

STRATEGIC REPRESENTATION OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN TERMS OF DEBORAH STONE

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EDU 7211 – Educational Research and Data Analysis II

Professor Francesco Ianni, Ed. D.

Of the Division of
ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
Of
THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
Oakdale, N.Y

by

Anastasios Koularmanis

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Introduction

Educational funding and expenditures has been an issue for most if not every school system. Running a school system that addresses declining test scores and performance with minimal funding is what most administrators deal with every day. As the continued declines in funding schools receive a similar decline can be seen in achievement as well as future progress. Many schools have been forced to eliminate many programs as well as courses necessary for student achievement. Administrators however are swift to throw in what little money they have into programs that gain minimal progress.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the significant effect district expenditures had on student performance relating to the number of Advanced Regents Diplomas earned by students. Utilizing data obtained from Dr. Jonathan Hughes Almanac we can assess where the Hicksville school district ranks amongst the other districts in expenditures and advanced Regents Diplomas. Moreover, importing this data into SPSS we will be able to examine the correlation that exists between District expenditure and the amount of Advanced Regents Diplomas students receive in the Hicksville School District. Deborah Stone's framework will also be our framework which will assist us in categorizing our finding into Goals, Problems and Solutions.

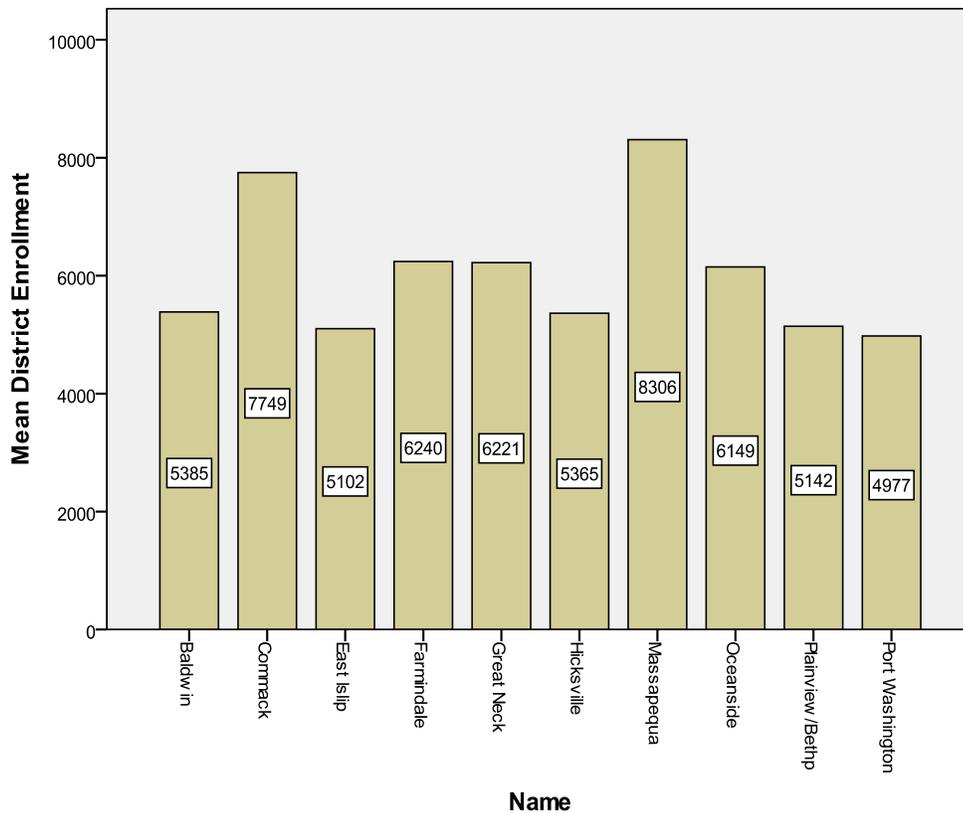
Community Overview

Central Office Address:	200 Division Avenue Hicksville NY, 11801
Spending Per Student:	\$14,822
General Education Spending:	\$43,340,770

Special Education Spending:	\$16,502,325
Percent Spent On Instruction:	78.3%
Average Teacher Salary:	\$64,638
Student Dropout Rate:	0.7%
Students Receiving Reduced/Free Lunch:	16%
Students With Limited English Skills:	7%
Graduates Receiving Regents Diplomas:	84%
Graduates Receiving Advanced Diplomas:	47%

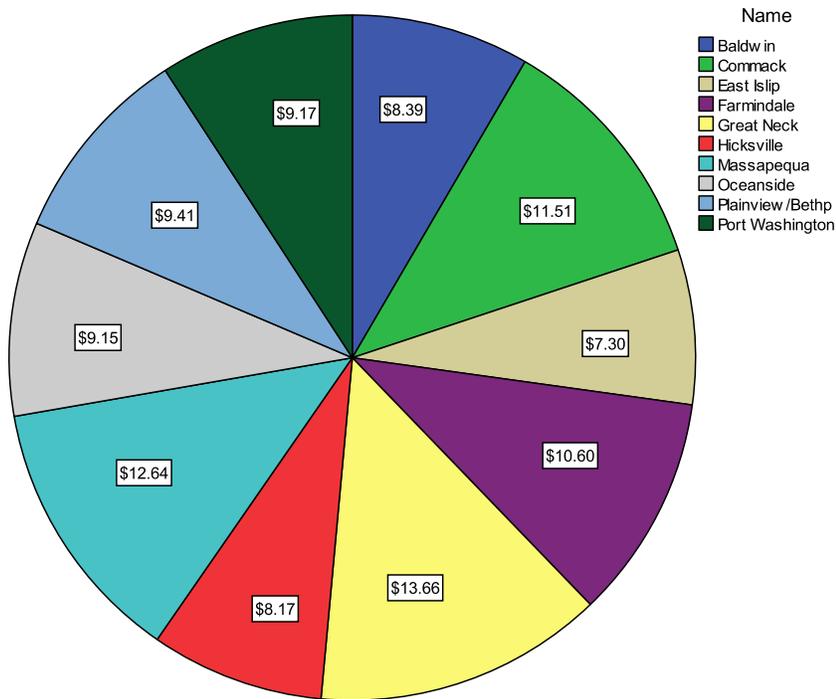
- **DEMOGRAPHICS:** Middle class community with an average size population and home values falling in the median range. Student enrollment is in the low range in relationship to our comparison school

Table 1: School District Enrollment



- **FINANCIAL:** Our school has one of the lowest total expenditures from the 10 districts while spending a great percentage on instruction

Table 2: School district total expenditures



- **INSTRUCTION:** Our school has falls under the mean average having only 47% of its' graduated receiving an Advanced Regents Diploma.

Table 3: Mean Average of Advanced Regents Diplomas

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Advanced Diplomas *	10	100.0%	0	.0%	10	100.0%
Name						

Report

Advanced Diplomas

Name	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Baldwin	36.000	1	.
Commack	69.000	1	.
East Islip	57.000	1	.
Farmingdale	44.000	1	.
Great Neck	82.000	1	.
Hicksville	47.000	1	.
Massapequa	71.000	1	.
Oceanside	59.000	1	.
Plainview/Bethp	25.000	1	.
Port Washington	64.000	1	.
Total	55.400	10	17.4050

Research Question

Q. What affect do Hicksville School Districts' expenditures on the amount of Advanced Regents Diplomas students earn?

Definition of Terms

Almanac: A publication containing statistical, tabular, and general information...often including a miscellany of other information (Hughes)

Advanced Regents Diplomas:

Regression Analysis: A statistical technique designed to predict values of dependent variable from knowledge of the values of one or more independent variables.

Correlation: A measure of the strength and direction of association between two variables.

Mean: A measure of central tendency; the sum of a set of scores divided by the total number of scores in test.

Significance: A measure of the rarity of a particular statistical outcome given that there is actually no effect

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

The key to understanding Deborah Stone's Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making is accepting and understanding the aims, premises, and definitions given in "Introduction" and "Part One, The Market and the polis." At the same time, one needs to note the facetious and playful tone she occasionally employs. Deborah Stone offers a way of understanding the analysis of politics and policy that makes sense of inconsistencies that are abundant in communities and schools grappling with issues important to the interests of individual political actors and to members of the "polis" a term she uses for the political community (Stone, 1997, p. 10). Stone argues that a rational approach to political actors and to members of the "polis" misses the point of politics; to engage opposing points of view that are paradoxical and often cannot be explained logically. She asserts that a rational approach to politics, which she calls "the rationality project," is an "impossible dream" (p. 7). From Stone's point of view, any attempt to view politics rationally is crazy and illogical. A rational approach to politics sets up categories of logic. These categories, used to make sense of things in the political world, can easily be opposed. This is due to their ambiguous and confusing nature, creating paradoxes rather than solutions.

“The Rationality Project” seems to have the answer to understanding messy politics by asserting a better, more sensible way to judge what is valuable and important in the community or “polis”. “The Rationality Project” establishes a bias of logic that Stone deconstructs. Political thought defies logic since essentially political thought is fraught with abstract notions with multiple meanings. This bias toward rational political thought is exposed by Stone’s argument that “analysis is itself a creature of politics; it is strategically crafted argument, designed to create ambiguities and paradoxes and to resolve them in a particular direction” (Stone p. 7). Political actors present an analysis and argument that seems rational but actually is a strategic representation of a point of view designed to win the case. The rationalist approach is itself a strategic representation crafted in their interest.

Stone’s political theory presents a rationale for making sense of politics in the real world, where human actions are governed more by passion than by logic. The lines that separate policy analysis, policy making, and policy solutions are unclear, since there is no definite distinction. Attempts to make one policy area distinct from the other is an attempt to strategically represent a position that often ignores underlying assumptions about values such as equity, efficiency, security and liberty. Stone makes a strong case for the contradictory nature of human values and behavior, as well as the importance of ongoing political argument. According to Stone, arguing for values that underlie policy making is a worthy and complex social process. The following diagram is a visual representation of the two aims of Deborah Stone’s Policy Paradox.

Educational institutions are plagued with issues of continuous change. Deborah Stone's book, Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, describes how decisions are driven by many factors. Stone discusses two models, the "market" and the "'polis'". The market is a model of individuals competing for self-interests ruled by material exchanges. The "'polis'" is a community model where public interest competes with multiple self-interests, allowing groups and organizations to establish loyalties and foster alliances. Stone postulates that the "'polis'" model can be used to accurately describe how decisions are made in politics (Stone, 1997). Stone separates these decisions into three separate components: Goals, Problems, and Solutions. There are many issues which need to be addressed within these three sections.

Goals

There are four goals that Debra Stone discusses, below is an explanation on each.

Equity

Equity is a goal of the community that seeks fairness. When seeking equity one asks: Who gets what, when, and how? However, one's perceptions about fairness come from how one views distribution. "Polis" members would agree that the ideal rational model would call for equity by simply sharing any and all burdens equally. But as Stone illustrates, cutting "fair" shares of a cake gets complicated and depends upon multiple referents of the notion of what is being "shared." Take, for example, the concept of taxes used to support schools. Community members will question who will receive the distribution, how much will be distributed, and what process will be used to cause the distribution. Different groups will answer these questions differently.

Efficiency

According to Debra Stone, the goal of efficiency means getting the most out of a given input or achieving an objective for the lowest cost. Efficiency helps individuals and communities acquire things of value. Measuring efficiency is impossible and thus is subjected to varying interpretations according to one's point of view. Communities must remember that any exchange between two groups may have a potential effect and cost on a third group.

The market relies on voluntary exchanges based on self-interest and perceived gain. The legal obligation associated with school taxes represents a community policy decision in the commons that supporting schools is in the best interest of all.

Security

Stone also names security as a goal of the community; security is often presented as a fundamental political claim that is based on the concept of need. It is agreed that society should meet the needs of individuals and families in dire need. There are, however, varying points of view about what constitutes genuine need. Attempts to objectify definable needs are met with complications in the "polis". Various considerations must be examined: "What kind of thing is needed? Who needs it? What does it provide? And what does it represent?" (Stone p.90).

Answers to these questions will vary according to individual perceptions. "Humans require community, solidarity, a sense of belonging; dignity, respect, self-esteem, and honor; friendship and love. We need not only to have and receive, but to give and to help", (Stone, p.95). Viewed in this way, providing for schools becomes more complicated than distributing taxes to support a school's budget.

Liberty

Liberty is an important notion. “Freedom is no less ambiguous and complex than other goals and values that motivate politics” (Stone, p.110). Freedom is commonly seen as the right to do what one wants as long as one doesn’t cause harm to others. The question of liberty asks when the government should intervene, and when is it okay to expand the rights of one group at the expense of another group. The question then becomes how to equalize resources amongst groups and compel cooperation within the “polis”.

The concept of liberty is often viewed as freedom to use and dispose of one’s resources as one desires. This is subjected to restriction when taxes are raised. Members of the “polis” may or may not wish to pay school taxes but are forced to by legal obligation. Arguments, however, can be made for either side of the tax debate. Liberty can be perceived from a positive or negative point of view depending upon which political claim or interest group one belongs to.

Stone argues that the “polis” is a community with a public interest for the greater good.

Restricting liberties of individuals are justified by an obligation to the community. Compelling communities to cooperate in solving shared problems expands human freedom, thus expanding liberty.

Problems: symbols, numbers, causes, interests, decisions

Problems in the “polis” are seen in light of goals and values of the community. Defining a problem is structured to present an individual or a particular group’s point of view. Since members of the “polis” have competing goals and values, they seek to define problems to win arguments against those who have competing view points. Stone explores five areas of problems

confronting anyone in the “polis”: symbols, numbers, causes, interests, and decisions. Each is discussed below.

Symbols:

In the “polis”, symbols are used to create a narrative to define a perceived problem. Numbers and stories are symbolic representations that are a part of the “polis” and have been created to stand for something else. A symbol obtains its meaning by how it is used and who creates it. People interpret and respond to symbols according to their own interests and backgrounds. Symbols, including numbers, tell stories to promote values and generate support for certain positions.

Numbers

Numbers have the illusion of accuracy, since it is the belief that if the problem can be understood arithmetically, then it can be solved. The difficulty with defining a policy problem with numbers lies in that numbers can conceal hidden stories. In the “polis”, number stories are viewed as projections. Numbers suggest that items, or people, counted together have common features and should be treated as one group. According to Stone, the important issue is not in the counting, but in the “counting as;” That is, in establishing the boundaries of the concepts/categories into which items will be counted. Once the boundaries are set, and set for political advantage, what gets counted into the boxes is mostly direct.

Causes

Causal stories define problems because “polis” members distinguish between actions and consequences. The cause of a problem may be spoken about as the result of an action that has

certain costs or certain benefits. Policy problem stories are discussed in terms of the intended consequence of specific actions. Consequences can be spoken about as intended or unintended, since all actions create consequences of some sort. Causes in the political community become a way to talk about shifting responsibility from or toward policy makers. “Political actors create causal stories to describe harms, and difficulties, to attribute them to actions of other individuals, and organizations, and thereby to invoke government power to stop the harm” (Stone p. 208).

Interests:

Having an interest and taking interest are the two stands “polis” members can take in the discussion of interests. Political actors represent an interest in the “polis” by organizing an effort to bring about change. It is in this way that interests are tied to issues. Organizing around an issue to bring about change will only occur if the group’s benefits or losses are stronger than those of the opposing group regarding the same issue.

Decisions

Political goals are often reached by making decisions. There are many perceptions as to how decisions are to be made and many ways to make decisions. Decision-making is often based on emotion, habit, social custom, or impulse. Decision-makers assert the authority of reason and logical thinking as the impetus behind responsible decision making. Decision-making in the “polis” is subjected to sharing and negotiating. Thus, rational decision-making in the “polis” becomes yet another way of defining problems and establishing boundaries. Rational decision-makers use their view of a decision as a way to control perception and persuade others. In the “polis”, decision-makers set vague goals. This allows them to appeal to different constituencies.

“If goals are forever changing as different people read meanings into them, they cannot serve as a stable reference point for evaluating alternative actions (Stone p. 245).

Finding Solutions: Inducements, Rules, Facts, Rights, Powers

Solutions are ongoing strategies that try to organize people around purposes. The goal behind any policy solution is to use strategy to get people to support the policy action. Stone presents four generic strategies, the concern of which includes “forms of authority government explicitly uses to change behavior and policy” (Stone p. 259). These forms of authority are: inducements, rules, facts, rights, and powers. Each is discussed below.

Inducements:

Incentives and deterrence are flip sides of the same coin. They are motivators to change behavior in people. Positive Inducements are incentives or rewards and negative Inducements are sanctions or penalties. There are three parts involved in inducements. The first is the inducement giver, the second is the receiver/target, and the third is the actual inducement. The Donkey and carrot illustrate how inducements work. People want to reach their goals in the easiest way. Inducements alter people’s progress toward their goals. In order for inducements to be successful, the person affected must care about the cost and the rewards and be willing to adjust behavior. Inducements that occur far into the future are less effective than those that are immediate. Positive inducements can create alliances and a spirit of good will, where as negative inducements can divide two parties and can build resentment.

Rules:

Rules are defined as commands to act or not act in a particular situation. Rules determine permissions by deeming acceptability only for certain people in certain situations. Different rules are applied to different people, and are backed up by sanctions. Rules are a strategy to influence and control human behavior.

Facts:

Facts are often presented to support a particular viewpoint about rules. Facts are persuasive arguments constructed to appeal to a person's mind. One can view facts as clean, logical, and reasonable. Facts such as numbers are used as an authority that tells a story to persuade people. The basic assumption that rests on using facts is that given information people can make up their own minds and will act in accordance with the facts.

Rights and Powers

1. A right is a claim backed by the power of the state
2. Rights derive from the power of the government
3. People can have rights only to those things they claim and for which the state backs them up

Tort law protects groups of people who suffered a common injury or malpractice. The law of accidents relies on the idea of what people think is reasonable compensation for one's loss and what community think should be the standard.

Power

Constitutional engineering – this is a theory based on the idea that different types of collective decision-making processes yield different kinds of outcomes. Restructuring is a bid to

reallocate power. Someone not winning will want to shift policy to an arena where they might prevail. New decision making structure by design of its mechanism, will produce decisions in the public interest as well as enabling a subordinate interest to become dominate.

A larger community offers a greater selection of possible representatives and a greater chance of finding more competent ones. It is harder for demagogues to persuade a large number of people than a smaller. Decisions will be based on reason rather than emotion. The larger the community the less likely there will be a unified majority on any issue. Policy is less likely to be dominated by a faction or special interest. It is harder for small elite to capture a larger government. Changing the size of decision making units small vs. large. Small communities have face to face knowledge and people are more likely to have empathy for fellow citizens. Decisions will be based on better intimate knowledge of community.

Small communities can use flexible and informal solutions and use loyalty and empathy to smooth over conflict; they are more conducive to rational deliberation. It is easier to form a unified majority in a small community, so government action is possible, there is a smaller risk of deadlock. Small communities provide greater opportunities for participation in governance.

A larger community offers a greater selection of possible representatives and a greater chance of finding more competent ones. It is harder for demagogues to persuade a large number of people than a smaller. Decisions will be based on reason rather than emotion. The larger the community the less likely there will be a unified majority on any issue. Policy is less likely to be dominated by a faction or special interest. It is harder for small elite to capture a larger government

Chapter 3 Research Method

DEBORAH STONE MATRIX:

Problems	Problems of the district Instruction	What are the REAL problems?
Goals	Goals of the districts in relations to the problems Ex. standards	What are the REAL goals?
Solutions	What are the solutions of the district?	

Problems

The Hicksville school district falls under the mean average in producing students graduating with advanced student diplomas. The district also does not spend as much as other districts. The idea that putting more money into the budget will produce better results also poses another problem. Many districts seem to dump thousands of dollars into programs only to find out that the results are very minimal.

Goals

The eminent goal of the district is to raise the advanced diplomas significantly. Another goal is to allocate the district expenditures in a manner that produces higher results in other areas as well. The increase in advanced diplomas earned will be a testament to the higher quality of education and teaching that goes on in the district.

Solutions

There are very solutions the district can take to reach its' desired goals. Allocating funding appropriately and monitoring the status of success through proper data collection is very important. Every stride should be documented to better understand the increases and decreases. A proper analysis of the data is also very important as is correlating the data to understand the affects each change has on one another.

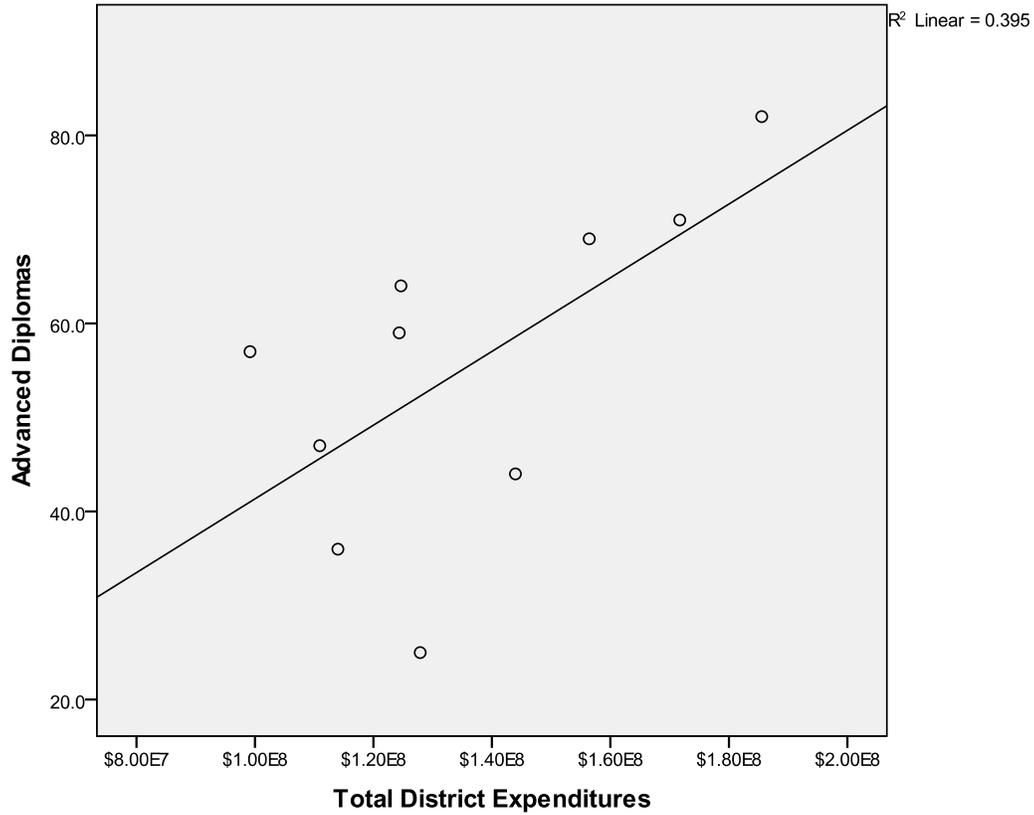
Chapter 4 Data Presentation

**Table 4
Correlations**

		Advanced Diplomas	Total District Expenditures
Advanced Diplomas	Pearson Correlation	1	.628
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.052
	N	10	10
Total District Expenditures	Pearson Correlation	.628	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052	
	N	10	10

While examining Table 4 and looking at the Pearson Correlation it clearly evident that there exists a strong positive correlation .628 between *Advanced Diplomas* and *District Expenditures*

Table 5:



As district expenditures increase so do the amount of Regents diplomas given to students.

Table 6:

The frequency chart table 6 shows us that Hicksville not only falls below the mean range but is also in the lower quartile. Moreover, the findings are negatively skewed.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Advanced Diplomas	10	100.0%	0	.0%	10	100.0%

Descriptives

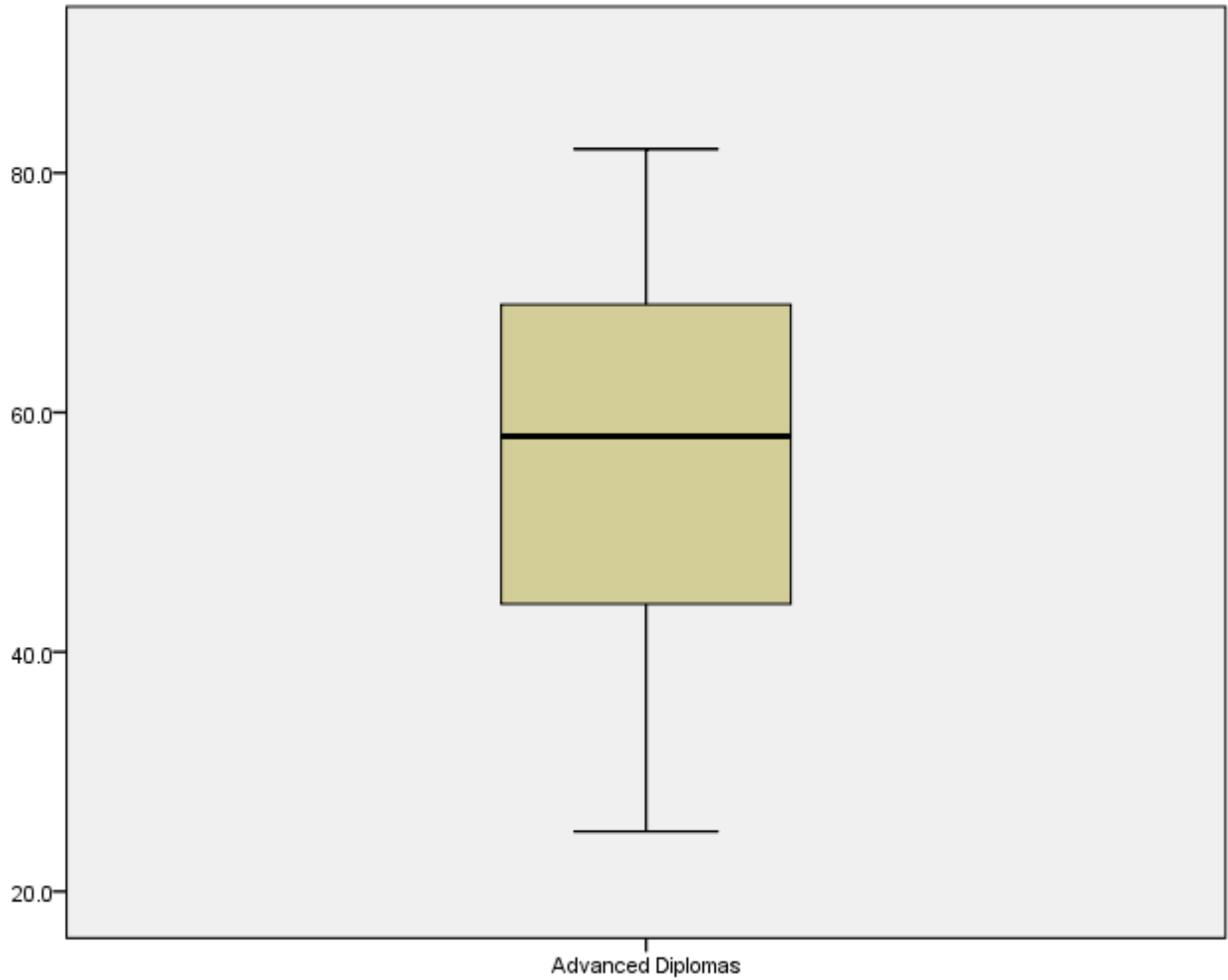
		Statistic	Std. Error
Advanced Diplomas	Mean	55.400	5.5039
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		
	Lower Bound	42.949	
	Upper Bound	67.851	
	5% Trimmed Mean	55.611	
	Median	58.000	
	Variance	302.933	
	Std. Deviation	17.4050	
	Minimum	25.0	
	Maximum	82.0	
	Range	57.0	
	Interquartile Range	27.5	
	Skewness	-.307	.687
	Kurtosis	-.493	1.334

Advanced Diplomas

Advanced Diplomas Stem-and-Leaf Plot

Frequency	Stem &	Leaf
1.00	2 .	5
1.00	3 .	6
2.00	4 .	47
2.00	5 .	79
2.00	6 .	49
1.00	7 .	1
1.00	8 .	2

Stem width: 10.0
Each leaf: 1 case(s)



Statistics

		Advanced Diplomas	Instructional Expenditures
N	Valid	10	10
	Missing	0	0
Percentiles	25	42.000	\$9.6077E7
	50	58.000	\$1.0898E8
	75	69.500	\$1.3195E8

There is a 27.5% gap between the first and third quartile. The Hicksville School District falls in the lower quartile in both funding and Advance Diplomas.

Table 7: Regression

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.150	23.744		.091	.930
	Total District Expenditures	3.919E-7	.000	.628	2.285	.052

a. Dependent Variable: Advanced Diplomas

$$Y = .0000003919x + 2.15$$

The regression analysis table shows us that for every unit increase in expenditures there is a .0000003 increase in Advanced diplomas. Even though there is a strong correlation between the expenditures and diplomas in order to see a significant change in the amount of Advanced Diplomas earned an exuberant amount of money must be spent. Districts must begin to examine if it is beneficial to spend so much and see minimal results.

Table 8: Correlations

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.175	22.612		-.096	.926
	Instructional Expenditures	5.030E-7	.000	.676	2.594	.032

a. Dependent Variable: Advanced Diplomas

After further examining various types of expenditures another strong positive correlation .676 was evident when looking at instructional expenditures and advanced diplomas. Therefore, it is evident that expenditures which are allocated appropriately can indirectly help increase not only advanced diplomas but other major areas needing improvement.

Chapter 5

Conclusion/Recommendations

As budget cuts continue to threaten educational institutions trying to allocated what to cut and where to increase funding will be on the minds of all administrators. Our study shows that increasing funding will increase desired results in advanced diplomas. The problem however is whether or not such a small increase deserves the enormous amount of funding that needs to be poured into small gains.

When examining the data above it is clear that in order for Hicksville to see an improvement in advanced diplomas the district must spend a tremendous amount of money. When we examined further and broke down the expenditures into another category “Instructional Expenditures” we notice yet another gain in advance diplomas. Therefore, Hicksville must further study and understand where exactly funding needs to be spent instead of just spending money.

It is the studies recommendation that additional categories be created which can further point out where exactly funding is needed. Smaller categories in the “Instructional Expenditures” may show the district where less funding is needed and where more funding can yield our

desired results. The district should examine where it currently spends its' funding and further study the relationship that exists with advanced diplomas.

References

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Appendices

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.628 ^a	.395	.319	14.3606

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total District Expenditures

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1076.584	1	1076.584	5.220	.052 ^a
	Residual	1649.816	8	206.227		
	Total	2726.400	9			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total District Expenditures

b. Dependent Variable: Advanced Diplomas

Frequencies

Statistics

District Enrollment

N	Valid	10
	Missing	0

District Enrollment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4977	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	5102	1	10.0	10.0	20.0
	5142	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
	5365	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
	5385	1	10.0	10.0	50.0
	6149	1	10.0	10.0	60.0
	6221	1	10.0	10.0	70.0
	6240	1	10.0	10.0	80.0
	7749	1	10.0	10.0	90.0
	8306	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		10	100.0	100.0	

Explore

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
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Advanced Diplomas	10	100.0%	0	.0%	10	100.0%

Descriptives

		Statistic	Std. Error
Advanced Diplomas	Mean	55.400	5.5039
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	Upper Bound	67.851	
	5% Trimmed Mean	55.611	
	Median	58.000	
	Variance	302.933	
	Std. Deviation	17.4050	
	Minimum	25.0	
	Maximum	82.0	

Range	57.0	
Interquartile Range	27.5	
Skewness	-.307	.687
Kurtosis	-.493	1.334

Frequencies

Statistics

District Enrollment

N	Valid	10
	Missing	0

District Enrollment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4977	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	5102	1	10.0	10.0	20.0
	5142	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
	5365	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
	5385	1	10.0	10.0	50.0
	6149	1	10.0	10.0	60.0
	6221	1	10.0	10.0	70.0
	6240	1	10.0	10.0	80.0
	7749	1	10.0	10.0	90.0
	8306	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		10	100.0	100.0	

Explore

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent

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	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
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	Minimum	25.0	
	Maximum	82.0	
	Range	57.0	
	Interquartile Range	27.5	
	Skewness	-.307	.687
	Kurtosis	-.493	1.334