



**BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL FOR
BETTER LEARNING 1**

**2017-18 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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BBL 1 2017-18 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Dr. Kevin Brennan, Executive Director, and Vanessa Asencio-Trezza, Assistant Principal, prepared this 2017-18 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Kimberly Kelly	Board Chairperson, Complaint Review Policy/Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Finance/Audit Committee
Marvin Waldman	Vice-Chairperson, Fundraising/Development Committee, Policy/Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
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Neal Myerberg	Fundraising/Development Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
Dean Thomas	Policy/Governance Committee, Fundraising/Development Committee
Victor Zimmerman	Complaint Review Committee, Fundraising/Development Committee, Finance/Audit Committee

Dr. Kevin B. Brennan has served as the Executive Director since June 2010.

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York approved the application for the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 1 (BBL1) on February 23, 2003; it was subsequently approved by the Board of Regents on March 25, 2003. BBL 1 opened in the fall of 2003 with an enrollment of 50 students in Grade 1. One grade was added each year thereafter, and 285 students were enrolled in Grades 1-5 in the fall of 2007, the final year of its original charter term. On January 15, 2008, the State University Trustees granted BBL 1 a full-term charter renewal for 5 years, authorizing the school to provide instruction in Grades K-5 through the 2012-2013 school year. BBL 1 added a Kindergarten program in the fall of 2008 and served 345 students in grades K-5. In 2010-11 the school enrolled 386 students in those same grades. On March 4, 2013, the State University Trustees granted another full five-year renewal of the charter for Bronx Charter School for Better Learning. Additionally, on June 4, 2014, the State University Trustees approved a five-year charter for the replication of BBL1 and, in turn, the opening of Bronx Better Learning 2 (BBL 2) for September 2015. Since September 2015, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning Educational Corporation (Board of Trustees) has governed both charters, i.e., BBL 1 and BBL 2. BBL 1 enrolled 537 students for the 2017-2018 school year, concurrent with its being awarded an early, additional five-year renewal.

BBL 1 was originally located in a facility leased from the Bronx Bethany Church of the Nazarene at 971 East 227th Street in the Bronx, NY. Following the first year of operation, BBL 1 reached a shared space agreement with the New York City Department of Education, through which BBL 1 received permission to locate in the annex portion of P.S. 111 (Seton Falls Elementary School) at 3740 Baychester Avenue in the Bronx, NY. The school used 3 classrooms and an office in the main building of P.S. 111 for the first time in 2008-09, to accommodate its growth in enrollment. Its new Kindergarten classes were situated there in 2008-2009, replaced by 5th grade in 2009-2010. Beginning September 2014, BBL 1 occupied three additional classrooms in the main building and added another two classrooms for the 2015-16 school year. Currently, its Kindergarten, 1st Grade and some 2nd Grade classes situate in the main P.S. 111 building.

The mission of the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning is as follows:

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning provides its students with a solid foundation for academic success, through achievement that exceeds citywide averages and meets or exceeds New York State standards and national norms in all curriculum areas tested, especially in mathematics and language arts. Our teaching constantly adjusts to the needs of our students, leading to independence, autonomy, responsibility and a sustained love of learning, all of which contribute directly to high academic achievement.

To fulfill its mission, the school's teachers endeavor to practice *the subordination of teaching to learning*, an instructional approach that does not dominate learning, but rather is guided by it. Implementing the approach involves: getting students actively and mentally engaged in lessons; assisting students to go beyond rote memorization, wherever the subject matter allows, and to

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develop criteria for understanding; recognizing every child’s high intellectual capacity and, thereby, welcoming errors in students’ work as guides to help them harness that capacity; promoting students’ use of what they know to master new content; and encouraging student initiative and self-sufficiency.

In August 2015 and again, in January 2018, BBL 1 was recognized by the New York State Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents as a “High progress Reward School.” The award celebrates BBL 1’s success in closing the gap between historically low and high performing students in the state.

BBL 1:

- is not test-prep driven; as noted, the instructional approach is constructivist: we know children “construct” their knowledge, understanding and skills, so our teaching is guided by their learning and does not dominate it;
- does not have extended school days;
- does not incorporate an extended school year;
- backfills at all grade levels; and
- welcomes and actively recruits students eligible for free and reduced lunch, eligible for special education services and/or eligible for support as English Language Learners (ELLs).

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2011-2012	69	69	69	66	61	52								386
2012-2013	72	72	70	63	62	56								395
2013-2014	89	72	72	72	57	58								420
2014-2015	108	93	72	72	72	57								474
2015-2016	100	101	93	73	65	66								498
2016-2017	101	101	100	94	65	63								524
2017-2018	78	102	101	100	94	62								537

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will become proficient readers and writers of the English Language.

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 1 (BBL 1) continues its focus on four priorities: 1) Instructional Rigor, to ensure that every student receives an instructional program that is rigorous and enriching; 2) Data Based Decision Making, to ensure that all instructional decisions are based on student performance; 3) Meeting Individual Student Needs, to ensure that the instructional program regularly adapts to meet the needs of each student; 4) Student Empowerment, to ensure that through an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort and efficacy, all students sustain a personal sense of their own innate abilities.

BACKGROUND

During the 2017-18 school year, BBL 1 maintained its strong commitment to ensuring a quality ELA program for all of its students, through the delivery of a comprehensive and challenging instructional program that is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards by:

- a. Continuing to edit and revise our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade ELA curriculum, primarily to increase rigor and to transition away from skill based instruction to one that is theme based, focusing on the underlying mental functionings that are called upon for the range of reading skills that ensure high achievement;
- b. Continuing to emphasize the consistent application of Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*;
- c. Continuing to incorporate, as part of its ELA class sessions, the use of Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop;
- d. Continuing to foster a joy of reading through the Growing Great Readers program;
- e. Continuing to support increased reading proficiency through the Accelerated Readers program;
- f. Providing technology resources and computer based non-fiction resources with *Achieve 3000*, a web-based, adaptive, differentiated instruction resource;
- g. Continuing to make available to all students access to an extensive classroom library and school library;
- h. Continuing to closely monitor each student's progress through the use of regularly scheduled interim assessments and the scheduling of a monthly "Data Day";
- i. Continuing to provide supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;

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- j. Maintaining a Director of Professional Development to oversee and coordinate teacher development, including our Fellowship program, which incorporates a Master’s degree program with SUNY Albany, designed specifically to promote teachers’ capacity to practice well our unique pedagogy, the *Subordination of Teaching to Learning*;
- k. Elevating high performing teachers to the position of Academic Leaders, assigned to further support teacher development at each grade level;
- l. Continuing to provide professional development, through our in-house professional development specialists and outside consultants, to both teachers and assistants, further ensuring each person’s readiness to support the needs of all of our students;
- m. Continuing to utilize writing rubrics that are aligned with the State’s Learning Standards; and
- n. Increasing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through a higher frequency of classroom observations and “walkthroughs” by administrators.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State English language arts examination for grades 3-8.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts (“ELA”) assessment to students in 3rd through 5th grade in April 2018. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year’s test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year).

2017-18 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ¹				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	97	0	0	0	2	99
4	94	0	0	0	0	94
5	61	0	0	0	1	62
All	252	0	0	0	3	255

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

As summarized in the table, below, on the 2017-18 state ELA assessment, 58% of all students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency. Furthermore, 41% of 5th grade

¹ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.

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students (39 out of 58), 57% of 4th grade students (51 out of 89) and 69% of 3rd grade students (60 out of 87) performed at that level. The school did not meet this measure. Overall, it fell about 17 percentage points below the target of 75% reaching proficiency. The proficiency rate was highest in 3rd grade.

Performance on 2017-18 State English Language Arts Exam By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	66%	97	69%	87
4	59%	94	57%	89
5	43%	61	41%	58
All	58%	252	58%	234

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

BBL 1's ELA overall performance grew by 9 percentage points from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018, bringing it closer to the overall goal of 75% proficient. The 4th grade performance grew most notably, from 39% proficient in 2016-2017 to 57% proficient in 2017-2018.

ELA Performance by Grade Level and Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	41	69	60	85	69	87
4	34	65	39	61	57	89
5	30	66	44	63	41	58
All	35	200	49	209	58	234

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (“PI”) on the State English language arts exam will meet that year’s state Measure of Interim Progress (“MIP”) set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the English language arts test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state’s ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state’s 2017-18 English language arts MIP for all students. The state plans to calculate and disseminate the MIP in summer 2018. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The school’s Performance Index was 156.5.

English Language Arts 2017-18 Performance Index

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	8	34	40	17

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 34 & + & 40 & + & 17 & = & 91 \\
 & & & & 40 & + & 17 & = & 57 \\
 & & & & & + & 8.5 & = & 8.5 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & 156.5
 \end{array}$$

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.²

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

With 58% of continuously enrolled students scoring at the proficient or above level, the school exceeded the district’s performance of 35% proficient or above. The school met this measure. It exceeded the district’s performance by 23 percentage points. In addition, each tested BBL grade exceeded the percent proficient of the respective district grade.

2017-18 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	69	87	40	3188
4	57	89	39	3155
5	41	58	27	3290
All	58	234	35	9633

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Bronx Better Learning has consistently outperformed the district’s percent at or above proficiency. That disparity holds for overall performance and individual grades.

² Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

English Language Arts Performance of Charter School and Local District
by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Scoring at or Above Proficiency Compared to District Students					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
3	41	32	60	33	69	40
4	34	32	39	34	57	39
5	30	24	44	27	41	27
All	35	29	49	31	58	35

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

METHOD

The SUNY Charter Schools Institute (“Institute”) conducts a comparative performance analysis, which compares the school’s performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The Institute compares the school’s actual performance to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school’s actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Given the timing of the state’s release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2017-18 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2016-17 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The school had an overall effect size of 1.17 in 2016-2017, which was higher than expected to a large degree. As of the writing of this report, the overall effect size for 2017-2018 is not yet available. The school met this measure by exceeding the target of 0.3. All three grades also individually exceeded that target.

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2016-17 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	82.8	94	61	32.2	28.8	1.56
4	78.8	64	41	31.6	9.4	0.51
5	81.0	63	44	25.1	18.9	1.26
All	81.1	221	50.4	30.0	20.4	1.17

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Higher than expected to a large degree

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The school has consistently generated a positive effect size for the past three years.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2014-15	3-5	82.1	187	31.1	20.4	.79
2015-16	3-5	81.1	203	35.0	28.7	.37
2016-17	3-5	81.1	221	50.4	30.0	1.17

Goal 1: Growth Measure³

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50.

METHOD

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2016-17 and also have a state exam score from 2015-16 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2015-16 score are ranked by their 2016-17 score and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order for a

³ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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school to perform above the target for this measure, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2017-18 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2016-17 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁴

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The school's average mean growth percentile of 53 for the 2016-17 school year exceeded the target of 50 by three points, meeting the growth objective.

2016-17 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	42.5	50.0
5	63.5	50.0
All	53	50.0

English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Target
4	41	47	42.5	50.0
5	45	48	63.5	50.0
All	43	48	53	50.0

⁴ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

The school met

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts exam for grades 3-8.	Not Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate PI on the state’s English language arts exam will meet that year’s state MIP as set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2016-17 results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state’s Growth Model the school’s mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50. (Using 2016-17 results.)	Achieved

ACTION PLAN

Our school’s absolute performance on the 2017-18 New York State ELA assessment, across grades 3 through 5, increased 9 percentage points, compared to the previous year. We comfortably exceeded the overall results, not just compared to CSD 11, the Bronx and New York City, but the entire state, as well.

We not only experienced gains in the school’s absolute performance, but we also saw a reduction in the number of students who scored a Level 1 (12% in SY 2016-2017 vs. 8% in SY 2017-2018). Additionally, fourth grade’s performance improved by almost 18% percentage points, which reflects the increased, deliberate collaborative efforts between the 3rd and 4th grade teams during the 2017-2018 school year, as well as the thorough integration of our revised ELA and social studies curricula.

As highlighted in our action plan, below, we continue to closely review and enhance our newly revamped ELA curriculum, along with a number of ancillary actions that have proven successful.

The BBL Board of Trustees affirms its commitment to ensure the continued improvement of student performance in ELA, including working with the Executive Director to provide all needed resources.

While an ongoing analysis of individual student test results and an item analysis of the New York State ELA assessment will likely lead to additional adjustments in our ELA program as the

new school year begins, we have already planned and initiated the following steps, in order further to boost student achievement, including an increase in the percentage of our students who score at the Advanced Level:

1. In 2017-18, our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade ELA teachers, with support and guidance from our professional development team, undertook a complete revision of our ELA curriculum in those grades. Our purpose throughout has been to increase the rigor of the content and the academic challenges we present, significantly “raising the bar” with regard to vocabulary development, sophistication in handling complex texts and improving students’ accuracy, clarity and cohesiveness in their writing. This year, we will continue our efforts to improve our ELA curriculum in grades K-5. By creating an ELA Curriculum Committee, composed of experienced ELA teachers and professional development specialists, our goal is to streamline and further improve our ELA program. The aims of the committee are: plan and integrate the reading, writing, and Words in Color ELA curriculums (K-5), align the K-5 ELA curriculums with social studies/science curriculums, and, create and organize resources for teachers.

- 1.1 Plan and integrate the reading, writing, and Words in Color ELA curriculums (K-5):
An integrated reading, writing and Words in Color ELA curriculum provides a comprehensive, broader perspective for teaching and learning. Rather than teaching reading, writing and Words in Color in isolated lessons, the integrated units will feature all three aspects of our literacy program. This provides a vehicle for students to develop literacy skills, tackle advanced vocabulary by using Words in Color, analyze renowned authors’ techniques and artistry and, write their own high-level texts as a comprehensive learning experience.
- 1.2 Align the K-5 ELA curriculums with social studies/science curriculums: The curriculum committee will align the K-5 ELA curriculums with the social studies and science curriculums. Vertically aligning the ELA curriculums across the grades will provide students a scaffold for the development of their literacy skills throughout their academic career in our school. Additionally, the science and social studies curriculums will serve as vehicles for students to explore the world around them all while learning advanced vocabulary, comprehending and analyzing higher-level texts and creating projects and writing pieces that display new learning.
- 1.3 Finally, our growth in student enrollment requires our adding of additional resources for our teachers and students. The curriculum committee will create organized, scaffolded, and differentiated materials that not only align with our approach of subordinating teaching to learning but also raise the bar for rigor. The resources will not be prescribed, scripted lessons, but rather, provide teachers with enriching, engaging resources that are easily modified and adapted to the meet the needs of all our students. Both hard and soft copies of resources will be readily available across all grade levels.

2. Increased Early Grade Emphasis on Vocabulary Development and Reading Comprehension: While our core program for early literacy – Words in Color – is designed to support students’ capacity to write and to understand what they read as well as their spoken language allows, we have determined that our ELA instruction can continue to improve in Kindergarten through 2nd grade by adjusting the following:
 - 2.1 Our K – 2 teachers will incorporate, much more extensively in their lessons, work with students in the Primers and Worksheets that are part of the Words in Color program, but which have remained, until the past school year, less a central component than intended. Doing so will prepare students better to meet the increased challenges and expectations awaiting them in 3rd grade and beyond.
 - 2.1 Our primary grade teachers will reflect in their plans an increased emphasis on “academic” vocabulary.
3. Administrative Support: The continued availability of an Assistant Principal will increase support and feedback for teachers. A refined evaluation schedule includes regularly scheduled “classroom walkthroughs,” with written feedback to teachers targeting student engagement, lesson development, and differentiation.
4. Assignment of the Academic Leaders: We have assigned a larger cadre of Academic Leaders, most notably in our primary grades, where they will function as constant, on-site coaches for less experienced staff, whom they will mentor on a daily basis.
5. Planning Meetings: 2nd and 3rd grade teachers will meet at least once every month to discuss differentiation and targeted challenges. Their purpose will be to better prepare the 2nd grade students for 3rd grade.
6. Lesson Planning Review: Academic Leaders at all grade levels will closely monitor lesson planning to ensure that teachers provide sufficient attention and time to both reading and writing.
7. Active involvement of our Guidance Department: With the increase of staff in our guidance department we have been able to create in-house behavior interventions for Tier 2 students and have seen the impact/effect on the classroom climate. They will continue to conduct group and individual sessions to help students deal with testing and other anxiety, peer pressure and conflicts, and other academically related challenges. Additionally, our guidance department will push into classrooms and collaborate with the 4th and 5th grades to incorporate even more social and emotional learning opportunities into the classrooms each week.

8. Parent Workshops: We will integrate targeted parent workshops to educate and engage parents in addressing issues like: *Behavior Challenges, Homework Help, Understanding the Test*. We have selected the topics based on parent and teacher feedback. The parent training will occur every semester.
9. Student Support: Our administrative team will review and expand academic support, as necessary, to better meet the needs of underperforming students.
10. Review of Interim Assessments: Our assessment team will review both the schedule and method for monitoring student progress throughout the school year, ensuring an accurate alignment with our revised ELA curriculum and the implementation of assessment criteria that are sufficiently rigorous.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

Bronx Better Learning continues its focus on four priorities: 1) Instructional Rigor, to ensure that every student receives an instructional program that is rigorous and enriching; 2) Data Based Decision Making, to ensure that all instructional decisions are based on student performance; 3) Meeting Individual Student Needs, to ensure that the instructional program regularly adapts to meet the needs of each student; 4) Student Empowerment, to ensure that through an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort and efficacy, all students sustain a personal sense of their own innate abilities.

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to those school-wide priorities and, in turn, to ensuring the delivery of a challenging and meaningful instructional program in mathematics for all of its students by:

- a. Continuing to review the mathematics curriculum to ensure that the pacing of the instructional program effectively supports student learning of the full scope of the Common Core Standards;
- b. Continuing to maintain a strong commitment to the Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning;

- c. Continuing to consistently apply the use of manipulatives, primarily Cuisenaire rods, to ensure, even in the earliest stages, that students develop models for thinking mathematically;
- d. Continuing to provide supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;
- e. Continuing to provide professional development, through our in-house professional development specialists, to both teachers and assistants to further ensure each person's readiness to support the needs of all of our students;
- f. Increasing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through increasing the frequency of classroom observations by administration;
- g. Continuing to emphasize the development of two essential skills, i.e., becoming swift and accurate in their computation skills and increasing the student's ability to effectively focus on problem solving activities that involve practice and real world application of those skills;
- h. Continuing to ensure that instructional decisions are made based on specific student performance data. As with ELA, teachers utilize both formative and summative assessments, along with real-time moment-to-moment analysis of how students are responding to instruction, throughout the school year, to gather and analyze student performance data to ensure that each student's individual needs are being addressed.

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics examination for grades 3-8.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in 3rd through 5th grade in April 2018. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year's test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year.

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2017-18 State Mathematics Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁵				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	98	0	0	0	2	100
4	94	0	0	0	0	94
5	61	0	0	0	1	62
All	253	0	0	0	3	256

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The percentage of continuously enrolled students who scored at the proficient or above level was 73% (170 out of 234). In the 3rd grade, 75% (65 out of 87) scored at that level, 74% (66 out of 89) in the 4th grade and 67% (39 out of 58) in the 5th grade.

The school did not meet this measure. Overall, we fell just 2 percentage points below the target of 75%. However, there was an increase in the school's total, absolute performance, compared to the previous year. In addition, 39% of BBL 1's continuously enrolled students scored at Level 4 (91 out of 234).

Performance on 2017-18 State Mathematics Exam By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	74%	98	75%	87
4	74%	94	74%	89
5	66%	61	67%	58
All	72%	253	73%	234

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the last three years, two-thirds or more of BBL 1's students have scored consistently proficient in mathematics, with our highest achievement reached most recently.

⁵ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.

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Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	57%	72	71%	85	75%	87
4	62%	65	74%	61	74%	89
5	73%	66	68%	63	67%	58
All	64%	203	71%	209	73%	234

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index ("PI") on the state mathematics exam will meet that year's state Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the mathematics test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2017-18 mathematics MIP for all students. The state plans to calculate and disseminate the MIP in summer 2018. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The school had a PI of 184.5.

Mathematics 2017-18 Performance Level Index (PI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	8	19	34	39

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 19 + 34 + 39 = 92 \\
 &\quad \quad \quad 34 + 39 = 73 \\
 &\quad \quad \quad \quad + 19.5 = 19.5 \\
 &\quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{PI} = 184.5
 \end{aligned}$$

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares the performance of tested students enrolled in at least their second year to that of all tested students in the public school district of comparison. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.⁶

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Overall 73% of BBL 1's continuously enrolled students scored at or above the proficient level, compared to 33% of district students in the same grades. The school met this measure. It outperformed the district by more than 40 percentage points.

2017-18 State Mathematics Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	75%	87	37%	3250
4	74%	89	34%	3188
5	67%	58	29%	3310
All	73%	234	33.3%	9748

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The school has consistently outperformed the district by a large margin. This pattern holds true overall as well as for each individual grade level.

⁶ Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

Mathematics Performance of Charter School and Local District by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
3	57%	30%	71%	34%	75%	37%
4	62%	31%	74%	29%	74%	34%
5	73%	27%	68%	29%	67%	29%
All	64%	29%	71%	31%	75%	33.3%

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

METHOD

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The Institute compares the school's actual performance to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school's actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2017-18 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2016-17 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The school had an overall effect size of 1.80 in 2016-2017, which is higher than expected to a large degree. The school met this measure by exceeding the target of 0.3 by a large degree. All three grades exceeded the target.

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2016-17 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	82.8	94	69	37.4	31.6	1.5
4	78.8	64	72	32.2	2.02	2.02
5	81.0	63	68	30.5	2.03	2.03
All	81.1	221	69.6	33.9	1.80	1.80

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Higher than expected to a large degree.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The school has consistently generated a large, positive effect size for the past three years.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2014-15	3-5	82.1	196	66.7	29.8	1.97
2015-16	3-5	81.1	203	63.8	31.9	1.68
2016-17	3-5	81.1	221	69.6	33.9	1.80

Goal 2: Growth Measure⁷

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50.

METHOD

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2016-17 and also have a state exam score in 2015-16 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2015-16 scores are ranked by their 2016-17 scores and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order

⁷ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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for a school to meet the measure, the school would have to achieve a mean growth percentile above the target of 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2017-18 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2016-17 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁸

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In 2016-2017 the school's overall mean growth percentile was 68. The school hmet this target, exceeding the statewide median of 50 by 18 points, overall.

2016-17 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	65.5	50.0
5	70.5	50.0
All	68	50.0

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Our school has consistently exceeded the statewide median, achieving its highest difference ever during the 2016-17 school year, exceeding the state by 18 points.

Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Target
4	66	48	65.5	50.0
5	46	60	70.5	50.0
All	56	54	68	50.0

⁸ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's business portal: portal.nysed.gov.

SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

The school met all but one of the measures in this goal. It came close to meeting the first absolute measure, missing the measure by two percentage points. It far exceeded the performance of the local district and similar schools statewide. Finally, it demonstrated strong growth compared to the state.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics exam for grades 3-8.	Not Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's English language arts exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2016-17 results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50. (Using the 2016-17 results.)	Achieved

ACTION PLAN

Bronx Better Learning continues its commitment to ensuring that all of its students understand mathematics deeply, enjoy its beauty, and perform well in math examinations. Our students continue to demonstrate noteworthy achievement throughout the testing grades, but there is always room for improvement. To facilitate the continued growth of our students, the following actions will be taken:

1. Instructional Rigor: The mathematics program will continue to focus on facilitating the development of effective computational skills for all students through the following actions:
 - In her expanded role, the Assistant Principal will offer increased support and feedback to teachers. Her schedule will include classroom walkthroughs, followed by written feedback to teachers targeting student engagement, lesson development, and differentiation.

- The Math Academic Leader will continue to supervise and coach the upper grade math teachers, create differentiated lessons, organize the math curriculums and provide additional math support for “At-Risk” math students.
 - In grades 3-5, the AP and the Math Academic Leader will collaborate to facilitate the ongoing planning process (begun in the summer), the review of weekly lesson plans and the aligning of the overall instructional program with the high expectations articulated in the common core standards.
2. Data Driven Decision Making
- Frequently scheduled interim assessments will help monitor student progress and identify where the instructional program requires modification to better support student learning.
 - The interim assessment tool has been changed from Achievement Network to Educational Edvista.
 - Test prep material will be integrated throughout the year.
 - Assessments will be administered more frequently.
 - Homework will be given daily, rather than weekly.
 - Children will be given more opportunities to give each other feedback.
3. Spiraling curriculum: Many topics in the curriculum have been broken out so that they re-appear in successive months, with different and often more complex lessons and assessments scheduled for later months. That approach conforms with the gradual nature of learning and iteration ensures that our students’ understanding of a topic deepens over the course of the year.
4. Focus on At-Risk Students: The mathematics program will continue to give extra support to students identified as being at-risk and/or with special needs, through:
- the work of support teachers, who in collaboration with the PD specialist in math, will ensure an instructional plan that targets individual student needs.
 - special education instructional options. Special education will continue to include access to a variety of services: cooperative teaching intervention (CTI) classes, SETSS (provided as either push-in or pull-out services), along with the related services of speech, occupational therapy and counseling.
 - English Language Learner (ELL) program support. The ELL Coordinator will deliver needed support to eligible students.
5. Professional Development: The PD program will ensure that all teachers are prepared to provide students with the highest quality of instruction through:

- Weekly Institutes: The math PD specialist and the math Academic Leader has arranged weekly Institutes that will focus on the continued application of the school's pedagogy.
 - In-Class Support: Professional development will continue to push in to the classrooms to provide teachers and assistants with direct feedback on instructional practices and to better exemplify the school's approach.
6. Provide supplemental instruction: This year we will offer year-round after school math support, which will be available to all students, and not only those who struggle with math. Our "Saturday Academy" dates will be extended to provide students time outside of the classroom to stretch their math interests.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

BACKGROUND

Bronx Better Learning continues its focus on four priorities: 1) Instructional Rigor, to ensure that every student receives an instructional program that is rigorous and enriching; 2) Data Based Decision Making, to ensure that all instructional decisions are based on student performance; 3) Meeting Individual Student Needs, to ensure that the instructional program regularly adapts to meet the needs of each student; 4) Student Empowerment, to ensure that through an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort and efficacy, all students sustain a personal sense of their own innate abilities.

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning continues to strongly promote effective student mastery of the State's Common Core Curriculum in science by:

- a. Continuing to implement the Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning, incorporating techniques and materials that foster students' active participation in lessons;
- b. Continuing to implement lessons that emphasize hands-on experimentation and make use of BOCES prepared science kits (Science 21 Program) that complement the school's core pedagogy;
- c. Continuing to incorporate a problem solving approach that presents students with "real life" problems and working in groups, which analyze data/information to come up with solutions to the problems, all of which leads students to a deeper appreciation of cause and effect relationships; and

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- d. Continuing to provide supplemental support to students who are not progressing as expected.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State science examination.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th in spring 2018. The school converted each student's raw score to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students enrolled in at least their second year to score at proficiency.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In 2017-18, 98% of the school's 4th grade students achieved a level 3 or 4 on the NYS Science assessment. The school met this measure. It far exceeded the target of 75% proficient.

Charter School Performance on 2017-18 State Science Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	98	92	NA	NA
All	98	92	NA	NA

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The school has consistently exceeded its target by a wide margin over the last three years.

Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	93	65	97	61	98	92
All	93	65	97	61	98	92

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Goal 3: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state science exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year and the results for the respective grades in the school district of comparison. Given the timing of the state’s release of district science data, the 2017-18 comparative data is not yet available. Schools should report comparison to the district’s 2016-17 data.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

District science results are not available.

2017-18 State Science Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students ⁹	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	98	92	NA	NA
All	98	92	NA	NA

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

District results are not available, making it impossible to evaluate trends over time.

Science Performance of Charter School and Local District by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Proficiency and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
4	92	NA	97	NA	98	NA
All	92	NA	97	NA	98	NA

⁹ This table uses the prior year’s results as 2017-18 district science scores are not yet available.

SUMMARY OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

With 98% of students proficient in Science, the school has met this goal.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Not Available

ACTION PLAN

The students continue to perform exceptionally well on the NYS Science assessment – achieving 98% passing for the 2017-2018 school year. While student performance in Science continues to be laudable, Bronx Better Learning will refine and improve its program through:

1. Instructional Rigor: The science program will continue to focus on facilitating the development of effective analytical skills for all students through:
 - a. Academic Leaders, who have been placed at each grade level to ensure consistent delivery of a rigorous and meaningful instructional program, including facilitating the ongoing process of collaborative planning, the review of weekly lesson plans and aligning of the overall instructional program with the high expectations articulated through the common core standards.
 - b. Science Curriculum Coordinator: A Science Curriculum Coordinator has been appointed to facilitate instructional planning and curriculum refinement.
 - c. Data Driven Decision Making: Frequently scheduled interim assessments will help monitor student progress and identify where the instructional program requires modification to better support student learning.
 - d. Pilot a new science curriculum: In 1st, 2nd and 5th grades, some classes will pilot a new science curriculum. For the 2018-2019 school year, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning has decided to launch a dynamic new Science program offered by Pearson called *Elevate Science*. *Elevate Science* includes a set of texts designed to expose students to a curriculum reinforced by experiments and lab-writing skills. The online component features a self-guided read-aloud of texts as well as other digital resources that allow students to research questions that they develop about science. It also allows for differentiation of written texts and is equipped with videos that support content taught in class. The program units revolve around a real-world problem and makes connections to possible jobs that exist in that scientific field of

study, which is in line with our existing problem based learning approach in science.

2. Focus on At-Risk Students: The science program continues to support students identified as being at-risk and with special needs through:
 - a. Experienced Teachers: The Academic Leaders, who represent some of BBL’s most experienced and effective teachers, will serve as the support teachers for the at-risk students, with the in-house professional development specialists working directly with them and their students to ensure the precision of each student’s instructional program.
 - b. Special Education Instructional Options: Students identified in need of special education support services will continue to have access to a variety of services, including cooperative teaching intervention (CTI) classes, SETSS provided as either push-in or pull-out services, and related services, e.g., speech, occupational therapy and counseling.
 - c. English Language Learner (ELL) Program/Support: The ELL Coordinator’s schedule ensures the effective delivery of needed support for students identified as ELL.
3. Professional Development: The science program will ensure that all teachers are effectively prepared to provide students with the highest quality of instruction through:
 - a. Weekly Institutes: The in-house Professional Development Specialists and the Academic Leaders have arranged a weekly Institute schedule that will focus on the continued application of the school’s pedagogy throughout the school.
 - b. In-Class Support: Professional development will continue to push-in to the classrooms to provide teachers and assistants with direct feedback on instructional practices and to provide examples that illustrate in “real situations” the effectiveness of the school’s approach.

GOAL 4: ESSA

Goal 4: ESSA

The school will make Adequate Yearly Progress.

Goal 4: Absolute Measure

Under the state’s ESSA accountability system, the school is in good standing: the state has not identified the school for comprehensive or targeted improvement.

METHOD

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's performance standards, the federal statute stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results. As New York State, like all states, is required to establish a specific system for making these

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determinations for its public schools, charter schools do not have latitude in establishing their own performance levels or criteria of success for meeting the ESSA accountability requirements. Each year, the state issues School Report Cards that indicate a school's status under the state accountability system.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Bronx Better Learning 1 is in good standing. The school has met this measure and achieved the goal.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The school has consistently been in good standing.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2015-16	Good Standing
2016-17	Good Standing
2017-18	Good Standing