

**Analysis – Social Studies Class Analyses
Schroon Lake Central School
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Overview of Conclusions

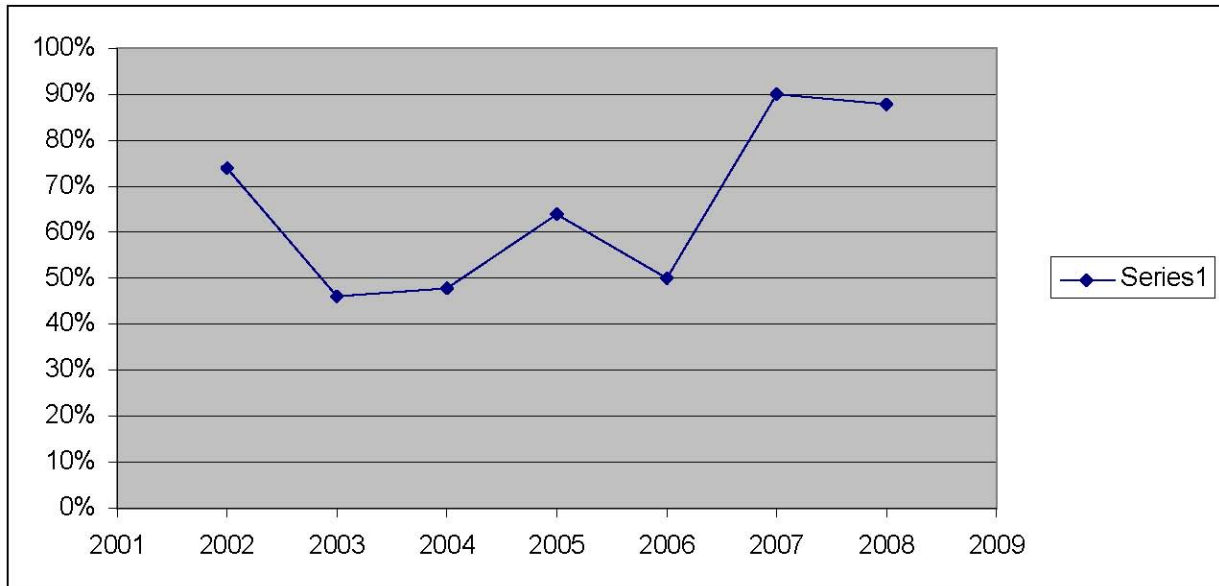
- Students in grade 8 hit **another** all-time high class average (88% earned 3 or 4) for the NYS Social Studies Test compared to the past 5 years compared to other 8th graders at SLCS **and** compared to 3 other schools.
- Of particular note is that **40%** of this class scored 4!
- The **.8** correlation coefficient between the average class grade and the average score on the state test confirms my class grading system continues to measure the state standards in Social Studies.
- Strategies implemented since October 2006 appear to have been successful in enhancing student performance on the state test.

This analysis is a follow-up to one done since October 2006. The original purpose of the analysis was to develop a plan for increasing student performance on the NYS Social Studies Test based on measurable data. The continuing purpose is to identify successful strategies and to identify any predictive measures from class assessments.

Summary of performance on the 8th grade Social Studies test since 2002 at Schroon Lake

| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 4 | 13% | 5% | 8% | 12% | 4% | 32% | 40% |
| 3 | 61% | 41% | 50% | 52% | 46% | 58% | 46% |
| 2 | 26% | 55% | 42% | 36% | 38% | 11% | 12% |
| 1 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 13% | 0% | 0% |
| | | | | | | | |
| score 3-4 | 74% | 46% | 48% | 64% | 50% | 90% | 88% |

Graph: Percentage of students earning 3 or 4 on NYS Social Studies Test since and including 2002



Scoring 3-4: Comparison with three local schools 2002-2007

| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | AVG |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| SLCS | 74% | 46% | 48% | 64% | 50% | 90% | |
| Willsboro | 81% | 74% | 47% | 84% | 56% | | |
| Johnsburg | 81% | 74% | 47% | 84% | 90% | | |
| Minerva | 43% | 40% | 60% | 73% | 66% | | |

Strategies List

These are the strategies implemented since October 2006:

- Administer midterm exam after 5 day review of all material since grade 7.
- End regular class work 30th April for an entire month of review in May before the exam.
- Align the grading system more closely with the NYS standards (use state rubrics to grade papers, use state test questions on examinations, etc.) Try to make the average difference between the overall class average and exam score 7 points. **New in 2007:** Assess correlation coefficient, NYS exam grades and class scores.
- Drop only one grade per quarter.
- Restrict extra credit options and eliminate grades that only measure effort, not knowledge or skill.
- Maintain a web site (JonesHistory.net) with extensive practice test questions and review materials.

These are the additional strategies implemented since January 2007:

- Assign constructed response questions from old NYS exams for a period of 20 weeks. Distribute so few students have the same paper in a given week.
- Review method: review by theme instead of chronology. (I think this was particularly effective.) The themes were drawn from old US History Regents exam thematic essay questions.
- 7th and 8th grade tests now include multiple-choice questions from old State Exams. (Although grade 8 goes to all short-response tests by September for the regular monthly class exams. This seems to enhance writing.)
- Additional AIS offered to bottom 1/3 performing students in the class to one hour per week.

A failed strategy implemented in 2007-2008: Students in danger of scoring only 1-2 were assigned nightly 4-question short answer assignments. The questions were short-answer versions of multiple-choice test questions from old exams. Students could do the assignments orally or in writing. Questions were repeated. These students handed in very few of these assignments and suffered an extreme drop in grades. I proposed to them that any of them who scored 3 or 4 on the state test would have their 4th quarter average adjusted to that score (effectively negating the effect of the unfinished assignments).

My argument runs as follows: I agree that students' marks should show deductions for incomplete work. However, I also wish to maintain a grading system that shows what kids know; what they would get on the exam. The large number of incomplete assignments in this particular case only warped the class measure so much that an adjustment was warranted. I also hoped that some borderline students who care about their marks might be influenced to study more and achieve a 3. Eight of the dozen students to whom this applied earned the "bonus". Their 4th quarter averages were adjusted to reflect their NYS exam grade.

To what degree is the mid-term exam, consisting of the previous year's multiple-choice section of the NYS exam, predictive of performance on the NYS exam?

| Class of ... | Class Average Overall | Class Average on the M-C Portion of the State Exam | Average Difference | Correlation |
|--------------|-----------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|
| 2010 | 74% | 61% | 10 | NA |
| 2011 | 76% | 75% | -1 | NA |
| 2012 | 77% | 77% | 0 | .8 |