment and Comparison Schools

Type of School (Treatment or Comparison)	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Number of Schools
Treatment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	**T**	**T**	**T**	**T**	4
Comparison	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	c	c	c	c	16
Total												20

All achievement scores come from New York State Department of Education assessments administered in the spring of each school year.
"x": indicates a pre-treatment year when a school outcome score will be obtained.
"**T**": For Treatment schools.
"c": For Comparison schools.

Treatment Schools: Identification, Selection, and Assignment

The developer identified the treatment schools and recruited the schools during the proposal phase. In the proposal, there were three districts as part of the treatment—Ossining Union Free School District, Tarrytown Union Free School District, and White Plains Public Schools. The developer has had long-standing partnerships with these districts and the superintendent from each district for many years. Upon award, White Plains school district withdrew from the project prior to the start of the study with the approval of the US Department of Education. Therefore, across two school districts (Ossining and Tarrytown), there are four schools in the treatment condition. Both districts, as is the case in many of the districts in Westchester County, have one middle school and one high school. Therefore, the four treatment schools include the sole middle school and high school in their respective districts.

Comparison Schools: Identification, Selection, and Assignment

Across two districts in Westchester County, the developers are working with two middle (grades 6-8) schools and two high (grades 9-12) schools. The evaluators identified comparison schools for this study by conducting propensity score matching to identify schools and by conducting baseline equivalence testing to ensure the schools are similar in observed characteristics to the treatment schools prior to the intervention.

The comparison schools serve as "business as usual" conditions. The comparison schools will not have Project Exc-EL in their schools during the duration of the study. There will be variation across the comparison schools in curriculum and instruction, professional development, and college-readiness efforts targeted at EL students. However, under the NYSED, curriculum and instruction across the state follow the New York State Learning Standards. To graduate from

high school, all New York students must have a minimum of 22 specific high school credits and pass five Regents examinations.

Our identification process included a series of methods and analyses to ensure baseline equivalence, see Appendix B for details. We identified and selected 16 comparison schools, or a balance of 1:4 treatment to comparison schools (eight middle school comparison schools, and eight high school comparison schools). To identify and select the 16 comparison schools, we first identified the matching variables across two domains—achievement and behavior. Second, we conducted propensity score matching for each domain separately (i.e. two separate PSM), and propensity score matching for all domains/outcomes (i.e. one PSM). For the propensity score matching for each domain, we selected different samples of comparison schools for the achievement domain and another sample of comparison schools for the behavior domain. For the propensity score matching for all domains/outcomes, we selected one set of comparison schools. Third, we calculated effect sizes for the baseline equivalence tests for the achievement and behavior domains, and all the domains/outcomes. Because our confirmatory impact analyses are for all four treatment schools, our primary goal was to ensure baseline equivalence, at a minimum, of the confirmatory analytic sample of twenty schools (4 treatment and 16 comparison schools).[5] We compared baseline equivalence across the three sets: 1) Achievement domain, 2) Behavior domain, and 3) All domains. We chose the comparison schools from all the domains because it met the *WWC Evidence Standards* for baseline equivalence, and it was efficient to have a single comparison group of schools (rather than two separate samples per domain).

Impact Study Data Sources

We collect all administrative (secondary) school-level data from school report cards, as published by the NYSED each summer. We download school report cards from the NYSED website annually (see: https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php). NYSED makes this data publicly available via Access databases. We download and convert the Access databases into a SAS database for analysis.

Because of the longitudinal nature of the administrative data, we are able to obtain school-level data from the treatment and comparison schools from the 2006-2007 school year, obtaining eight years of data prior to Project Exc-EL.

[5] We conduct separate analyses to select comparison schools for middle and high schools separately and conduct baseline equivalence testing. Our sample was small, with two middle schools matched with eight comparison middle schools and two high schools matched with eight comparison high schools. Due to the small sample size, we were unable to achieve baseline equivalence that meets WWC standards for schools disaggregated by grade level.

Outcome Domain 1: Achievement

For middle school students, the achievement measure is the state math and reading assessments administered each spring. For high school students, the math achievement measure is the Regents Integrated Algebra exam administered each spring, and the reading achievement measure is the Regents Comprehensive English exam administered each spring. These state-wide assessments are not over-aligned with the intervention. The school scores will be the average scaled scores for the school and the average scaled scores for all EL students in the school (denoted as Limited English Proficient in the school report card data). These measures are consistently collected using the same procedures and rules in both treatment and comparison conditions.

We will z-score the achievement data. We will convert each school's achievement data by grade and by school year, utilizing the standard deviation for the students in that grade, in that given school year. The standard deviation will reflect the state-wide student population.[6] For example, a z-score will be calculated for 6th grade EL students for each school in the 2006-2007 school year, using the LEP population mean and LEP population standard deviation provided in the technical report of the 2006-2007 school year, denoted in the formula below:

$$Z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}$$

Where:
x is the school-level mean from the annual school report cards. For example, this will be the school-level average of 6th grade EL student mean score.
μ is the mean of the population taken from the annual technical report. For example, this will be the population 6th grade EL student mean score.
σ is the standard deviation of the population taken from the annual technical report. For example, this will be the population 6th grade EL student standard deviation.

To create a middle school score, we will first create z-scores for the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades for each given year and for each school in the analytic sample. We will then create a single score by averaging across the z-scores for each grade. As such, each school will have grade-specific z-scores, as well as an average z-score across grades (i.e. school average) for each year of data. While we assume that the number of students within each grade is comparable, we will create a weighted average if the number of students within each grade level varies greatly (i.e., > 25%).

[6] The state-wide student population standard deviation is made publicly available through annual technical reports. The standard deviations are reported by content/assessment by grade. Technical reports are available here: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/reports/

For the high school score, students take the Regents Integrated Algebra assessment and the Regents Comprehensive English assessment. Students do not take the same Algebra or reading assessment every year (e.g.9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades) but rather once during their high school experience. Therefore, we will create a z-score of the math and reading outcomes to reflect the high school scores of all EL students who took the test that school year.

To create an overall math achievement outcome, we will create an average score from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade z-scores and from the Regents Integrated Algebra z-scores. Similarly, to create an overall reading achievement outcome, we will create an average score from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade z-scores and from the Regents Comprehensive English z-scores.

To estimate the impact of Project Exc-EL across education levels, middle and high schools will be analyzed together using the averaged z-scores as the outcome. The math and reading outcomes will be on a common metric for all grades and are interpreted as performance relative to the reference population of the LEP students in the state of New York in any given year.

Outcome Domain 2: Behavior

The behavior domain represents student attendance for the confirmatory sample (i.e. middle and high schools). For high schools, the behavior domain also includes college-readiness behaviors such as high school graduation (Regents diploma, Regents advanced diploma) and post-secondary plans (2-year and 4-year college plans).

For middle and high schools, attendance will be the school attendance rate. Through the school report cards, we are only able to obtain the attendance rate of the whole school. School report card data reports attendance for the whole school (all students), the general education students, and special education students. The school report card data does not report attendance by subgroups, such as Limited English Proficient (LEP), like the achievement data. Therefore, we will use the attendance rate of the whole school. Attendance rates are not over-aligned with the intervention. These measures are consistently collected using the same procedures and rules in both conditions.

As part of the NYSED reporting requirements, high schools are required to report their annual graduation rates and students' post-graduation plans[7]. In schools, guidance counselors ask high school graduating seniors about their post-high school plans to:

- Attend a 4-year college/university (in-state or out-of-state);
- Attend a 2-year college (in-state or out-of-state);
- Attend other post-secondary institutions (in-state or out-of-state);

[7] The NYSED guide for schools on reporting the annual graduation and post-graduation plans are available here: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/level2reports/SIRS_308-Annual_Graduation_and_PostGraduationPlans.pdf

- Enlist in the military;
- Enroll in adult services;
- Pursue employment.

As part of the annual reporting by the NYSED, the school report card includes: 1) the percent of all high school graduates who plan to enroll in a four-year college in NYS, 2) the percent of all high school graduates who plan to enroll in a four-year college out-of-state, 3) the percent of all high school graduates who plan to enroll in a two-year college in NYS, and 4) the percent of all high school graduates who plan to enroll in a two-year college out-of-state. The evaluators will create a variable for the percent of all high school graduates who plan to attend a four-year college and a variable for the percent of all high school graduates who plan to attend a two-year college for each school in our analytic sample. Like school attendance, the school report cards do not report college plans by subgroups, such as LEPs. Post-secondary plans are not over-aligned with the intervention. These measures are consistently collected using the same procedures and rules in both conditions and are standard educational measures in the state of New York.

In New York, the high school diploma is called a Regents Diploma. Students can earn a Regents Diploma or a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. Students earning Advanced Designation diplomas have passed a larger number of New York State assessments, thereby meeting a higher academic standard, ostensibly indicating preparedness for post-secondary education opportunities. Specifically, students who earn a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation are students who should not need remediation in a post-secondary institution. The school report card includes the percent of students who earned both types of diplomas. The school report card data reports the diplomas earned by the whole school population and not by subgroups such as LEPs. Therefore, the outcome will represent the percent of all students who earned a diploma for each school. The Regents diplomas have the same definition and requirements across all schools in New York state. These variables are not over-aligned with the intervention. These measures are consistently collected using the same procedures and rules in both conditions.

We will also obtain from the school report cards the percent of LEP students in the school to use as a covariate. Given that Project Exc-EL focuses on students who are learning English as a new language (ENLs), we believe that this is an important covariate to include in the model.

Impact Study Data Analysis

We have two confirmatory research questions:

1) The impact of Project Exc-EL on math achievement for middle and high schools offered Project Exc-EL for 4 years as compared to middle and high schools in the business as usual condition, and

2) The impact of Project Exc-EL on ELA achievement for middle and high schools offered Project Exc-EL for 4 years as compared to middle and high schools in the business as usual condition.

Confirmatory Impact Analysis

The table below shows the confirmatory contrasts for the achievement domain. The confirmatory contrast will be used to estimate the impact on school math and reading performance for middle and high schools offered Project Exc-EL for three years as compared to middle and high schools in the business as usual condition.

Exploratory or Confirmatory	Grade level / Outcome	Contrasts	Analysis
Confirmatory	Middle/ High school: 6-12th grade **math** (state math and Regents Integrated Algebra)	ELL school average in treatment schools (4 schools) versus comparison schools (16 schools)	C-ITS with comparison group design
Confirmatory	Middle/ High school: 6-12th grade **ELA** (state ELA and Regents Comprehensive English)	ELL school average in treatment schools (4 schools) versus comparison schools (16 schools)	C-ITS with comparison group design

For the confirmatory analysis, we met baseline equivalence with the treatment and comparison schools using school-level data from the 2012-2013 school year (one-year prior to the intervention).

Exploratory Analysis

Other analyses are exploratory, meaning, the analyses are meant to explore and hypothesize about the program and school improvement. The table below shows the exploratory contrasts for the behavior domain that includes the full analytic sample (middle and high schools). The school report card only reports school-wide attendance rates and does not report out attendance rates for subgroups such as LEP students. The contrasts in this domain are all exploratory and focus on estimating the impact on school attendance rates for middle and high schools with Project Exc-EL for three years as compared to middle and high schools in the business as usual condition.

Exploratory or Confirmatory	Grade level / Outcome	Contrasts	Analysis
Exploratory	Middle/ High school: **Attendance rate**	Whole school average in treatment schools (4 schools) versus comparison schools (16 schools)	C-ITS with comparison group design

For the exploratory analysis, we met baseline equivalence with the treatment and comparison schools using school-level data from the 2012-2013 school year (one-year prior to the intervention).

Additional Exploratory Descriptive Analysis

Further exploratory analyses include grade specific analyses. However, this greatly reduces the sample size to two middle or high schools in the treatment group, and eight middle or high schools in the comparison group. Therefore, these analyses are descriptive and exploratory in nature that could be helpful for hypothesis-generating and planning for next steps.

For the middle school sample, we will explore differences in LEP math and ELA school performance and school attendance of all students. For the middle school outcomes, we met baseline equivalence with the treatment and comparison schools using school-level data from the 2012-2013 school year (one-year prior to the intervention).

For the high school sample, we explore differences in LEP math and ELA school performance and school attendance of all students. In addition, high schools also offer college-going behavior outcomes, such as high school diploma and college-going plans. Like school attendance, school report card data does not disaggregate college plans or diploma by important subgroups such as LEP. The report only disaggregates by all students, general education students, and special education students. Like school attendance, the rates of high school graduation and college plans are for all students in schools. We met baseline equivalence for LEP math, school attendance, Regents diploma, and Regents Advanced diploma using school-level data from the 2012-2013 school year (one-year prior to the intervention). We did not meet baseline equivalence for LEP ELA, 2-year college plans, and 4-year college plans.

Implementation Study

Plus Alpha worked with the project developer to design an implementation study that allows the flexibility needed for a development grant while ensuring that fidelity to the key project components is defined and assessed across the treatment group (Nelson et al, 2012). Measuring Project Exc-EL fidelity began with refining the project logic model provided in the original grantee application. The evaluation team worked closely with the intervention developer and the evaluation technical assistance provider to develop the logic model (p. 6). The logic model aligns with the management plan created by the developer and approved by the USED Program Officer. The logic model was used to guide the implementation study design. Each key component consists of indicators of implementation, as can be seen in the Fidelity Matrices for each key component. We have provided the operational definition for each indicator as well. Protocols have been created (see Appendix C); each protocol item aligns with an indicator of implementation and therefore a key component. Each protocol item is designed to be scored either yes or no (0 or 1). Scores roll up to the full sample. We will use the Fidelity Matrix to measure and assess fidelity for all components and indicators for each of the three years of implementation.

Exhibit 2: Fidelity Matrix Key Component 1. School climate and structures to support college and career readiness

Indicator	Operational Definition	Data Sources	School Fidelity	Full Sample Fidelity
School coach conducts needs assessment	School coach conducts one needs assessment at each school	Evaluator interview with school coach using check list protocol School Coaching Form created by the evaluator completed by school coaches after each session Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	0 = Annual needs assessment not conducted 1 = Annual needs assessment conducted	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
School coach provides coaching sessions to the school	Five (5) coaching sessions are provided at each school per year	Evaluator interview with school coach using checklist protocol School Coaching Form created by the evaluator completed by school coaches after each session Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	0 = <3 planned coaching sessions provided to the school 1 = ≥3 planned coaching sessions provided to the school	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
Community partnership meetings	Developer meets quarterly with the community partnership with district and school representatives present	Evaluator interview with community partner organizations using check list protocol Meeting Form created by the evaluator and completed by partnering organizations and competed after each meeting Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	0 = A school representative does not attend each quarterly community partnership meeting 1 = A school representative attends each quarterly community partnership meeting	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
Community partnership service	Developer coordinates community	Evaluator interview with community partner organizations using check list protocol	0 = Developer does not coordinate community partnership services at each school (less than 100% of the	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level

Indicator	Operational Definition	Data Sources	School Fidelity	Full Sample Fidelity
coordination	partnership services each semester at each school	Meeting Form created by the evaluator and completed by partnering organizations and competed after each meeting Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	checklist items confirmed during interview) 1 = Developer coordinates community partnership services at each school (100% of the checklist items confirmed during interview)	threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
			Key Component Fidelity Range	0-4
			Key Component Fidelity Threshold	4

Exhibit 3: Fidelity Matrix Key Component 2. Teacher and staff training and technical assistance

Indicator	Operational Definition	Data Sources	School Fidelity	Full Sample Fidelity
Developers provide training on best instructional practice for ELs to school-based teams	Twenty (20) hours of instructional practice training are provided to each school-based team per year	Evaluator interview with developer and professional development provider using checklist protocol Professional development attendance lists collected from the developer Professional development debrief form created by the evaluator completed by the developer after each PD session Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	0 = <15 hours of instructional practice training are provided to each school per year 1 = ≥16 hours of instructional practice training are provided to each school per year	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
			Key Component Fidelity Range	0-1
			Key Component Fidelity Threshold	1

Exhibit 4: Fidelity Matrix Key Component 3. Data-driven systematic coaching

Indicator	Operational Definition	Data Sources	School Fidelity	Full Sample Fidelity
School based teams receive training on establishing Professional Learning Communities focused on student data.	Five (5) teacher training sessions on Professional Learning Communities are provided at each school	Evaluator interview with developer using check list protocol Team meeting attendance lists collected from the developer Team meeting debrief form created by the evaluator completed by the developer after each PD session. Review of the Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	0 = <3 planned trainings conducted at each school 1 = ≥3 planned trainings conducted at each school	0 = Less than 100% of schools meet school- level threshold 1 = 100% of schools meet school-level threshold
			Key Component Fidelity Range	0-1
			Key Component Fidelity Threshold	1

Implementation questions (IQ) guided the assessment of fidelity as follows:

- *IQ 1* Have the key components of Project Exc-EL been implemented with fidelity?
- *IQ 2* How has implementation varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components:
  - School climate and structures to support college and career readiness,
  - Teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and
  - Data-driven systemic coaching.

To guide data gathering in response to the implementation questions, a series of aligning documents were created to map from the project logic model to the project management plan objectives, strategies, and actions. A fidelity matrix and fidelity indicators were designed and aligned with the management plan as well. For the purposes of this development grant implementation study, only the project activities within the control of the developer were measured, in order to better define and ascertain what implementing Project Exc-EL with high fidelity entails.

The implementation study began with the development of protocols aligned with the project management plan, logic model, and evaluation plan. A community partnership form was designed to be completed by a community partner member following each community partnership meeting. The community partner interview protocol was developed in Year 1, and interviews have been conducted annually since Year 2 with the same participants to ensure consistency. The developer interview protocol was developed in Year 1 and an interviews have been conducted annually since Year 2. A school administrator / team leader interview protocol was developed in Year 1, and interviews have been conducted annually since Year 2 with the same participants to ensure consistency. A school coach interview protocol was developed in Year 1, and interviews have been conducted annually since Year 2. The school coaching activity form was designed in Year 1 to record school coach activities and impressions of on-going school coaching throughout the project school year, as completed by school coaches. Twenty-seven (27) school coaching forms were completed in project Year 3. The miscellaneous event protocol was designed to be used by evaluation team members attending non-recurring, unplanned, or unscheduled project activities. The final protocol, the quarterly management team activity form, was designed to collect information on the quarterly project Exc-EL management team meetings, but this form ended up collecting information nearly identical to the monthly/bi-monthly Program Officer updates provided by the developer. Thus, these forms (completed in full in Year 1 and partially in Year 2) are considered and synthesized together with the monthly/bi-monthly reports. In Year 3, the Program Officer updates were used exclusively.

Project protocols align with the Project Management Plan submitted annually to the Department of Education. The Project Exc-EL management plan focuses on 4 core objectives also found in the logic model and the implementation study fidelity matrix. Each objective is further composed

of strategies, and each strategy is composed of activities. For example, “Objective 1. Improve the capacity of educators to effectively educate ELs within a framework of tiered interventions” is supported by four distinct strategies as outlined in the plan, (e.g., “Strategy #1.1: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on best instructional practices for ELs and effectively incorporate these practices into classroom instruction (instructional practices training)”. Strategy 1 is then comprised of eight activities (e.g., “Activity 1.1.1 Identify participating schools and educator teams). Following this overarching objective, strategy, and activity structure, each study protocol question or item maps back the management plan. The following exhibits detail the alignment of the protocols and the management plan objectives (Exhibit 5-7).

Exhibit 5: Management Plan Objective 1 Instrument / Protocol Alignment

	Objective 1. Improve the capacity of educators to effectively educate ELs within a framework of tiered interventions.			
Instrument / Protocol	Strategy #1.1: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on best instructional practices for ELs and effectively incorporate these practices into classroom instruction (instructional practices training)	Strategy #1.2: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on using data to personalize instruction and intervention (tiered intervention training)	Strategy #1.3: School based teams meet 4 times per year for coaching and data team discussion in order to ensure student progress is regularly monitored and data is used to provide students with appropriate supports and interventions (data team meetings)	Strategy #1.4: School based teams participate in a year-end data fair designed to promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned (dissemination)
Community Partnership Form				
Community Partner Interview				
Developer Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Admin. / Team Leader Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Coach Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Coaching Activity Form	✓	✓	✓	✓
Miscellaneous Event Protocol	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Management Team Activity Form Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer				

Exhibit 6: Management Plan Objective 2 Instrument / Protocol Alignment

Objective 2. Structural elements of each school will ensure EL students are part of a smaller learning community with a common team of teachers and personalization supports.

Instrument / Protocol	Strategy #2.1: School based teams are formed that include core content area teachers, ESL, guidance, social worker and administrative support. Each team works with a common set of EL students assigned to their team. Teams are inclusive of mainstream and special needs students, and are the same teams identified for professional development under Obj. #1.	Strategy #2.2: School-based teams meet together and focus on student progress during regularly scheduled common planning time.	Strategy #2.3: A regular time and process for individualized student advising (career, academic and personal) is structured and implemented.	Strategy #2.4: A process for Personal Learning Plan (PLP) development and regular use by EL students is developed and implemented. A critical feature of this PLP will be the incorporation of student-led conferencing. The use of digital portfolios will be explored as an adjunct use of technology.
Community Partnership Form				
Community Partner Interview				
Developer Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Admin. / Team Leader Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Coach Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Coaching Activity Form	✓	✓	✓	✓
Miscellaneous Event Protocol	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Management Team Activity Form Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer				

Exhibit 7: Management Plan Objectives 3 and 4 Instrument / Protocol Alignment

	Objective 3. An interagency, inter-district team will be formed to leverage and share resources and provide support for at-risk EL students and their families.		**Objective 4. An objective evaluation process will be integrated into project activities to document and improve process and outcome.**
Instrument / Protocol	Strategy #3.1: An inter-agency, inter-district team will be formed (Project Exc-EL Team) to leverage resources and provide wrap around supports for at-risk EL students and their families.	Strategy #3.2: Interagency partners will host community meetings to engage families (topics may include: immigration law, assistance with FAFSA, college applications, etc.).	Strategy #4.1: An outside, objective evaluator is engaged in partnership with program staff, providing on-going data collection and feedback. Outside evaluator will share findings with the core management team. Core management team will be charged with further disseminating information to entire project members and outside organizations.
Community Partnership Form	✓	✓	✓
Community Partner Interview	✓	✓	✓
Developer Interview	✓	✓	✓
School Admin. / Team Leader Interview	✓	✓	✓
School Coach Interview			✓
School Coaching Activity Form	✓	✓	✓
Miscellaneous Event Protocol	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Management Team Activity Form Program Officer monthly/bi-monthly update provided by the developer	✓		✓

Exhibit 8 below shows the key components of the fidelity study cross-walked (i.e., aligned) with the fidelity indicators and definitions and the PARC-developed evaluation protocols.

Exhibit 8: Implementation Fidelity Matrix Key Components Instrument / Protocol Alignment

	Component 1: School climate and structures to support college and career readiness				Component 2. Teacher and staff training and technical assistance	Component 3. Data-driven systematic coaching
Fidelity Indicators	School coach conducts needs assessment	School coach provides coaching sessions to the school	Community partnership meetings	Community partnership service coordination	Developers provide training on best instructional practice for ELs to school-based teams	School based teams receive training on establishing Professional Learning Communities focused on student data
Fidelity Definitions	School coach conducts one needs assessment at each school	Five (5) coaching sessions are provided at each school per year	Developer meets quarterly with the community partnership with district and school representatives present	Developer coordinates community partnership services each semester at each school	Twenty (20) hours of instructional practice training are provided to each school-based team per year	Five (5) teacher training sessions on Professional Learning Communities are provided at each school
Instruments / Protocols						
Community Partnership Form			✓	✓		
Community Partner Interview			✓	✓		
Developer Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
School Admin. / Team Leader Interview	✓	✓			✓	✓
School Coach Interview	✓	✓				
School Coaching Activity Form	✓	✓			✓	✓
Miscellaneous Event Protocol	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Management Team Activity Form / Program Officer update			✓	✓		

Implementation Study Data Analysis

We administer the community partner interview check list protocol once per school year, and the check list sum is tallied. The community partnership activity form is completed during each community partnership activity during each of three implementation years and the resulting data has been analyzed for content. We administer the developer interview check list protocol once per school year, and the check list sum is tallied. The school coaching form is completed following each school coaching session during each of three implementation years, and the resulting data is analyzed for content. We administer the school coach interview check list protocol once per school year, and the check list sum is tallied. The school meeting form is completed during each school team meeting session during each of three implementation years, and resulting data is analyzed for content.

Content analysis involved coding the open ended responses using extant codes based on Project Exc-EL key components with developer feedback. Emergent codes were also used during the coding process to provide additional formative feedback to the developer. Two coders coded all qualitative data, and a third coder helped to reconcile any coding differences to reach 100% agreement in the application of codes.

See the fidelity matrices provided above in Exhibits 2-4. The School Fidelity and Full Sample Fidelity (right) columns and the Key Component Fidelity Range and Key Component Fidelity Threshold rows (bottom) detail the fidelity score calculation at the key component level.
We calculate fidelity based on data collected using protocols that we developed (see Appendix C). Each protocol item aligns with an indicator, and each indicator aligns with a key component. For example, for Project Exc-EL *Key Component 2 Teacher and staff training and technical assistance* to be implemented with fidelity at the school level, 16 or more hours of instructional practice training must be provided to the school each year. We conducted interviews with the developer, the school coaches, and the school administrators/team leaders using checklist protocols aligned with the management plan activities and professional development debrief forms created by the evaluator and completed by the developer after each professional development session. These protocols and procedures have been used to determine whether or not the key component fidelity threshold is reached each year.

APPENDIX B: DETAILED PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING COMPARISON SCHOOLS

Our identification process included a series of methods and analyses to ensure baseline equivalence between four treatment schools and 16 comparison schools. To select 16 comparison schools, we followed three steps: 1) Identify matching variables, 2) Conduct propensity score matching, and 3) Select a pool of comparison schools by conducting baseline equivalence testing to meet WWC standards. Because our confirmatory impact analyses are for all four treatment schools, our primary goal was to ensure baseline equivalence, at a minimum, of the confirmatory analytic sample.

Step 1: Identifying Matching Variables

Our matching variables included the outcomes in the achievement domain and the outcome in the behavior domain, in addition a key school characteristic, percent of LEP students. The following is our list of matching variables:

- Prior achievement in Math
- Prior achievement in ELA
- % LEP
- % Attendance

Step 2: Conducting Propensity Score Matching

We employed propensity score matching techniques (PSM) to identify a group of potential comparison schools. In this step, we conducted PSM on the following:

- Achievement Domain
- Behavior Domain
- All Domain/outcomes.

For each domain (i.e. Achievement, Behavior, All), we created propensity scores for each school in our sample (treatment and comparison). We selected 6-7 comparison schools per treatment school via distance matching. To obtain our four comparison schools per treatment school, we then used school outcomes such as achievement, attendance, and percent LEP to select the final group of comparison schools.

This step used three different samples of schools. We conducted PSM and identified comparison schools within Westchester county, within four contiguous counties surrounding Westchester county and New York City (Nassau, Putnam, Suffolk, and Rockland), and state-wide (all schools in the state of New York). In essence, we had the following set of comparison schools:

1. Achievement Domain Westchester County
2. Achievement Domain Surrounding Counties
3. Achievement Domain Whole State
4. Behavior Domain Westchester County

5. Behavior Domain Surrounding Counties
6. Behavior Domain Whole State
7. All Domain Westchester County
8. All Domain Surrounding Counties
9. All Domain Whole State

Step 3: Selecting a Pool of Comparison Schools

We tested for baseline equivalence on all nine samples of comparison schools to determine which group of comparison schools were the most like the four treatment schools. We used baseline equivalence standards outlined in the *What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Standards and Procedures Handbook Version 3*.

For the confirmatory analysis the target size for the analytic sample was 20 schools, wherein 4 will be treatment schools and 16 will be comparison schools (8 middle schools and 8 high schools). The baseline equivalence testing involved creating an effect size measure for each matching variable. For continuous variables, such as school performance in math and ELA, we calculated the effect size based on Hedges' g. For dichotomous variables, such as school attendance rate, we used the Cox's Index Ratio for Hedge's g. Our threshold for acceptable baseline equivalence, regardless of significance, was ES = .25 following the WWC standards[8].

In comparing the effect sizes across the nine samples, we ultimately chose the sample from the singular domain (All Domain), and whole state. Exhibit B.1 shows the descriptive results of the comparison and treatment schools. Exhibit B.2 shows the baseline equivalence results for the confirmatory analysis (four treatment and 16 comparison schools). Exhibit B.3 shows the baseline equivalence for the middle school sample (two treatment and eight comparison schools), which is part of the exploratory descriptive analysis. Exhibit B.4 shows the baseline equivalence for the high school sample two treatment and eight comparison schools), which is part of the exploratory descriptive analysis. Exhibit B.5 maps the 20 schools in the state of New York. Most of the schools are clustered around the Westchester county area, but there are a few comparison schools in other metro regions, such as Albany, Buffalo, and Rochester.

[8] http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_procedures_v3_0_standards_handbook.pdf

B 1: Baseline Descriptive Results

Individual School Performance and Demographic Characteristics

	School Year 2012-2013 (Baseline Equivalence)								
School name	Enrollment	LEP	Math	ELA	Attendance	2-Year College Plans	4-Year College Plans	Regents	Regents Advanced
TREATMENT SCHOOLS									
SLEEPY HOLLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL	581	14	-1.23	-0.90	96				
ANNE M DORNER MIDDLE SCHOOL	912	7	-1.33	-1.18	97				
SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL	874	15	0.87	0.84	95	37	54	94	44
OSSINING HIGH SCHOOL	1298	9	0.55	0.76	97	31	60	95	39
TREATMENT SCHOOLS AVERAGE		**11.25**	**-0.29**	**-0.12**	**96.25**	**34.00**	**57.00**	**94.50**	**41.50**
COMPARISON SCHOOLS									
DUNKIRK MIDDLE SCHOOL	472	13	-1.52	-1.23	96				
LAWRENCE ROAD MIDDLE SCHOOL	762	8	-1.29	-1.19	96				
TURTLE HOOK MIDDLE SCHOOL	723	10	-1.29	-0.80	96				
IS 192 THE LINDEN	568	6	-0.95	-1.00	95				
SAXTON MIDDLE SCHOOL	742	7	-1.45	-1.11	96				
EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL	996	16	-1.03	-0.84	96				
SOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL	910	18	-1.19	-0.86	96				
FOX LANE MIDDLE SCHOOL	990	3	-1.22	-1.20	97				
WEBSTER-SCHROEDER HIGH SCHOOL	1442	1	1.13	1.92	96	35	53	93	52
WESTBURY HIGH SCHOOL	1262	21	-0.11	0.36	94	49	24	91	16
MANHATTAN BRIDGES HIGH SCHOOL	555	68	1.39	1.64	92	37	55	100	21
INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AT PROSPECT HEIGHTS	395	94	0.25	0.86	90	47	34	90	0

WALTER G O'CONNELL COPIAGUE HIGH SCHOOL	1509	12	0.94	1.67	96	51	32	93	33
COMSEWOGUE HIGH SCHOOL	1242	4	0.16	-0.35	96	48	43	95	48
PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL	2486	5	0.63	0.97	95	49	32	95	27
WESTHAMPTON BEACH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	1025	3	1.09	1.14	97	28	58	93	63
COMPARISON SCHOOLS AVERAGE		**18.06**	**-0.28**	**0.00**	**95.25**	**43.00**	**41.38**	**93.75**	**32.50**

B 2: Baseline Equivalence Results- Confirmatory Sample

Confirmatory Baseline Equivalence Results (N = 20)

School Year 2012-2013 (Confirmatory Baseline Equivalence)								
Variable	Mean Comparison Before	Mean Comparison After	Mean Treatment	Cox Index	Standard Errors	95% CI Lower Limit	95% CI Upper Limit	p-values
LEP %	13.17	18.06	11.25	-0.11	0.27	-0.63	0.41	0.68
MATH	0.00	-0.28	-0.29	-0.01	0.63	-1.25	1.23	0.99
ELA	0.00	0.00	-0.12	-0.10	0.63	-1.34	1.14	0.88
Attendance Rate	89.12	95.25	96.25	0.14	0.44	-0.72	0.99	0.76

B 3: Baseline Equivalence Results: Middle School Exploratory Sample

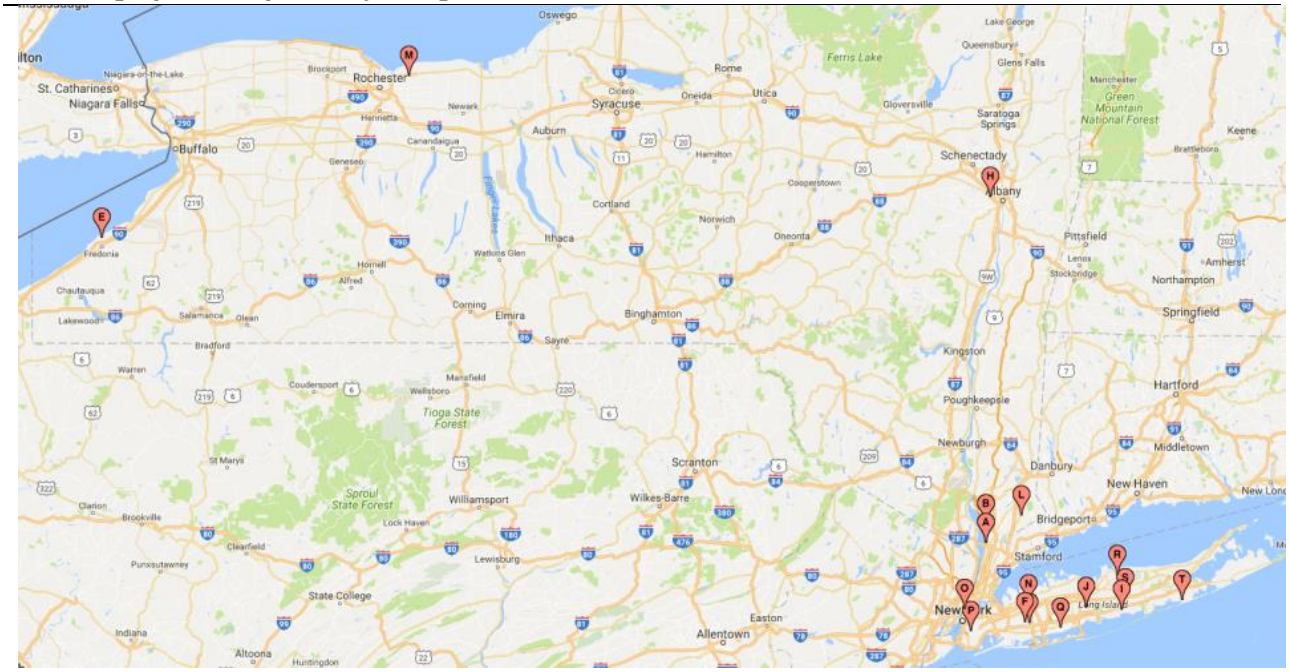
Exploratory Baseline Equivalence Results for Middle School Sample (N = 10)

School Year 2012-2013 (Exploratory Baseline Equivalence)								
Variable	Mean Comparison Before	Mean Comparison After	Mean Treatment	Cox Index	Standard Errors	95% CI Lower Limit	95% CI Upper Limit	p-values
LEP %	14.89	10.13	10.50	-0.03	0.28	-0.59	0.52	0.91
MATH	-0.92	-1.24	-1.28	-0.20	1.00	-2.24	1.84	0.84
ELA	-0.91	-1.03	-1.04	-0.06	1.00	-2.09	1.98	0.96
Attendance Rate	93.06	96.00	96.50	0.09	0.46	-0.80	0.99	0.84

B 4: Baseline Equivalence Results: High School Exploratory Sample

Exploratory Baseline Equivalence Results for High School Sample (N = 10)								
	School Year 2012-2013 (Exploratory Baseline Equivalence)							
Variable	Mean Comparison Before	Mean Comparison After	Mean Treatment	Cox Index	Standard Errors	95% CI Lower Limit	95% CI Upper Limit	p-values
LEP %	12.31	26.00	12.00	-0.14	0.26	-0.64	0.36	0.58
MATH	0.49	0.69	0.71	0.04	1.00	-2.00	2.08	0.97
ELA	0.52	1.03	0.80	-0.29	1.00	-2.34	1.75	0.77
Attendance Rate	87.14	94.50	96.00	0.16	0.42	-0.68	0.99	0.71
2-year college plans	34.42	43.00	34.00	-0.31	0.18	-0.66	0.05	0.09
4-year college plans	38.44	41.38	57.00	0.35	0.17	0.01	0.69	0.05
Regents diploma	90.78	93.75	94.50	-0.15	0.23	-0.61	0.30	0.51
Regents diploma with Advanced distinction	19.40	32.50	41.50	0.07	0.18	-0.28	0.43	0.69

B 5: Map of the Confirmatory Sample



APPENDIX C: IMPLEMENTATION STUDY PROTOCOLS

Community Partnership Activity Form

Project Exc-EL Community Partnership Activity Form	*1) Location of Activity:* _____ _____	*2) Activity Host:* _____ _____
3) Length of Activity: _____	*4) Activity Date:* _____	*5) Activity Time:* _____
6) When did this group last meet, or when did this activity last occur? _____	*7) When will this group next meet, or when will this activity occur again?* _____	*8) This activity occurred:* ☐ In person ☐ By Phone ☐ Via Webinar ☐ As part of another event

9) Activity Participants (Please list name, role, and affiliation):

_____
_____
_____

10) Activity Topic(s) (Please check all that apply and describe briefly below):

- ☐ Academic Tutoring
- ☐ Assisting with college applications
- ☐ Assisting with immigration law
- ☐ College awareness
- ☐ Job shadowing
- ☐ Meeting
- ☐ Adult English language instruction
- ☐ Assisting with FAFSA completion
- ☐ Career awareness
- ☐ Field trip
- ☐ Life skills training
- ☐ Mentoring

_____
_____
_____

11) Briefly outline the community partnership activity. Please list activities, topics, and approximate time spent on each. Feel free to share an agenda, notes, minutes, or supporting materials:

_____
_____
_____

12) Activity Goal(s):

_____
_____
_____

13) Activity Outcome(s):

_____
_____
_____

14) Question(s) / Concern(s):

_____
_____
_____

15) Rate the effectiveness of the Activity (group consensus):

_____1 = Little or no learning/effectiveness
_____2 = Partial learning or effectiveness
_____3 = Adequate group learning or effectiveness

Community Partner Interview Check List Protocol

Introduction and Purpose
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC (Plus Alpha) is completing this interview as part of the implementation study of UCLA's Center X i3 development grant in support of Project Exc-EL. Your responses will help us understand: whether or not the key components of Project Exc-EL have been implemented with fidelity and how the implementation has varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components, such as school climate and structures to support college and career readiness, teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and data-driven systemic coaching. Your participation is voluntary. You can stop the interview at any time. You will not be individually identified in resulting reports. Project Exc-EL evaluation activities have been reviewed and approved by UCLA's Institutional Review Board (IRB). For additional IRB information, please contact Laureen Avery, avery@gseis.ucla.edu. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

Participants
Project Exc-EL community partners selected by the development team.

Method
Interviews are being conducted either in person as part of other project meetings or over the phone. Plus Alpha staff will take notes during the interview and will not audio record the interview. Analysts will synthesize notes from each interview and include the findings in project reports. The protocol below will be completed by the interviewer during the interview.

Please feel free to provide supporting documents or related resources to Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com

Plus Alpha Staff Member(s) Conducting the Interview:

Date of the interview:

This interview was conducted: ☐ In person (list location/event): or ☐ Over the phone

Start Time: ***End Time:***

Interview Participant(s) (affiliation, role):

Project Fidelity[9] Measures

Indicator:	Definition:	Interviewee Involvement and Support(s):
Community partnership meetings	☐ Developer meets quarterly with the community partnership with district and school representatives present	☐ Academic tutoring ☐ Adult English language instruction ☐ Assisting with college applications ☐ Assisting with FAFSA completion

[9] Taken from the *Study Design Summary* submitted to the US Department of Education as part of the national evaluation of the i3 program. These measures are part of project *Component 1. School climate and structures to support college and career readiness.*

Indicator:	Definition:	Interviewee Involvement and Support(s):
		☐ Assisting with immigration law ☐ Career awareness ☐ College awareness ☐ Field trip(s) (list purpose and location below) ☐ Job shadowing ☐ Life skills training ☐ Meeting (list type and purpose below) ☐ Mentoring (for whom, how ☐ Observing a classroom ☐ Observing a presentation
Community partnership service coordination	☐ Developer coordinates community partnership services each semester at each school	

Discussion Notes:

Project Activities[10]

Strategy #3.1: An inter-agency, inter-district team will be formed (Project Exc-EL Team) to leverage resources and provide wrap around supports for at-risk EL students and their families.

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 3.1.1* Catalog of available resources and supports developed	
☐ *Activity 3.1.2* Project Exc-EL team is formed and meets quarterly to purposefully match students with services	
☐ *Activity 3.1.3* EL students identified as at-risk are offered identified services (i.e., tutoring, summer boot camps, family ESL classes)	
☐ *Activity 3.1.4* Participation and outcomes for all services are monitored	
☐ *Activity 3.1.5* Evaluate effectiveness of community support programs	

Strategy #3.2: Interagency partners will host community meetings to engage families (topics may include: immigration law, assistance with FAFSA, college applications, etc.).

[10] Taken from the annual *Project Management Plan* submitted to the i3 grant funder, the US Department of Education.

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 3.2.1* Catalog of available topics, dates and sites developed	

Additional Discussion Points and Notes:

Thank you for your time and your efforts on Project Exc-EL. If you have any project-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laureen Avery: avery@gseis.ucla.edu or 203-365-8914. If you have any evaluation-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com or 803-924-2300.

Developer Interview Check List Protocol

Introduction and Purpose
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC (Plus Alpha) is completing this interview as part of the implementation study of UCLA's Center X i3 development grant in support of Project Exc-EL. Your responses will help us understand: whether or not the key components of Project Exc-EL have been implemented with fidelity and how the implementation has varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components, such as school climate and structures to support college and career readiness, teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and data-driven systemic coaching. Your participation is voluntary. You can stop the interview at any time. You will not be individually identified in resulting reports. Project Exc-EL evaluation activities have been reviewed and approved by UCLA's Institutional Review Board (IRB). For additional IRB information, please contact Laureen Avery, avery@gseis.ucla.edu. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

Participants
Project Exc-EL project development staff.

Method
Interviews are being conducted either in person as part of other project meetings or over the phone. Plus Alpha staff will take notes during the interview and will not audio record the interview. Analysts will synthesize notes from each interview and include the findings in project reports. The protocol below will be completed by the interviewer during the interview.

Please feel free to provide supporting documents or related resources to Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com

Plus Alpha Staff Member(s) Conducting the Interview:

Date of the interview:

This interview was conducted: ☐ In person (list location/event): or ☐ Over the phone

Start Time: ***End Time:***

Interview Participant(s) (affiliation, role):

Project Fidelity[11] Measures

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
Developers provide training on best instructional practice for ELs to school-based teams[12].	☐ Twenty (20) hours of instructional practice training are provided to each school-based team per year	

[11] Taken from the *Study Design Summary* submitted to the US Department of Education as part of the national evaluation of the i3 program.
[12] This measure is part of *Component 2. Teacher and staff training and technical assistance.*

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
School based teams receive training on establishing Professional Learning Communities focused on student data[13].	☐ Five (5) teacher training sessions on Professional Learning Communities are provided at each school	

Discussion Notes:

Project Activities[14]

Strategy #1.1: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on best instructional practices for ELs and effectively incorporate these practices into classroom instruction (instructional practices training)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.1.1* Identify participating schools and educator teams	
☐ *Activity 1.1.2* Roll out project at participating schools	
☐ *Activity 1.1.3* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice	
☐ *Activity 1.1.4* Create a plan for training that includes content and logistics	
☐ *Activity 1.1.5* Conduct training	
☐ *Activity 1.1.6* Conduct site-based coaching 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.1.7* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	
☐ *Activity 1.1.8* Evaluate usefulness and impact of coaching	

[13] This measure is part of *Component 3. Data-driven systematic coaching.*

[14] Taken from the annual *Project Management Plan* submitted to the i3 grant funder, the US Department of Education.

Project Activities[14]

Strategy #1.2: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on using data to personalize instruction and intervention (tiered intervention training)	
Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.2.1* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice (done in conjunction with Activity 1.1.3)	
☐ *Activity 1.2.2* Create a plan for training that includes content and logistics	
☐ *Activity 1.2.3* Conduct training	
☐ *Activity 1.2.4* Conduct site-based data team meetings 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.2.5* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	
☐ *Activity 1.2.6* Evaluate usefulness and impact of data team meetings	
Strategy #1.3: School based teams meet 4 times per year for coaching and data team discussion in order to ensure student progress is regularly monitored and data is used to provide students with appropriate supports and interventions (data team meetings)	
Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.3.1* Create a schedule that allows site based teams to meet 4 times per year for at least 90 minutes per meeting	
☐ *Activity 1.3.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to effectively and efficiently use student data to identify student progress and create appropriate interventions	
☐ *Activity 1.3.3* Conduct site-based team meetings	
Strategy #1.4: School based teams participate in a year-end data fair designed to promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned (dissemination)	
Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.4.1* Create a plan for a year end data fair that includes logistics that allows all teams to participate	
☐ *Activity 1.4.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to share their lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.3* Conduct the year end data fair	

Project Activities[14]

☐ *Activity 1.4.4* Develop an electronic platform that will store and facilitate sharing of best practices, lessons and lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.5* Populate electronic platform with materials developed by site-based teams	
☐ *Activity 1.4.6* Create a strategy for widely sharing and promoting the use of the electronic platform materials	
☐ *Activity 1.4.7* Disseminate lessons learned	

Strategy #2.1: School based teams are formed that include core content area teachers, ESL, guidance, social worker, and administrative support. Each team works with a common set of EL students assigned to their team. Teams are inclusive of mainstream and special needs students, and are the same teams identified for professional development under Objective #1.

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.1.1* Plan for a school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.2* Conduct school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.3* EL students are scheduled and assigned to teams	
☐ *Activity 2.1.4* Evaluate the ability to create effective teams	

Strategy #2.2: School-based teams meet together and focus on student progress during regularly scheduled common planning time

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.2.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to review the schedule and revise as necessary.	
☐ *Activity 2.2.2* Evaluate the implementation and impact of common planning time	

Strategy #2.3: A regular time and process for individualized student advising (career, academic and personal) is structured and implemented

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.3.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	

Project Activities[14]

☐ *Activity 2.3.2* Evaluate the development of a student advisory model	

Strategy #2.4: A process for Personal Learning Plan (PLP) development and regular use by EL students is developed and implemented. A critical feature of this PLP will be the incorporation of student-led conferencing. The use of digital portfolios will be explored as an adjunct use of technology

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.4.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	
☐ *Activity 2.4.2* Evaluate the development of a PLP model	

Strategy #3.1: An inter-agency, inter-district team will be formed (Project Exc-EL Team) to leverage resources and provide wrap around supports for at-risk EL students and their families

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 3.1.1* Catalog of available resources and supports developed	
☐ *Activity 3.1.2* Project Exc-EL team is formed and meets quarterly to purposefully match students with services	
☐ *Activity 3.1.3* EL students identified as at-risk are offered identified services (i.e., tutoring, summer boot camps, family ESL classes)	
☐ *Activity 3.1.4* Participation and outcomes for all services are monitored	
☐ *Activity 3.1.5* Evaluate effectiveness of community support programs	

Strategy #3.2: Interagency partners will host community meetings to engage families (topics may include: immigration law, assistance with FAFSA, college applications, etc.).

☐ *Activity 3.2.1* Catalog of available topics, dates, and sites developed.	

Additional Discussion Points and Notes:

Thank you for your time and your efforts on Project Exc-EL. If you have any project-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laureen Avery: avery@gseis.ucla.edu or 203-365-8914. If you have any evaluation-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com or 803-924-2300.

Project School Administrator or School Data Team Lead Check List Protocol

Introduction and Purpose
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC (Plus Alpha) is completing this interview as part of the implementation study of UCLA's Center X i3 development grant in support of Project Exc-EL. Your responses will help us understand: whether or not the key components of Project Exc-EL have been implemented with fidelity and how the implementation has varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components, such as school climate and structures to support college and career readiness, teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and data-driven systemic coaching. Your participation is voluntary. You can stop the interview at any time. You will not be individually identified in resulting reports. Project Exc-EL evaluation activities have been reviewed and approved by UCLA's Institutional Review Board (IRB). For additional IRB information, please contact Laureen Avery, avery@gseis.ucla.edu. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

Participants
Project Exc-EL school administrator or data team lead.

Method
Interviews are being conducted either in person as part of other project meetings or over the phone. Plus Alpha staff will take notes during the interview and will not audio record the interview. Analysts will synthesize notes from each interview and include the findings in project reports. The protocol below will be completed by the interviewer during the interview.

Please feel free to provide supporting documents or related resources to Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com

Plus Alpha Staff Member(s) Conducting the Interview:

Date of the interview:

This interview was conducted: ☐ In person (list location/event): or ☐ Over the phone

Start Time: ***End Time:***

Interview Participant(s) (affiliation, role):

Project Fidelity[15] Measures

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
School based teams receive training on establishing Professional Learning Communities focused on student	☐ Five (5) teacher training sessions on Professional Learning Communities are provided at each school	

[15] Taken from the *Study Design Summary* submitted to the US Department of Education as part of the national evaluation of the i3 program. This measure is part of *Component 3. Data-driven systematic coaching.*

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
data.		

Discussion Notes:

Project Activities[16]

Strategy #1.1: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on best instructional practices for ELs and effectively incorporate these practices into classroom instruction (instructional practices training)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.1.1* Identify participating schools and educator teams	
☐ *Activity 1.1.2* Roll out project at participating schools	
☐ *Activity 1.1.3* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice	
☐ *Activity 1.1.6* Conduct site-based coaching 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.1.7* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	
☐ *Activity 1.1.8* Evaluate usefulness and impact of coaching	

Strategy #1.2: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on using data to personalize instruction and intervention (tiered intervention training)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.2.1* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice (done in conjunction with Activity 1.1.3)	R
☐ *Activity 1.2.4* Conduct site-based data team meetings 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.2.5* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	R
☐ *Activity 1.2.6* Evaluate usefulness and impact of data team meetings	

[16] Taken from the annual *Project Management Plan* submitted to the i3 grant funder, the US Department of Education.

Project Activities[16]

Strategy #1.3: School based teams meet 4 times per year for coaching and data team discussion in order to ensure student progress is regularly monitored and data is used to provide students with appropriate supports and interventions (data team meetings)	
Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.3.1* Create a schedule that allows site based teams to meet 4 times per year for at least 90 minutes per meeting	
☐ *Activity 1.3.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to effectively and efficiently use student data to identify student progress and create appropriate interventions	
☐ *Activity 1.3.3* Conduct site-based team meetings	R
Strategy #1.4: School based teams participate in a year-end data fair designed to promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned (dissemination)	
Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.4.1* Create a plan for a year end data fair that includes logistics that allows all teams to participate	
☐ *Activity 1.4.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to share their lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.3* Conduct the year end data fair	
☐ *Activity 1.4.4* Develop an electronic platform that will store and facilitate sharing of best practices, lessons and lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.5* Populate electronic platform with materials developed by site-based teams	
☐ *Activity 1.4.6* Create a strategy for widely sharing and promoting the use of the electronic platform materials	
☐ *Activity 1.4.7* Disseminate lessons learned	
Strategy #2.1: School based teams are formed that include core content area teachers, ESL, guidance, social worker, and administrative support. Each team works with a common set of EL students assigned to their team. Teams are inclusive of mainstream and special needs students, and are the same teams identified for professional development under Objective #1.	

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.1.1* Plan for a school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.2* Conduct school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.3* EL students are scheduled and assigned to teams	
☐ *Activity 2.1.4* Evaluate the ability to create effective teams	

Strategy #2.2: School-based teams meet together and focus on student progress during regularly scheduled common planning time

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.2.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to review the schedule and revise as necessary.	
☐ *Activity 2.2.2* Evaluate the implementation and impact of common planning time	

Strategy #2.3: A regular time and process for individualized student advising (career, academic and personal) is structured and implemented

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.3.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	
☐ *Activity 2.3.2* Evaluate the development of a student advisory model	

Strategy #2.4: A process for Personal Learning Plan (PLP) development and regular use by EL students is developed and implemented. A critical feature of this PLP will be the incorporation of student-led conferencing. The use of digital portfolios will be explored as an adjunct use of technology

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.4.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	
☐ *Activity 2.4.2* Evaluate the development of a PLP model	

Strategy #3.1: An inter-agency, inter-district team will be formed (Project Exc-EL Team) to leverage resources and provide wrap around supports for at-risk EL students and their families

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 3.1.1* Catalog of available resources and supports developed	

Project Activities[16]

☐ *Activity 3.1.2* Project Exc-EL team is formed and meets quarterly to purposefully match students with services	
☐ *Activity 3.1.3* EL students identified as at-risk are offered identified services (i.e., tutoring, summer boot camps, family ESL classes)	
☐ *Activity 3.1.4* Participation and outcomes for all services are monitored	
☐ *Activity 3.1.5* Evaluate effectiveness of community support programs	
Strategy #3.2: Interagency partners will host community meetings to engage families (topics may include: immigration law, assistance with FAFSA, college applications, etc.).	
☐ *Activity 3.2.1* Catalog of available topics, dates, and sites developed.	

Additional Discussion Points and Notes:

Thank you for your time and your efforts on Project Exc-EL. If you have any project-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laureen Avery: avery@gseis.ucla.edu or 203-365-8914. If you have any evaluation-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com or 803-924-2300.

School Coach Interview Check List Protocol

Introduction and Purpose
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC (Plus Alpha) is completing this interview as part of the implementation study of UCLA's Center X i3 development grant in support of Project Exc-EL. Your responses will help us understand: whether or not the key components of Project Exc-EL have been implemented with fidelity and how the implementation has varied across the treatment schools in terms of the key project components, such as school climate and structures to support college and career readiness, teacher and staff training and technical assistance, and data-driven systemic coaching. Your participation is voluntary. You can stop the interview at any time. You will not be individually identified in resulting reports. Project Exc-EL evaluation activities have been reviewed and approved by UCLA's Institutional Review Board (IRB). For additional IRB information, please contact Laureen Avery, avery@gseis.ucla.edu. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

Participants
Project Exc-EL school coaching staff.

Method
Interviews are being conducted either in person as part of other project meetings or over the phone. Plus Alpha staff will take notes during the interview and will not audio record the interview. Analysts will synthesize notes from each interview and include the findings in project reports. The protocol below will be completed by the interviewer during the interview.

Please feel free to provide supporting documents or related resources to Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com

Plus Alpha Staff Member(s) Conducting the Interview:

Date of the interview:

This interview was conducted: ☐ In person (list location/event): or ☐ Over the phone

Start Time: ***End Time:***

Interview Participant(s) (affiliation, role):

Project Fidelity[17] Measures

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
School coach conducts needs assessment	☐ School coach conducts one needs assessment at each school	

[17]Taken from the *Study Design Summary* submitted to the US Department of Education as part of the national evaluation of the i3 program. These measures are part of project *Component 1. School climate and structures to support college and career readiness.*

Indicator:	Definition:	Notes:
School coach provides coaching sessions to the school	☐ Five (5) coaching sessions are provided at each school per year	

Discussion Notes:

Project Activities[18]

Strategy #1.1: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on best instructional practices for ELs and effectively incorporate these practices into classroom instruction (instructional practices training)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.1.1* Identify participating schools and educator teams	
☐ *Activity 1.1.2* Roll out project at participating schools	
☐ *Activity 1.1.3* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice	
☐ *Activity 1.1.4* Create a plan for training that includes content and logistics	
☐ *Activity 1.1.5* Conduct training	
☐ *Activity 1.1.6* Conduct site-based coaching 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.1.7* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	
☐ *Activity 1.1.8* Evaluate usefulness and impact of coaching	

Strategy #1.2: Participants on school-based teams participate in training and coaching focused on using data to personalize instruction and intervention (tiered intervention training)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.2.1* Conduct a readiness assessment for educators to determine state of current knowledge and practice (done in conjunction with Activity 1.1.3*)*	

[18] Taken from the annual *Project Management Plan* submitted to the i3 grant funder, the US Department of Education.

Project Activities[18]

☐ *Activity 1.2.2* Create a plan for training that includes content and logistics	
☐ *Activity 1.2.3* Conduct training	
☐ *Activity 1.2.4* Conduct site-based data team meetings 4 times per year	
☐ *Activity 1.2.5* Evaluate usefulness and impact of summer training	
☐ *Activity 1.2.6* Evaluate usefulness and impact of data team meetings	

Strategy #1.3: School based teams meet 4 times per year for coaching and data team discussion in order to ensure student progress is regularly monitored and data is used to provide students with appropriate supports and interventions (data team meetings)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.3.1* Create a schedule that allows site based teams to meet 4 times per year for at least 90 minutes per meeting	
☐ *Activity 1.3.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to effectively and efficiently use student data to identify student progress and create appropriate interventions	
☐ *Activity 1.3.3* Conduct site-based team meetings	

Strategy #1.4: School based teams participate in a year-end data fair designed to promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned (dissemination)

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 1.4.1* Create a plan for a year end data fair that includes logistics that allows all teams to participate	
☐ *Activity 1.4.2* Create a protocol that allows site based teams to share their lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.3* Conduct the year end data fair	
☐ *Activity 1.4.4* Develop an electronic platform that will store and facilitate sharing of best practices, lessons and lessons learned	
☐ *Activity 1.4.5* Populate electronic platform with materials developed by site-based teams	

Project Activities[18]

☐ *Activity 1.4.6* Create a strategy for widely sharing and promoting the use of the electronic platform materials	
☐ *Activity 1.4.7* Disseminate lessons learned	

Strategy #2.1: School based teams are formed that include core content area teachers, ESL, guidance, social worker, and administrative support. Each team works with a common set of EL students assigned to their team. Teams are inclusive of mainstream and special needs students, and are the same teams identified for professional development under Objective #1.

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.1.1* Plan for a school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.2* Conduct school readiness assessment	
☐ *Activity 2.1.3* EL students are scheduled and assigned to teams	
☐ *Activity 2.1.4* Evaluate the ability to create effective teams	

Strategy #2.2: School-based teams meet together and focus on student progress during regularly scheduled common planning time

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.2.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to review the schedule and revise as necessary.	
☐ *Activity 2.2.2* Evaluate the implementation and impact of common planning time	

Strategy #2.3: A regular time and process for individualized student advising (career, academic and personal) is structured and implemented

Activities:	Discussion Notes:
☐ *Activity 2.3.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	
☐ *Activity 2.3.2* Evaluate the development of a student advisory model	

Strategy #2.4: A process for Personal Learning Plan (PLP) development and regular use by EL students is developed and implemented. A critical feature of this PLP will be the incorporation of student-led conferencing. The use of digital portfolios will be explored as an adjunct use of technology

Activities:	Discussion Notes:

Project Activities[18]

☐ *Activity 2.4.1* Coaches meet with administrators, school leadership teams and others to develop needed structures and processes	
☐ *Activity 2.4.2* Evaluate the development of a PLP model	

Additional Discussion Points and Notes:

Thank you for your time and your efforts on Project Exc-EL. If you have any project-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laureen Avery: avery@gseis.ucla.edu or 203-365-8914. If you have any evaluation-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com or 803-924-2300.

School Coaching Activity Form

Project Exc-EL School Coaching Form	*1) School:* _____	*2) Length of Coaching Session:* _____
3) Coach: _____	*4) Coach's Affiliation:* _____	*5) Date:* _____
6) Participants in Coaching Session (list staff member names and roles): _____ _____		
7) Coaching Topic(s) (check all that apply): ☐ Advising for Success: ☐ Individual Student Focus ☐ Small Group Focus ☐ Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) ☐ Response to Intervention (RtI) ☐ School schedule ☐ Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) ☐ Supporting EL students ☐ Teacher Data Team ☐ Other (describe): _____	*8) Coaching Session Frequency (with this specific individual or group):* ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Each Semester ☐ Annually ☐ Other (describe): _____ ___ *9) When did your last coaching session with this individual or group occur?* _____	*10) This coaching session occurred (check all that apply):* ☐ In person / face-to-face ☐ Over the phone / via conference call ☐ Virtually—via a webinars, etc. ☐ In conjunction with another event (i.e. a conference, another meeting, etc.) ☐ Other (describe): _____ *11) When is your next coaching session scheduled to occur with this individual or group?* _____
12) Briefly outline the coaching session (list activities, topics, and approximate time spent on each): _____ _____ _____		
13) Coaching Session Goal(s): _____ _____ _____		
14) Coaching Session Outcome(s): _____ _____ _____		
15) Question(s) / Concern(s): _____ _____ _____		
16) Rate the effectiveness of the coaching session (group consensus): _____1 = Little or no learning/effectiveness _____2 = Partial learning or effectiveness _____3 = Adequate group learning or effectiveness		

Miscellaneous Project Event Protocol

This protocol is a catch all for activities and events not already covered by other project protocols or data collection efforts. As such, this protocol **should not** be used to record the proceedings of a Community Partnership Activity (this data is collected by the developer using the Community Partnership Activity form), School Coaching, (this data is collected by the coaches using the School Coaching form), School (Team) Meetings (this data is collected by the school team using the Scholl Meeting form), or a Quarterly Project Partnership Activity (this data is collected by partners using the Quarterly Activity Summary Report). This protocol **should be** used to record school observations, impromptu conversations, impromptu project events, etc.

Please attach or include supporting documents or related resources when sending this completed protocol back to Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com

Role of the person completing this form:

☐ Evaluation Team Member ☐ Development Team Member

☐ Other role, briefly describe:

Date of the activity:

How did you attend this event? ☐ In person, ☐ By phone, ☐ Via Webinar, ☐ As part of another event

Location of the Activity, briefly describe:

Start Time: ***End Time:***

Event Frequency: ☐ Recurring Event or ☐ One-Time Event

Activity Participants (Please list name, role, and affiliation):

_____

_____

Activity Topic(s) (Please check all that apply and describe briefly below):

☐ Academic Tutoring	☐ Adult English language instruction
☐ Assisting with college applications	☐ Assisting with FAFSA completion
☐ Assisting with immigration law	☐ Career awareness
☐ College awareness	☐ Field trip
☐ Job shadowing	☐ Life skills training
☐ Meeting	☐ Mentoring
☐ Observing a classroom	☐ Observing a presentation

Activity Description (a brief paragraph):

_____

_____

Activity Goals and Outcomes (if applicable):

_____

_____

Quarterly Management Team Activity Form

[redundant with the Program Officer updates and superseded as such in year 2]

School or Partner Name:____

Date	Activity	Summary Sheet Attached?	Value/Action
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind
		☐ Yes ☐ No	$ ☐ Paid ☐ To be invoiced ☐ In Kind

Briefly summarize the activities for the period covered and why you believe they were successful:____

____

____

Briefly summarize any challenges or barriers you encountered, including suggestions for mitigation:____

____

____

Other comments or suggestions:____

____

____

Thank you for your time and your efforts on Project Exc-EL. If you have any project-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laureen Avery: avery@gseis.ucla.edu or 203-365-8914. If you have any evaluation-related questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Hall: ahall@plusalpharesearch.com or 803-924-2300.

Educational Improvement through Research

Project Exc-EL
(Excellence for English Learners)

2016 Site Visit Brief

October 2016

Prepared for:
UCLA Center X, Northeast Region
40 Lindeman Drive, Suite 200
Trumbull, CT 06611
Laureen Avery
Tel: 203-365-8914
Fax: 203-365-8947
Email: avery@gseis.ucla.edu

Prepared by:
Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, LLC
34 North Granada Street
Arlington, VA 22203
Dr. Ryoko Yamaguchi
Tel: 703-243-4780
Email: ryamaguchi@plusalpharesearch.com
Web: www.plusalpharesearch.com

Table of Contents

2016 Site Visit Summary

Project Exc-EL (Excellence for English Learners) is a new intervention developed to support the academic achievement and post-secondary success of students who are learning English as a new language (ENLs). UCLA Center X, Northeast Region is developing and implementing an enhanced, comprehensive design that will address the unique and urgent needs of low-incidence ENL population school districts (i.e., districts that are struggling to provide a comprehensive, rigorous education for the newest members of their communities). The developers have designed the intervention to impact, via direct inclusion in the treatment group and bleed-over to the broader school community, all middle and high school students within the project schools who do not speak English as their first language.

Plus Alpha Research and Consulting serves as the Project Exc-EL external evaluator. Our staff members are conducting ongoing impact and implementation studies to ascertain the potential outcomes of the project and gauge the fidelity of implementation of the project. We attended the September 21, 2016 Community Partners Meeting at the Westchester Community College Library Foundation Board Room. During the meeting, project community partners provided an update on their Project Exc-EL efforts, Plus Alpha staff presented on school year 2 evaluation report findings, and the developer conducted a training on building college readiness.

Prior to and following the Community Partners' Meeting, Plus Alpha staff visited all four project schools September 21-22, 2016. While visiting the schools, Plus Alpha staff met with school leaders and teachers. The site visits occurred during or following the school day. The visits provided time for the evaluators to talk with school leaders regarding project updates and plans for year 3 as well as observe two project teams conducting their first team meetings of year 3. Each visit was approximately an hour long. Plus Alpha staff took notes during the sessions; these have been compiled and cleaned to ensure clarity. Since these sessions typically involved a relatively small number of school staff, it is important to note that the findings and recommendations herein are solely those gleaned by the external evaluation team.

Project participant feedback provided during the site visits has been included below, by school. It is important to note that project participants gave feedback in an informal, open discussion setting. Comments are provided herein to serve as formative feedback designed to improve Project Exc-EL going forward.

Each visit session began with the following general conversation starters:

- What is Project Exc-EL?
- How has Project Exc-EL been going?
- What would you change about Project Exc-EL?
- How has Project Exc-EL affected you?

1 TARRYTOWN SCHOOLS - SLEEPY HOLLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL

1.1 PROJECT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

We met with the Sleepy Hollow Middle School (SHMS) principal and an assistant principal, and the district EL chairperson.

- SHMS leaders stated that, as a result of Project Exc-EL, art, music, and other electives that were once not available to EL students are now available to them. EL teachers were also integrated into the grade level teams, helping to bridge EL students and communicate their needs to the larger school community, leading to a more integrated support structure at the school.
- In year 2 of Project Exc-EL, the school focused on implementing Part 154, the co-teaching of EL students, by EL and content area teachers. SHMS expanded co-teaching in ELA and Living Environment science classes. Eighth grade EL students now also take the high school Regents exam like every other student in the middle school.
- School leaders noted that the co-teaching of level 1- 3 students focuses on language support and content teaching expertise that has raised the level of rigor for EL students. The school plans to continue expanding co-teaching to social studies in year 3.
- The school's project team focuses on data, both qualitative (e.g., teacher insights and student assignment information) and quantitative (e.g., formative and summative assessments and attendance), to more effectively tier students. Prior to project Exc-EL, the school had not approached tiering this way. By actively focusing on and discussing student data, strengths can be noted and built upon, and skills in need of improvement can be further targeted. The team analyzes data using a computer-based program that features Lexile level and student pre- and post- scores over time. The team uses a Google Doc projected on the wall to visualize data during meetings.
- The Project Exc-EL school team has begun discussing deeper issues related to data. These include: what kind of data is collected, what does the team need from that data, what data is not included in report card data, does report card data accurately convey student progress, how might Lexile levels be better used, how effectively do Lexiles help teachers understand student progress, how is student writing being measured and is this effective, what is competency at the middle grades, and how does it align with elementary and secondary?
- Concomitantly, teachers have been discussing what report card scores really mean--class work, time on task, homework completion, proficient at "the role of [being] a student". Teachers are seeking to understand what kind of data adds value (e.g., Lexiles, math proficiency, living environment (science) Regents results). School staff noted a 10% increase in Regents scores this past year, which they feel can be attributed to co-teaching efforts and a focus on vocabulary with EL students.
- As the Exc-EL team's work with student data has advanced, interest in better understanding internal student motivation has grown; the team is unsure how to measure student motivation,

yet they know that external factors have an impact on this. School leaders noted that sustaining success up to and beyond high school can be difficult for students, thus motivation measures would be particularly helpful.

- Project Exc-EL has encouraged and provided time for teachers to share best practices with one another while also focusing on common vocabulary, skills, and learning strategies appropriate for use with EL students receiving tiered supports.
- School staff stated that, without the district EL director, the school project team leader, and the Project Exc-EL grant support, the school could not have moved to the state-required co-teaching model. The EL department chair and the district EL director are 2 of 7 current Exc-EL school team members.
- During the first project year, buy-in from teachers wasn't there, but the co-teaching focus, the district and school-level leadership, and the Exc-EL PLC team culture helped cement teacher buy-in in year 2. At this time, 18 teachers are deeply invested in the project, and these teachers work directly with 50 students.
- The EL department chair meets with the Exc-EL team, which also includes members of other (middle school model) teams. The professional learning and data discussions that are part of Exc-EL trickle out from the Exc-EL team and into the middle grades teams, thereby impacting the whole school, leading to what one school leader called, "a trickle-down effect." As such, general education teachers and special education teachers who had not previously worked with or known their EL colleagues particularly well are now working collaboratively. The EL department chair has led the way in this area.
- Two of the school's teachers presented in Syracuse, NY at the NY TESOL conference on the school's co-teaching efforts.
- School leaders noted that co-teaching began at the school 3 years ago. The school has experienced success through co-teaching by setting rigorous content goals, supporting it with graphic organizers and language skills, and slowing it down or providing pictures to ensure that students have a mental model that helps them access rigorous curriculum.
- Latino U was reported by the school staff as the most involved partner. Latino U staff come to the school to speak to students on career day and provide tutoring in one-on-one and small group settings. Students also visit the Jacob K. Burns Center several times each year.
- School leaders noted that they would change the professional development offered as part of the project; they would like to see trainings that further support co-teaching expansion into the other content areas and study groups for teachers (to engage and learn new research-based methods and strategies). The challenge of finding time in the schedule is a constant.
- School staff noted that a systematic way of ascertaining EL student needs would help to scaffold and focus teacher efforts—both in service to students and to grow teacher professional learning. The level of extant teacher knowledge also needs to be gauged to effectively pick up where their current knowledge may begin to taper off.

- The school is interested in new strategies for collaboration that can extend to all the school's teachers. There is no common planning time school-wide, so time is the single biggest challenge to professional development efforts. Teachers have come up with creative approaches on their own, like using Google calendar to find times to meet, using a universal Google doc to record upcoming events. Teachers, district leaders, and partners are all posting threads or strategies using Instagram, Twitter, and blog comments. School staff noted that the part of the challenge of sharing information may also involve effectively leveraging all the resources and channels of information that are currently available to teachers.
- School leaders stated that the opportunities to collaborate with both the Exc-EL developers and the school level Exc-EL team have resulted in critical friend conversations that would not have been feasible prior to the project. The project has been supported by school and district administrators that have encouraged teachers to build a culture focused on improving services to students.
- School staff stated that, going forward, they have concerns about the project in terms of obtaining more formative feedback at the classroom and school levels, next steps, measuring the impact of the project, and sustainability beyond the life of the funding (i.e., the project provides stipends for after school and summer professional development). Specifically, one school administrator noted that data over 2 years or even the life of the project won't be enough to understand impact; he would prefer a 10 year window for analysis.
- School staff stated that they would like to see the fall partner meeting take place in October to avoid scheduling conflicts with the beginning of the school year in September. The school offers back to school night, parent meetings, and other opportunities for parents and students to connect with teachers and the school staff. Similarly, the dates for the Summer Institute may also need to be weighed as well. The year 3 Summer Institute took place on the first day of school, thus the school leaders could not attend.

Recommendations:

- School staff specifically requested information on measuring student motivation and ways to improve, including ways to mitigate external factors detrimental to motivation.
- Summer institute dates are selected by a planning group with representatives from each school. This group's efforts are informed by an open survey of all project participants to see what dates would work best for their schools. Partner meeting dates are set by the partners group. Administrators or a designee can work with the Summer Institute planning group to ensure that administrators can demonstrate their support for Exc-EL, district leadership's vision for the project, and EL students by attending these core project events.
- The importance of district, school, and developer leadership cannot be overstated. Continued support and guidance are necessary. As year 3 is underway, sustainability concerns loom large. Demonstrating the value of Exc-EL project components and cultural shifts will be crucial to maintaining support for team meeting time and continued professional learning

opportunities that focus on EL student supports and best practices. Expansion of staff involved in the project may also help build momentum for establishing a schoolwide culture focused on improvement and student support.

- School coaches and community partners may need to be revisited to ensure that the levels of engagement and the quality of interactions are substantial and becoming more consistent between and among schools.

2 TARRYTOWN SCHOOLS - SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL

2.1 PROJECT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

We met with the new Sleepy Hollow High School (SHHS) principal and the district EL chairperson.

- The new school leader is learning about Project Exc-EL and described the project as geared towards improving the academic and social needs of Latino students.
- The district chairperson noted that a great deal of program progress has been made since the beginning of year 2. School staff are reaching out to parents and families more as a result of Exc-EL. At this time, there are 11 Exc-EL team members at the school who collectively represent all of the content areas as well as the guidance office. These team members serve 60 shared EL students.
- Going forward, project expansion will include student-led conferences and deeper student engagement in the learning process.
- The school principal was not able to attend the Summer Institute due to scheduling conflicts related to her new position and the need to be on-campus to ensure a smooth transition in leadership.
- The district chairperson noted that the Summer Institutes have provided a great opportunity for teachers to share work between project schools and districts. However, the district chairperson was also unable to attend the Summer Institute due to scheduling conflicts related to meeting with administrators and project partners to plan for the new school year. But teachers did share information regarding the language progression professional development offered.
- The district chairperson stated that Project Exc-EL's support of co-teaching was particularly valuable. Specifically, the observation-based feedback from the developers regarding actual classroom practice was especially useful.
- The school has developed an EL mentor program as part of Project Exc-EL wherein teachers have been gender-matched with EL students in need of a mentor. The school leadership is working to reallocate funds so that these teachers can be compensated and the program can grow. Teachers currently volunteer for mentoring, but teacher interest is growing. School leaders would like to seek a grant to support the mentoring program.

- Heretofore, community partners have served the high school community in the following roles: Latino U has provided tutoring and college readiness information, Herff Jones helped provide materials for the summer transition program, RSHM Life Center continues to provide workshops for parents. The Jacob K. Burns Center works primarily with the middle school.
- Going forward, the project team plans to continue to track student progress, conduct more student-led conferences, and work to engage more families at the high school level.
- The school intends to integrate social studies co-teaching in the coming year. EL student science exam improvement, as attributed by school staff to co-teaching, has made the idea of co-teaching social studies feasible. Staff noted that the performance gains of EL students speak for themselves within the school and will ultimately aid in program sustainability. Teachers not directly involved in Exc-EL also provide positive feedback regarding EL student improvement. Thus, the school leadership stated that they will need to find a way to keep Exc-EL components going, even after grant funding ends.
- The district chairperson indicated that maintaining a strong relationship with Latino U, even in the future when Exc-EL grant monies terminate, is a priority.
- School leaders noted that they need to consider the cultural aspects of students being labeled ELL and SPED and how Exc-EL provides supports to classified students. Since these students are already dealing with language barriers, the issue of assimilating into school culture may need to be addressed as part of Exc-EL.

2.2 PROJECT SCHOOL TEAM MEETING OBSERVATION

We observed the first project Exc-EL team meeting at SHHS for the 2016-2017 academic year. Eight teachers and the district EL chairperson attended the meeting.

- The team discussed professional development offered at the Summer Institute (e.g., dynamic learning progressions training) and the need for additional school faculty to participate next year.
- The team began planning for year 3, noting that the mentoring program would need to expand. Goals for the team's work with students are also expanding—to include student academic success (e.g., passing classes), greater exposure to community service (e.g., hours of community service), and encouraging students to participate extra-curricular activities (e.g., join a club).
- Team members discussed student needs specifically—noting that they have many of the same students that they had last year. The team hopes that other teachers working with EL students will continue to reach out to the Exc-EL team for additional support with students to establish routine contact.

- The teachers piloting the mentor program discussed which students were involved in the mentor program, the emails that they send to colleagues regarding these students (to establish contact), and individual student updates.
- Teachers planned staffing of the homework center and reviewed their calendars to assign days to team members.
- The remainder of the team meeting was used to discuss specific students—their needs, updates on their academic progress, news relevant to school, and supports or strategies that may be used to assist students. The group shares updates regarding strategies that have or have not worked with students via a Google doc shared with the whole team.

Recommendations:

- Summer institute dates are selected by a planning group with representatives from each school. This group's efforts are informed by an open survey of all project participants to see what dates would work best for their schools. Partner meeting dates are set by the partners group. Administrators or a designee can work with the Summer Institute planning group to ensure that administrators can demonstrate their support for Exc-EL, district leadership's vision for the project, and EL students by attending these core project events.
- School coaches and community partners may need to be revisited to ensure that the levels of engagement and the quality of interactions are substantial and becoming more consistent between and among schools.
- School faculty noted that SPED and EL labels can adversely affect student self-perceptions. This issue may need to be addressed as part of larger faculty professional development efforts and specifically with the Exc-EL team and liaising counselors. Parent engagement around this issue may also help students move beyond initial concerns regarding these labels.

3 OSSINING SCHOOLS – ANNE M. DORNER MIDDLE SCHOOL

3.1 PROJECT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

We met with the Anne M. Dorner Middle School (AMDMS) principal and three assistant principals.

- School leaders stated that Exc-EL has empowered a group of educators to work together to plan deeply to meet the needs of students while "honing in" on EL students.
- Year 1 focused on creating wrap-around services for EL students that featured a tiering spreadsheet to align supports with needs. Year 2 included tweaking and evaluating these tiered supports to discern what has worked and what has not and improving the focus on students.
- School leaders stated that the PLC, the liaison model, and substantive professional development (e.g., SIOP under the school's best practice for all students [BPALS] label) are foundational for the project.

- The school's student liaison model was designed in year 2 and will be implemented in year 3. Members of the PLC have been assigned to students to get to know them well.
- Staff indicated that the developer helped the school maintain focus by asking critical questions that have helped shape the implementation of the project at the school.
- The school principal stated that, as part of the annual school budget process, monies are being considered to help sustain core components of Exc-EL (e.g., PLCs).
- The school offers EL student assistance during Saturday academy and after school. Staffing these was difficult in year 1, since some partners did not deliver on promises of support. This situation has improved in year 2 due to the efforts of the developer and Latino U.
- School staff stated that the RSHM Life Center works more with the high school in the district. Staff also stated that Herff Jones had a program that school staff initially wanted to bring in to the school but that it didn't quite align with what the school is doing at this time (i.e., the school is implementing the OVIS anti-bullying program already).
- Administrators indicated that work with CSSR coaches in year 2 was helpful (e.g., refocusing on co-teaching and Part 154), but the push toward student-led conferencing going forward has met resistance. In year 3, the school plans to test student-led conferences out following the high school's pilot.
- Additional student support efforts mentioned by school leaders included the Newcomer Club, a capstone project, ELA-related student voice curriculum, and ensuring that ELs are represented on the student council.
- School leaders stated that the school is very data focused and leverages Lexile data, iReady, and STAR Renaissance to aid differentiation efforts. As the school works on sustaining Exc-EL components, they plan to continue using their internally developed student and teacher surveys as well as attendance information and program participation rates.
- School leaders want more recognition of their efforts on the project.
- School leaders feel that the project implementation resembles a checklist at times, wherein strategies and components are set in stone which causes frustration for school staff.

3.2 PROJECT SCHOOL TEAM MEETING OBSERVATION

We observed the first project Exc-EL team meeting at AMDMS for the 2016-2017 academic year. Nine teachers, the school principal, and 3 assistant principals attended the meeting.

- The school team completed a sign-in sheet to record attendance, introduced a new team colleague, reviewed the meeting agenda, revisited the vision and focus of the coming project year, reviewed project years 1 and 2, and planned for year 3.
- The team reiterated that year 3 means that the grant end is 2 years away, so attentions must also focus on sustainability and continuing to shift the culture of the school to wrap-around student supports.

- Team members who participated in the Summer Institute briefed the group on the content and structure of the training. Table-hopping and the UCLA toolkit packet were deemed particularly valuable.
- The team expressed interest in bringing language progression training to their peers (i.e., basic communication skills [BCS] and cognitive academic language proficiency). One team member noted that BPALS might be used to integrate some of the language progression content into practice.
- To support the students, the team, and the larger faculty, the team adopted a meeting schedule as follows: team meeting--once a month, liaison meetings with students--once a month or 6 weeks, and grade-level tiering meetings to discuss student data and strategies—once a month. The team discussed scheduling further meetings at length; the number of meetings planned seemed quite large given the constraints of the school schedule and the threat of meeting fatigue.
- Listening to the team discuss the liaison meetings/model that was planned in year 2, it became clear that the work of the liaison meetings with students, which students would be involved, and what purpose these meetings would serve is not entirely clear.
- The team also discussed the tiering spreadsheet—what data points/columns are still missing and what needs to be added. Requiring regular, lengthy manual data entry by teachers may prove to be a stumbling block going forward.
- The team also briefly discussed the tutoring program for the coming year, as offered by Latino U.

Recommendations:

- School staff want more flexibility in implementing components; as project Exc-EL enters the third of 5 years of funding, such decisions need to be based on data, with an eye towards sustainability and longevity of programmatic supports.
- School leaders stated that the project partner meetings are too focused on presentations. They would prefer that the partner meetings be more interactive and focused on doing project work collaboratively with other schools and the partners—during the meetings.
- School administrators would like their own professional development opportunities to support leadership and continue building administrative skill sets as well.
- The liaison model, in its second year of development, seems to have an unclear structure, schedule, and purpose—as noted by team members while discussing the implementation of the liaison model.

4 OSSINING SCHOOLS - OSSINING HIGH SCHOOL

4.1 PROJECT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

We met with the Ossining High School (OHS) principal and the district EL director.

- The principal indicated that the district EL director has played a major role in Exc-EL, ensuring that the tutoring program, the newcomer's program, the SIFE program, and the partner relationships (i.e., Latino U and RSHM Life Center) have been successful.
- Year 3 will focus on personalized learning (i.e., student-led conferences), a critical Exc-EL component. CSSR coaches will work to support the school team as they expand and deepen these conferences to engage parents and empower students.
- The principal stated that there was a "rocky start" with regards to tutoring in year 1, but that this has improved in year 2, with Latino U providing tutors.
- The Jacob K. Burns Center worked with the school on the "I Learn America" project during project years 1 and 2.
- Westchester Community College (WCC) provided Spanish-language after school parent workshops that discussed how parents can support students.
- RSHM Life Center provided the school community with immigration law information at a critical time when students had many concerns regarding rumored Immigrations and Customs Enforcement activities in the community.
- Open Door Family Medical Centers and Foundation continues to operate an on-campus community health center.
- Nineteen of twenty-one EL students passed the Integrated Algebra Regents exam in year 2. As a result, trigonometry has been offered to EL students for the first time in the school's history.
- The school locally produced a vignette-based play entitled "Rowing To America"; each vignette was based on an EL student's experiences.
- The principal stated that the SIFE implementation, Part 154 implementation, push-in EL services, Spanish language GED program, Saturday tutoring were all put in place without support from Exc-EL; these components are not part of Exc-EL as funded. The principal also stated that Exc-EL "hit the jackpot" when Part 154 was required by the state because this "became project Exc-EL"; Exc-EL as designed did not feature co-teaching as a component.
- The principal expressed frustration with the school coaches; he stated that the coaches take a "1,000 foot view instead of a 1-foot view". Each time he meets with the coaches, they "ask me to tell them about my school" instead of moving forward with specific, relevant, necessary assistance. As an example, the principal mentioned the fact that the school established a SIFE program and a Spanish language GED program. In both instances, the principal felt that these programs should have received support (e.g., a contact, a connection

to a consultant, funding, etc.) from Exc-EL, though these programs are not Exc-EL components.

- The principal stated that CSSR provided a needs assessment report regarding OHS in year 1 and that no follow-up or clear next steps were provided.
- The district EL director stated that SIOP (an Exc-EL component) is something that the school already does.

Recommendations:

- The district EL leader noted that the Exc-EL PLC meetings were biweekly but are now monthly and that these meetings have helped the team have a "laser-like focus" on kids. Going forward, it may be necessary to integrate these meetings into the school day to further aid sustainability efforts.
- The principal stated that the coordination of partners could be improved. As an example, the principal has a 20 year track record of working with WCC, but the WCC contacts working with Exc-EL and the schools are not the same and are not communicating. Frequent staffing changes at WCC have exacerbated this issue.
- If a year 3 needs assessment revisit or follow-up by the developer and CSSR takes place, next steps could be outlined and planned with school leadership and staff to ensure that the resulting report has optimal impact.
- School leadership noted that the planned EL student summer transition program has not developed as planned.
- School leaders stated that they would like to work with Latino U to provide a Spanish-language parallel series of parent meetings that the school offers every year to English-speaking parents.
- Planning for sustainability is on the minds of school staff, especially as it regards maintaining partner-provided student supports and services (e.g., Latino U and RSHM Life Center). To prevent these partnerships from "drop[ping] when Exc-EL ends", as one school leader put it, project implementation and planning both need to focus.
- With the high EL student Integrated Algebra Regents exam passing rate (e.g., 19 of 21 EL students taking the exam passed), a Regents tutor may be lost. The school leaders may need to move quickly to ensure that a support gap (i.e., for incoming students) does not occur.
- The school principal noted that "graduation rates drive us here". For Project Exc-EL's intended impacts to be fully realized, core project components need to be implemented as planned and the successes and efforts of the school, the developer, and the partners all need to be recognized and supported.

REFERENCES

Becker, S.O. & Ichino, A. (2002). Estimation of Average Treatment Effects Based on Propensity Scores. *The Stata Journal, 2*(4), 358-377.

Bloom, H. S. (2003). Using "short" interrupted time series analysis to measure the impacts of whole school reforms: With applications to a study of Accelerated Schools. *Evaluation Review, 27*(1), 3-49.

Dehejia, R., & Wahba, S. (2002). Propensity score matching methods for non-experimental causal studies. *Review of Economics and Statistics, 84*, 151-161.

Nelson, M.C., Cordray, D.S., Hulleman, C.S., Darrow, C.L., & Sommer, E.C. (2012). A procedure for assessing intervention fidelity in experiments testing educational and behavioral interventions. *Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research, 39* (4), 374-396.

Rosembaum, P.R. and Rubin, D.B. (1984). Reducing Bias in Observational Studies Using Subclassification on the Propensity Score. *Journal of the American Statistical Association, 79*, 516-523.

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.