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## Academic Intervention Services

### Abstract

Academic Intervention Service (AIS) programs across New York state play a key role in the academic progress of students who have not met grade level standards in any number of core subjects. School districts have the freedom to develop and implement programs in order to meet the needs of their students. The author investigated goals and practices of AIS programs in urban and suburban schools to determine their effectiveness in preparing students for long term academic success. Data was obtained through electronic teacher surveys distributed to teachers currently teaching in grades six through twelve within Western New York. Teachers participating in the survey answered questions related to and commented on a range of topics related to their school's AIS program and its effectiveness in helping students overcome their barriers to learning.

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**Abstract**

Academic Intervention Service (AIS) programs across New York state play a key role in the academic progress of students who have not met grade level standards in any number of core subjects. School districts have the freedom to develop and implement programs in order to meet the needs of their students. The author investigated goals and practices of AIS programs in urban and suburban schools to determine their effectiveness in preparing students for long term academic success. Data was obtained through electronic teacher surveys distributed to teachers currently teaching in grades six through twelve within Western New York. Teachers participating in the survey answered questions related to and commented on a range of topics

related to their school's AIS program and its effectiveness in helping students overcome their barriers to learning.

### **Academic Intervention Services**

New York State Education regulations mandate that all students who do not meet the designated performance level on standardized assessments in specific subjects are required to receive Academic Intervention Services. Killeen and Sipple (2004) state, "AIS related regulations mandate the provision of additional instruction to students who needed extra time, support, and skills to meet the State learning standards" (p. 1). The support services offered to students in need of extra help can take on a variety of forms during the school day or outside of school time. New York State Education Regulations indicate that, "the intensity of such services (AIS) may vary but must be designed to respond to student needs as indicated through state assessment results and/or the district-adopted or district-approved procedure (100.1(g)). The provisions within the regulations also outline how services are scheduled for students and who is to provide them. The New York State Education regulations state:

- i. School districts may use time available for academic intervention instructional and/or student support services during the regular school day.
- ii. School districts may provide students with extended academic time beyond the regular school day and school year.
- iii. In public schools, academic intervention instructional and/or support services shall be provided by qualified staff who are appropriately certified pursuant to Part 80 of this Title. (100.2 ee )

Taking these regulations into account Academic Intervention Services offer school districts the opportunity to utilize qualified teachers in order to develop and implement effective instructional strategies based on specific student need. The time a student must spend in Academic Intervention Services may vary depending on the individual school district. New York State Education Regulations indicate:

Beginning September 1, 2000, academic intervention instructional and/or student support services shall commence no later than the beginning of the semester following a determination that a student needs such services. Services shall continue until a student's performance: a) meets or exceeds the State designated performance level on the next State assessment; or b) is shown to be likely to meet or exceed the State designated performance level on the next State assessment through achievement on the district-selected assessments of the levels specified in the district description of academic intervention services pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subdivision. (100.2 ee)

Time allotted within a student's schedule that allows for them to receive individualized instruction with the intent to only meet specific exit criteria based on a proficiency level demonstrated on a standardized test would accomplish only a short term goal for the student and the school. An ideal situation for both students and school would be to utilize the information

obtained from test results and using it to target a student's gaps in knowledge and also addressing any other barriers to learning. In doing this, schools would offer a quality intervention for students that develop the skills necessary to meet the short term goal of grade level proficiency and give them a base to be successful when faced with academic challenges in the future. School wide program improvements that are a direct result of knowledge gained through data results on state tests strengthen the quality of instruction within schools and helps to promote success for all students. In their study of successful schools within the Chicago School District Diamond and Spillane (2004) found that,

Within higher performing schools, there is a more substantive interpretation of the data.

The resources to enable data interpretation are greater in higher performing schools.

Therefore these schools are more likely to benefit from the information in ways that lead to instructional improvement. (p. 1165)

Increased accountability for schools and teachers based on high-stakes testing has caused changes to instruction that do not put the best interest of students first. In relation to changes in instructional practices as a result of increased accountability Supovitz (2009) states, "...the changes they motivate seem to be superficial adjustments in content coverage and test preparation activities rather than promoting deeper improvements in instructional practice" (p. 212). When schools use Academic Intervention Service programs to teach only the skills necessary to pass a state assessment they have done a disservice to the students in the program and in essence, marginalized the students receiving the Academic Intervention Services.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Academic Intervention Services are a support structure for students who are not making expected progress toward learning goals in school. The Commissioner of Education Regulations

in New York State mandate that for grades three through eight, "Schools shall provide academic intervention services when students: score below the State designated performance level on one or more of the State elementary assessments in English language arts, mathematics or science" (100.2 (ee2i)) and for grades nine through twelve, " the State designated performance level on any one of the State examinations in English Language Arts, mathematics, social studies or science that are required for graduation" (100.2(ee3i)). McDermott and Varenne (1995) state,

At the most general level, people in all cultures can use established cultural forms to disable each other. By established cultural forms, we mean anything built from physical structures that leave people locked out of public places, through bad school assessment systems that leave people from learning what is in some way needed, on to metaphors and tropes that deliver so consistently a view of people as less than they are. (p. 332)

McDermott and Varenne would argue that by mandating support services for students who do not meet the required state performance level on standardized assessments, the system is creating and disabling a specific group of students. These mandates, which may have been developed with good intentions, create a specific population of students in our educational system that are considered less than they are. A perceived disability based on a created cutoff score.

There are a number of different models for implementation of Academic Intervention Services for students. According to Killeen and Sipple (2004) there are four basic model types for Academic Intervention Services. Three of the four model types are outside of the regular classroom. One model implements services in place of electives and another model supplants the regular class (p. ii). From a Critical Race theoretical lens, defined by Yosso (2005) as "an analytical framework that challenges the ways race and racism impact education structures, practices and discourses," (p.74). This process of identification and subsequent placement in

AIS programs which ultimately take time out of a student's school experience exemplifies a systemic structure that marginalizes a specific population of students. The population of students that is affected by identification and placement can be easily seen in the New York State Report Card each year. According to the results listed on the New York State Report Card for 2010-2011, see Table A in Appendix A, there were a large number students required to receive academic intervention services during the 2011-2012 school year. In addition a large percentage of these students are Black or African American students and Hispanic or Latino students. Taking this into consideration, a key question that we must ask as educators is; Are the instructional support programs that are implemented in schools geared toward test preparation and short term fixes or are they designed to help students meet the short term goals of grade level standards and long term success in their academic career?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Academic Intervention Services Defined**

In education today a great deal of value has been placed on standardized test results. They have become the primary means for measuring student learning, teacher effectiveness and school quality. Supovitz (2009) states that, "testing has become indisputably a widely utilized and relatively inexpensive American federal and state policy instrument to leverage change in districts, schools, and classrooms" (p. 212). This is evident in New York State. The New York State Report Card (2010-2011) states that, "State Assessments are designed to help ensure that all students reach high learning standards. They show whether students are getting the knowledge and skills they need to succeed at the elementary, middle and commencement levels and beyond" (p. 1). As a result of this rationale state regulations and policy changes have been geared toward programs for district implementation in order to promote student achievement on

standardized tests. The New York State Report Card (2010-2011) also states that, "The State requires that students who are not making appropriate progress toward the standards receive academic intervention services" (p. 1). School districts across New York State utilize academic intervention services as a means of academic support for students who have not met the state learning standards, measured by standardized tests in specific subjects or who have demonstrated specific barriers to learning that would prevent them from meeting those standards.

The Commissioner of Education Regulations (1999) define Academic Intervention Services as:

Additional instruction which supplements the instruction provided in the general curriculum and assists students in meeting the State learning standards... and/or student support services which may include guidance, counseling, attendance, and study skills which are needed to support improved academic performance... Academic intervention services are intended to assist students who are at risk of not achieving the State learning standards in English language arts, mathematics, social studies and/or science, or who are at risk of not gaining the knowledge and skills needed to meet or exceed designated performance levels on state assessments. (Section 100.1(g))

This definition of academic intervention services sheds light on the specific focus of what these support services are intended to do. The Commissioner of Education Regulations also indicates the specific student population that must receive these support services. According to the regulations, schools are required to provide academic intervention services for students who score below the state designated performance level on one or more of the State assessments in English language arts, mathematics, social studies or science in grades four through twelve. Also, in grades nine through twelve any student who does not score above the designated

performance level on any assessment necessary for graduation must also receive academic intervention services. There are also provisions outlining required services for all grades k-12 and are based upon a district-developed or district -adopted procedure that is followed consistently at all grade levels, 100.2(ee). High academic standards are an important piece of the success of any educational system and are created with the intent to promote student progress and learning. As in any situation involving a specific benchmark, different categories of students are created. It is evident from the results displayed in Table A the category of students requiring AIS consists predominantly of students who are not from the dominant culture.

### **Student Population**

There are a large number of students in New York State that require academic intervention services based on only their standardized test results. Table A displays test result data from the New York State Public Schools Report Card 2010-2011. The values in Table A represent the percentage of students who required academic intervention services during the 2011-2012 school year as a result of their standardized test scores in 2010-2011. The values in Table A for grades three through eight were obtained by taking the difference between 100% (all students tested) and the percentage of students that scored a 3-4 on a particular exam. The values for the five regents Exams were obtained by taking the difference between 100% and the percentage of students who scored at or above a 65.

Table A

Percentage of students required to receive academic intervention services; 2011-2012

		Percent of Students in Specified Group that did not meet State Mandated Proficiency Level				
Grade Level	Exam	All Students	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	White
3	ELA	44	61	58	31	33

3	Mathematics	40	57	53	20	31
4	ELA	43	59	56	29	34
4	Mathematics	33	52	45	15	24
4	Science	12	20	19	7	6
5	ELA	46	63	60	29	37
5	Mathematics	34	51	45	15	25
6	ELA	44	63	62	32	31
6	Mathematics	37	56	51	16	27
7	ELA	52	72	70	27	39
7	Mathematics	35	57	50	17	24
8	ELA	53	72	71	39	41
8	Mathematics	40	62	55	17	30
8	Science	31	53	49	22	15
Regents Exam	Comprehensive English	16	NA	NA	NA	NA
Regents Exam	Integrated Algebra	27	NA	NA	NA	NA
Regents Exam	Global History and Geography	31	NA	NA	NA	NA
Regents Exam	U.S. History and Government	20	NA	NA	NA	NA
Regents Exam	Living Environment	19	NA	NA	NA	NA

\*NA = Information not available

According to Table A there were a significant number of students that required academic intervention services at each grade level during the 2011-2012 School-Year. In examining the breakdown by student group in grades three through eight, a large percentage of Black or African America students and Hispanic or Latino students require academic intervention services. Chellman, Weinstein, Stiefel and Schwartz (2004) state, “there is considerable evidence in the persistence of gaps in academic performance between white and non-white (specifically, Hispanic and Black students) in both state and national data on standardized test scores from early childhood to high school” (p. 3). This trend can be easily seen in the New York State Report Card. The percentage of Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino students that require academic intervention services is significantly higher than the percentage of white

students for all grade levels and all tests. As a result, academic intervention service programs within New York schools have a large population of minority students who have struggled to meet the grade level standards set forth by the state. The implementation of effective programs is essential to the immediate and long range academic success of these students.

### **Programs**

Academic Intervention Service models can take on variety of different forms depending on a school district's plans and implementation. In referring to Education Department Regulations Killeen & Sipple (2004) state,

The guidelines also clearly encourage schools to innovate new instructional strategies to meet student deficits through AIS. Policy guidelines do not suggest specific strategies to change the instructional content or pedagogy, or for that matter, provide suggestions on how professional development could improve instructional services within the AIS plan.  
(p. 1)

Relative freedom for districts to develop and implement support services tailored to student need presents an excellent opportunity for schools to utilize effective programs that are beneficial to their students. As in many cases, theory doesn't always match practice. Killeen and Sipple (2002) state:

while it is clear that nearly all school districts (97%) (NY state) are following the state-mandated model for providing supplementary instruction for underperforming students (i.e., AIS), it is important to investigate what the additional instructional opportunities look like. Very little is known about what type of instructional services are being provided in AIS classes, or who is teaching these classes. (p.20)

There are a variety of strategies and programs that schools can implement to support students academically so that they make progress toward meeting grade level standards. Diamond and Spillane (2004) found that, "The high-performing schools use the test data in ways that seem consistent with the arguments of testing proponents. The test results are used to define students' specific instructional needs and provide a basis for school level instructional decision making" (p. 1165). Effective use of test result data to improve school programs and student learning is the ideal situation in our system. Sometimes this is not the case. Instructional practice that is implemented as a result of standardized test results can vary from school to school. According to Diamond & Cooper (2007) a sample of elementary schools in Chicago utilized their support services differently. They stated,

schools we studied that had histories of high student achievement used testing data to guide school-wide, systematic instructional improvement, in contrast, the probation schools we examined used testing data to devise strategies designed to avoid sanctions without fundamentally transforming educational practice. (p. 242)

Different uses of student testing data based on school need rather than student need creates a system that perpetuates inequality. Diamond and Spillane (2004) concluded that, "differences in responses to accountability policy in different types of schools may increase rather than reduce educational stratification" (p. 1148).

The answer to better education for all students is not in strategies that are geared toward short term fixes in order for students to meet state test requirements. Academic Intervention Services has the potential to fall in this category. In their study of the affects of performance standards on schools, Killeen and Sipple (2002) found 83% of the superintendents in their study reported their districts teach test taking strategies. Also 97% of those superintendents believe the

strategies are effective for improving student ability to pass Regents Exams. Test preparation has also become a focus in general education instruction. Supovitz (2009) states that, "teachers tended to narrow their emphasis on the curriculum to that which they thought to be tested and to prepare students for the test rather than the larger learning goals in the curriculum" (p. 217). As standardized testing becomes more of the driving force behind policy, program and curriculum decisions it is important for educators to put students first and make sure all students have the opportunity to receive a quality education.

### **Goal of Implementation**

Academic intervention services are the result of a state wide push for standards based reform in New York State. Killeen and Sipple (2004) indicate that, "beginning in the fall of 2000, New York State school districts were required to implement Academic Intervention Services (AIS) that linked underperforming students with heightened resources to improve their performance" (p. 1). Standards based reform has been an issue in education for a number of years. Many have argued that we are not effectively measuring school improvement by focusing on accountability through student results on standardized tests. Student test results are not the only means to measure the quality of schools, teachers or student learning. Schools serve students and their communities in a variety of ways that cannot be measured by aggregated scores at the end of the school year. The argument has been made that by imposing accountability through testing, our education system departs from what is important in an instructive setting. Sofu (2008) argues that, "our current accountability system under NCLB distorts school curricula with its emphasis on basic skills"(p. 393). Sofu also states, "The major challenge today is ensuring that all students make significant progress toward the achievement of twenty-first century academic standards and skills"(p. 392). A more narrow curriculum and an

emphasis on basic skills does not prepare students for the critical thinking and problem solving that is necessary to be successful in today's world. Standards based reform has forced schools to adjust their practices but not always for the better. Supovitz (2009) states, "high stakes assessments do motivate teachers and administrators to change their instructional practices and align their efforts with high stakes exams. However, the changes they motivate tend to be superficial adjustments in content coverage and test preparation activities rather than promoting deeper improvements in instructional practice" (p. 212). Supovitz speaks to a broader issue of curriculum, teaching and learning within our schools, but his statement applies directly to academic intervention services and the goal of the support systems for kids who need services.

### **Research Question**

Although Academic Intervention Services play a small role in the bigger structure of testing and remediation in the New York State education system, how they are implemented and utilized in schools is a clear indication of the intent of the program and the goals of the school. Curriculum, instruction and support services aimed at higher test scores beg the question: Is our current system offering all students an equal opportunity to access a high quality comprehensive education that prepares them for the challenges they will face as adults and members of society? The goal of education is to offer all students the quality instruction and support they need in order to be successful in the short term and work to build the skills necessary for their future success. Teachers must work to make connections with their students, offer quality instruction and support to meet academic expectations in the short term and build the confidence to face challenges in the future.

## **Methodology**

### **Context**

I will be collecting data and information regarding Academic Intervention Service programs offered to students within suburban and rural schools located in Western New York. Academic Intervention Service programs are mandated by New York State Education regulations in order to help students across the state to meet grade level standards. The goal of my research is to determine the types of programs that are being utilized in different school settings and whether or not those programs are effective in preparing students for long term academic success. Western New York is an area of the state that offers a wide variety of school settings and diverse student populations. Syracuse, Buffalo and Rochester are three of the largest urban school systems in the state of New York. There are many suburban school districts in and around all three big cities as well as a large number of rural communities and schools in areas outside the urban centers. As a result of this, Western New York offers an excellent opportunity to obtain data that will give an accurate picture of Academic Intervention Service program implementation and effectiveness.

### **Participants**

Participants in my research consisted of teachers from suburban and rural districts in Western New York. Teacher participants varied in their tenure and subject area. Of the 47 teacher participants 57% had 10 or more years of teaching experience and 94% had at least four years of teaching experience. All participants taught at various grade levels ranging from six through 12. Participant subject area consisted of all four core subjects, Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies as well as a number of other classes such as Physical education,

Art, Music and Business. Participants taught a variety of levels within their subjects also. Some participants taught freshman Science while others taught AP Biology or AP World History.

### **Researcher Stance**

My primary role in this study will be one of collecting and analyzing data. I designed the survey questions and distribution plan for the electronic survey then put the plan into action by sending the survey out to participants electronically. Once I receive responses from the surveys I will transition to analyzing the results and interpreting the findings.

I am currently a high school math teacher in a suburban school district in Western New York. I have enjoyed a 17 year teaching career in the public school setting in and out of New York State. I am currently working toward earning my Master's of Science in Special Education and plan on completing my course work in the fall of 2013.

### **Method**

In this study I am examining the different types of Academic Intervention Service programs offered at a variety of different schools in Western New York in order to determine whether the support being offered to students in Academic Intervention Service programs has a positive effect on their long term academic success. My research for this study was initiated by contacting principals of a number of different suburban, and rural schools in order to obtain permission to send electronic surveys to their teaching staffs. My goal of the initial contact with principals was to introduce myself and discuss what I was attempting to accomplish with my research and study. After receiving permission to distribute my surveys electronically I sent them out to the teaching staffs of the respective schools.

### **Informed Consent and Protecting the Rights of Participants**

Participants within my study consisted of teachers from suburban and rural schools in Western new York. In order to keep their anonymity I did not refer to any of the participants or school by name in my findings or report. I outlined my intent of the study and conveyed to the participants that their responses were being used for information purposes only. I indicated their responses to the electronic survey would be anonymous and that all responses would be analyzed as a whole group. I would not know how any one participant responded to the questions and the information they offered during the electronic survey would be utilized to establish the effectiveness of Academic Intervention Service programs on student success in Western New York. Participants within my study were given a choice to participate. They had a clear understanding that their response to the electronic surveys was voluntary and anonymous. As a result of this participants were not required to sign a consent form.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection for my research was accomplished by utilizing electronic surveys distributed to teachers in suburban and rural districts in Western New York. Surveys were sent only after obtaining permission from school principals. Along with the survey I explained who I was and the purpose of my study. Teachers were given a an initial deadline of two weeks for completion of the survey. I did extend the deadline another week in hopes of obtaining more respondents. The surveys consisted of ten questions broken into three different categories. The question categories were designed to obtain information regarding a specific aspect of Academic Intervention Services that I felt was relevant to my study. The questions were not listed by category in the survey but were mixed up within the ten questions. My questions were geared to elicit information with regard to Academic Intervention Service program specifics, student

progress within the program and general participant and school information. See Appendix for actual survey questions.

### **Data Analysis**

My data analysis was aided by the structure of my survey. (See Appendix) I specifically designed my survey in order to elicit information to answer my research question. Through my research process I distributed 154 electronic surveys to teachers in Western New York. The total number of teachers that took the survey was 47. Four questions within my survey were geared toward teacher and school information. Teaching experience, grade level, subject taught and school type were questions that were specifically asked in the survey. Analysis of the data from these responses was straight forward. It gave me a picture of my participants and the schools in which they taught. Three questions within the survey dealt exclusively with Academic Intervention Service program information within the participants' schools. These questions were geared to elicit information on Academic Intervention Service program models, goals and instructional techniques utilized within the programs. The remaining three questions in the survey centered on student progress monitoring, their eventual transition out of programs offered and the ultimate academic benefit for students. My analysis of the data began with looking at specific Academic Intervention Service program information that had a direct relationship to students academic progress and experience within the programs. Academic Intervention Service model types implemented by schools the instructional services offered to students in those schools and the program goals are all aspects of the support system that directly relate to students success and positive experiences. After examining the models and instructional techniques I began to look at how student progress was monitored within the programs and how students transition out of the programs in their schools. My goal was to get a better understanding of how

Academic Intervention Services are beneficial for students' long term academic success. By analyzing how services are incorporated into students' schedules, the academic support they are receiving and the pathways students can follow to transition out of the programs I would be able to get a better understanding of how the system works and the ultimate benefit for student academic success. Another aspect of my analysis was how the responses from various questions related to each other. The relationship between questions was an important aspect to my research. Responses involving the Academic Intervention Service program systems should be related in that systems in place in the programs should work together to promote students success. For example, progress monitoring of students should directly relate to how a student transitions out of the program and the types of services and instructional techniques employed to support students within the program should directly support the program goals. My analysis of the data also took this into account. I was looking for relationships across all programmatic questions. Quality programs have systems in place that work together to achieve a goal. Long term academic success for students in Academic Intervention Service programs is the goal.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Teacher and School Information**

Teacher participants within the study were from suburban and rural districts in Western New York. The large majority of the 47 participants in the study taught at the high school level and had 10 or more years of teaching experience. Of the 47 participants in the study 42 of them were high school level teachers. This equated to 89% of the respondents. Of the 47 participants 27 had 10 or more years of teaching experience. This equated to 57% of respondents in the survey. Only six percent of respondents had 3 or less years of teaching experience. This is significant in that veteran teachers within schools have more experience with how programs and

systems within schools operate. As a result, information obtained through survey responses would give a clearer picture of how Academic Intervention Service programs are run within their schools. All respondents to the survey taught grades six through 12 in a public school setting. Subject area in which respondents taught varied across many disciplines. All core subject areas, Math, English, Science and Social Studies were represented by participants in the survey. Courses such as Business, Art, Music and Physical Education were also represented. Some respondents indicated they were Special Education teachers which would indicate they work across a number of subjects. The wide variety of subjects and the relative consistency of teacher experience lends credibility to the information given by participants in the survey. A clearer picture of how Academic Intervention Service systems work will help to determine if students are learning skills that will have a long term academic benefit for them.

### **Program Information**

The goal of the research of this study was to determine if Academic Intervention Service programs in Western New York are offering the support to students that will help them to achieve long term academic success. The quality and effectiveness of any program or system utilized to help student achievement is dependent upon the structure, services and goals. In order to get a clearer picture of these aspects of Academic Intervention Service programs within schools participants were asked to respond to questions directly related to program model and structure, the types of services and support students receive in the programs and the goals of the respective programs. Twenty-nine of the 47 participants in this study responded to the question related to program goals at their school. Upon analysis of the data 17% indicated that improving test scores was the only goal of the Academic Intervention Service program in their building. In total, 45% or 13 of the 29 responses indicated tests scores as either the primary goal of the

Academic Intervention Service program in their school or one of the goals in the program.

These statistics match the responses from participants indicating teaching basic skills in content areas as a goal of Academic Intervention Services programs in their school. There was a total of 11 respondents out of the 29 that indicated basic skills as the only goal of the program. Two of the participants indicated basic skills along with another program goal. The final category of goals as indicated by participants in the survey was students earning class credit. Six of the 29 responses indicated class credit was a goal of the Academic Intervention Service program in the school they were employed. Class credit was not indicated as the only goal by any of the participants. Multiple goals for Academic Intervention Service programs is a good indication of positive effects on student academic success.

The goals of any academic program are achieved in large part by the types of instruction and strategies utilized by teachers to support students in those programs. The survey used to gather information in this study asked participants to indicate the types of services students in the Academic Intervention Service programs were offered in their school. Participants were given the option to select any of the choices that applied to their school program. The choices were individual instruction, targeted instruction based on test data, test taking strategies, subject content and reading strategies. Participants also had the option of listing other services not identified by the survey. The three choices of individualized instruction, targeted instruction based on test data and subject content were the most identified services by participants. Each of the three were chosen by 27 of the 33 participants who responded to this question. This ratio equates to 82% of respondents. This is a significant piece of information in that according to participants in this study students are getting individualized instruction based on need. This is a clear benefit academically in both the short and long term for students receiving services. Test

taking strategies and reading strategies were identified by 76% and 64% of the respondents respectively.

Program models within schools are also a key piece to the success of the program and students. The ability for students to have convenient access to the support they are mandated to receive helps to ensure that they are getting the support they need on a regular basis and making progress toward the goals of the program. This was a finding by Killeen and Sipple (2004), they indicated that scheduling Academic Intervention Services for students during the school day would help in students attendance. They state,

School administrators and teachers commented that if they could change something about their AIS program, it would be to integrate AIS into the school day rather than providing it before or after school. Providing it during the school day and integrating it into the class schedule would better ensure that students attend. (p. ii)

Survey participants were asked to indicate the model type that was being utilized by their school. They were given the choice of four different model types to choose from or could list another type utilized by their building. The model type choices were given as students receiving services inside the regular classroom, students receiving services held during class time outside of the regular classroom, students receiving services in addition to regular classroom in lieu of electives and students receiving services in place of the regular class. Forty-five percent of respondents to this question indicated their school utilized the model in which students received services in addition to the regular classroom in lieu of electives. Thirty-six percent of respondents indicated their school utilized the model in which students received support inside the regular classroom. Twelve percent of respondents indicated services for students in their school were held during class time and outside the regular classroom. According to respondents, no school utilized the

model that offered Academic Intervention Services to students in place of the regular class. Opportunities for students to access the services they need in order to meet the grade level standard are essential to their success. The most utilized Academic Intervention Service program models indicated by participants in this study allow students to have access to this support on a regular basis. Easy and consistent access to support is one piece of the puzzle. How students progress toward the goals of the program is monitored important aspect of program success.

### **Student Progress Monitoring**

Monitoring student progress toward the Academic Intervention Services program goals and their proficiency in a subject is a powerful tool in teaching and learning. Participants in this study were asked to identify how student progress toward exit from the Academic Intervention Service program in their school was measured. Twenty-eight participants responded to the question posed. Fifteen of the 28 respondents indicated state test results were one of the tools used to measure student progress. Of these 15 respondents, 10 identified other methods of measuring students progress along with state test results. The other methods indicated by participants were class grades, class exams and teacher observations. Class grades to monitor student progress was indicated by 12 of the 28 respondents. Of the remaining two types of progress monitoring teacher observation was indicated by five of the respondents to this question and class exams was indicated by four respondents. The three categories of measuring student progress outside of state test results lend some credibility to the thought that students are getting quality instruction that will help them in the long run. By utilizing multiple measures of progress in the form of class grades and class exams teachers are better suited to closely monitor progress and offer support more targeted support in the areas a student may need. Class grades and exams

also hold the students more accountable on a daily basis and allow them to see their progress over shorter periods of time.

A second question related to student progress asked participants to indicate how students receiving Academic Intervention Services in their school transition out of the program. Once again state test results was the predominate choice. Eighty-four percent of respondents indicated that passing the state exam in which they had failed the previous year was a way for students to transition out of the program. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that a student could exit the program if they showed subject matter competency as determined by the teacher and 41% indicated showing subject matter competency as determined by the school as a means to transition out of the program. These results are consistent with New York State Regulations on students exit from Academic Intervention Service programs. Regulation 100.2 of the New York State Education Regulations indicate students may exit Academic Intervention Service programs by showing that they are likely to meet or exceed the performance level necessary to pass the state exam. State test results play a large role in Academic Intervention Services. It is no surprise that they were predominate response for the two questions in the survey involving measuring progress of students toward goals of programs.

The final question in the survey asked participants to agree or disagree with statements regarding the original research question: Do Academic Intervention Service programs enable students to have long term academic success or are they only providing skills and strategies necessary for kids to reach the minimum competency level on state exams? The first statement in the survey in which participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with was, "Strategies and academic skills taught within the Academic Intervention Services program at my school enable students to have long term academic success." Twenty of the 32 participants that

responded agreed with the statement on some level. This is a powerful piece of information in that the majority of teachers in this study believe the support offered to students will have long term benefits for students. This finding is consistent with results from other questions in the survey in that schools are utilizing multiple measures of progress and a variety of instructional methods of in order to support students receiving services. The second statement in the survey in which participants were asked to agree or disagree was, "Strategies and academic skills taught within the Academic Intervention Services program at my school are geared toward passing the exam required for exit from the program." Twenty-seven of the 31 respondents indicated they agreed with this statement. The result of this finding is also consistent with the responses to previous questions in the survey that were related to program goals and exit. Although state test results are not the only route students may follow to exit Academic Intervention Service programs they remain the standard by which teachers in this survey base the student exit criteria.

### **Conclusions**

The results of the research conducted in this study yielded a number of different findings that shed light on the effectiveness of Academic Intervention Service programs on the long term academic success of students. A major theme across many of the questions involving program services and student progress monitoring was state test preparation and passage. Despite the emphasis on the relationship between Academic Intervention Services and state test scores there were a number of other findings within the study that indicated programs are working to help students learn more than test taking strategies. In addition to the test preparation there was a great deal of information that indicated students are getting the skills they need in quality environments that will make them successful in the long term. Individualized and targeted instruction based on student test data is one method participants indicated was being utilized by

their schools to help students meet their learning goals. Targeted instruction customized to student need is a great tool in helping students learn the concepts or content they are struggling with. The ability of teachers to diagnose learning gaps of students and then have a classroom setting in which to deliver the appropriate instruction is critical for student success in both the short and long term. Flexible instructional settings within program models is another valuable tool in helping students to succeed. Participants in this study indicated their schools utilized program models that offered services both in and out of the regular classroom setting. Students were able to access the services they need during the school day. Finally program goals that focus on aspects other than test results is an indicator that Academic Intervention Service programs are offering students opportunities to show they have made progress toward meeting the grade level standard. Multiple measures of student growth is another aspect of the research that would indicate positive long term academic benefits for students.

A logical step in further research would be to isolate and examine any of the three elements of Academic Intervention Service programs that are listed above. By focusing in on how instructional methods, program design and program goals specifically promote student progress within Academic Intervention Service programs researchers would be able to identify methods that make a positive difference in the academic success of students and help to design effective programs in the future.

Although the ultimate goal for Academic Intervention Service programs is to offer the support necessary for students to meet the grade level standard as determined by state test results, schools are utilizing a number of different methods and techniques to help students make progress toward that goal. The findings outlined in this study identified positive aspects of

Academic Intervention Service programs with regard to the long term academic success of students.

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**Appendix A**

Electronic Survey Questions and Results

**1. Please indicate the number of years of your teaching experience.**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1-3		3	6%
2	4-7		9	19%
3	8-10		8	17%
4	10+		27	57%
	Total		47	100%

**2. Which grade level do you currently teach?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	k-5		0	0%
2	6-8		5	11%
3	9-12		42	89%
	Total		47	100%

**3. Which of the following models does your school utilize in order to implement Academic Intervention Services?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Inside regular classroom (inclusive and additive)		12	36%
2	Held during class time, outside the regular classroom (self-contained, pull-out and additive)		4	12%
3	In addition to regular classroom, in lieu of electives (self-contained and additive)		15	45%
4	In place of the regular class (self-contained and supplanting)		0	0%
5	Other		2	6%
	Total		33	100%

Other
additional class period 1-1, plus in class support
All of the above

#### 4. How is a student's progress toward exit from the Academic Intervention Service program in your school measured?

Text Response
Grade/average and increase in skills from beginning of the semester until the end
teacher monitors progress toward learning goals, quarter grades, exam scores
Passing the Summative Assessment for their current course.
I don't know
Progress in the classes (how well students do in class and report card grades); scores on midterm exams and final exams; scores on Regents exams
Results on year end assessments, unit assessments, and grades
academic performance, teacher observations and recommendations,
test scores, teacher input
student growth as measured through classroom tests and report card grades
If they pass the regents they are usually removed
Passing a regents exam
test scores, teacher reports
Class average in regular classroom, state assessment score, regional assessment score
by review from a PPS (pupil personnel services committee)
On their grades
outcome exit assessments and state tests
Monitored through curriculum supervisors at the building level, oversight committee at district level looks at processes for effective administration
Meeting IEP goals and earning passing grades in all academic areas. Social/emotional/behavioral expectations are also considered.
If they met their incoming AIS goal
Standardized Tests
Progress Reports, Report Cards, Anecdotal Records, Informal Assessments, State and Regents Exams, Classroom observations
Revisiting the case
Observations of improvement in grades by core teachers and successful passage of Regents examinations.
By students demonstrating competence in their academic classes.
Success in standard classroom
class average, success on Regents exam
Test scores
cohort meetings on a marking period basis (10 weeks). Special focus at midterm time and depending upon the student at the 5 week interim time within a 10 week quarter

**5. Which of the following services do students in your school's Academic Intervention Service program receive? (check all that apply)**

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Individualized instruction	27	82%
2	Targeted instruction based on test data	27	82%
3	Test taking strategies	25	76%
4	Subject content	27	82%
5	Reading strategies	21	64%
6	Other, (please list)	2	6%

Other, (please list)
Content based support (mathematics)
monitoring assignment completion

|

**6. In what type of school setting do you teach?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Urban		0	0%
2	Suburban		34	72%
3	Rural		13	28%
	Total		47	100%

**7. Please indicate the subject/s that you currently teach.**

Text Response
English Special Education
math
Mathematics
Geometry
Special Education (English, Social Studies, and Resource Room)
Integrated Algebra, Algebra 2/Trigonometry
physics
integrated algebra, earth science, global history 1, english 9
business/tech
Special education: 4 core subjects
Social Studies: Global Studies II, AP World, and War and Holocaust
Spanish
Earth science
Math
English
English 9 and English 11AP
math ais and algebra 2/ trig lab
All levels of Latin from Introduction to college 201 option for juniors and seniors plus AIS English-last semester 12th grade,this 9th
Living Environment (Grade 10)
Technology Education
Economics, Participation in Governemnt, Humanities, Study Skills (academic support for students with special needs)
7th grade science and 11/12th grade applied science
Physics
AIS English Grades 7-12

**Appendix**

Question 7 responses continued.

Physical Education

Special Education

algebra, precalculus

Integrated Algebra

Art

Chemistry

Integrated Algebra, Algebra 2-Trig, Advanced Algebra 2-Trig

Living Environment and AP Biology

health

PE

instrumental music

Social Studies

ELA 7,10,12,ap lit

Italian

SPED-6-1-1

Art, Sculpture, Studio in Fine Arts

consultant teacher for grade levels 9-12

Chorus, Advanced Chorus, AP Music Theory, Lessons

LOTE

earth science and environmental science

Spanish

**8. Students in the Academic Intervention Services program in your school may transition out of the program once they: (check all that apply)**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Show subject matter competency as determined by teacher		16	50%
2	Show subject matter competency as determined by school		13	41%
3	Pass state exam with required score		27	84%
4	Other, (please list)		2	6%

Other, (please list)
I don't know
determined by CSE Chairperson

## 9. What are the goals for the Academic Intervention Service program in your school?

Text Response
Increase basic core skills and increase state test scores
To help them meet the grade level standards and fill in content gaps in order for them to exit the program.
Increase students test scores
I think to provide additional support to bring students up to the passing level of performance
The goals are that students will meet the standards in English and math and will make progress in their classes.
Increase student knowledge, understanding, and work completion in a smaller class environment
to increase student skill levels and consequently achievement levels
student success
to support students
Help students that are struggling on Regents examsn
To get them to graduate
support student learning
Improve reading skills, improve writing skills.
to support students who are not achieving at grade level
Help students pass their classes and assessments
student success and continued mastery of ELA skills
At the secondary level, requirement completion is the goal (State Assessment goals, Course Completion Goals)
To gain as many experineces as possible with the non-classified kids
To pre-teach or re-teach all co-taught academic areas. To support electives and other classes.
Depends on the student- sometimes to pass the course, sometimes to pass an exam, etc.
Remediation
Get students to pass State and Regents assesments as well as English class
Help kids to graduate
Support students struggling in core classes and provide supplementary preparation for Regents examinations.
To improve student's skills and cognitive framework to fall within the norm for their cohort
Focuses on pre-teaching, homework assistance and lesson reinforcement (more practice)
help students to pass subject areas in which they struggle or did not do well on the previous regents exam
Student success
TO support studney understnading in science with the goal of completeing a passing grade of 65 on all State Regents Exams and passing the class with a 65 or better.

## 10. Indicate your level of agreement for each of the statements below

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	Strategies and academic skills taught within the Academic Intervention Services program at my school enable students to have long term academic success.	1	8	3	16	4	32	3.44
2	Strategies and academic skills taught within the Academic Intervention Services program at my school are geared toward passing the exam required for exit from the program.	2	1	1	22	5	31	3.87