

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning Charter School Dissemination Grant Evaluation 2017-2018

Addendum to Final Report

The overall goal of the BBL Charter School Dissemination Project is to increase student achievement in mathematics in 3rd and 4th grades in both partner schools. The measurable objective to determine if that goal has been met is:

In school year 2017-2018, the second year of the grant period, the percentage of students in 3rd grade who achieve a level 3 or 4 on the New York State Mathematics Assessment, will exceed, by at least 5 points, the passing percentage rates achieved by their 3rd graders in the previous year, both at PS 111 and CS 112.

After almost two years of opportunities to learn from the iCountBetter app, both partner schools met this objective. Over the 2017-2018 school year, P.S. 111's 2017-18 cohort of 3rd graders accomplished a full 23 percent increase in passing rates on the state mathematics assessment, from 19 percent in the prior year to 42 percent in the 2017-18 school year. That jump represents more than a doubling of the number of 3rd grade students who passed the exam (see Table 1 below).

The C.S. 112 2017-18 cohort of 3rd graders also accomplished an 8 percent increase in passing rates on the state mathematics assessment, from only 9 percent in the prior year to 17 percent in the more recent year. The school nearly doubled the number of 3rd grade students who passed the exam.

Table 1: Passing Rates on New York State Mathematics Assessments

	3 rd Grade		4 th Grade		5 th Grade	
	2016-17	2017-18	2016-17	2017-18	2016-17	2017-18
P.S. 111 Seton Falls	19%	42%	4%	26%	13%	22%
C.S. 112 Bronxwood	9%	17%	15%	2%	8%	7%
District 11	33%	39%	34%	39%	27%	27%
Citywide	46%	52%	40%	46%	41%	42%

Overall, mathematics state test passing rates were about 5 percentage points higher in the spring of 2018 vs. the spring of 2017. Citywide, third grade scores showed an increase of 6 percentage points. Much of these increases have been attributed to a redesign of the assessment, which reduced the test length from three days to two.

Even after taking that into account, the dramatic improvement in the passing rates of the 3rd graders in both partner schools suggests that other factors were at play, as well, including the incorporation of iCountBetter into their instructional programs:

At P.S. 111 dramatic increases also appeared in 4th and 5th grade scores: from 4 percent to 26 percent and from 13 percent to 22 percent, respectively. It can be assumed that the mathematics instructional program in P.S. 111 improved due to factors in addition to iCountBetter, while at the same time noting that the school's 3rd graders' achievement is significantly higher than that of its 4th and 5th graders. In fact, the size of the increase exceeded that of district 11 and citywide. In fact, P.S. 111 outperformed the district cohort of 3rd graders.

Of special note, as a further indication that iCountBetter accounted for variance in the improved mathematics achievement of the C.S. 112 cohort, the third grade increase of 8 percentage points exceeded that of district 11 and citywide, each which showed a 6 percent increase. Also, students in the other two testing grades in the same school – students who never had the benefit of iCountBetter as part of their instructional program – actually experienced a decrease in their levels of passing rates, compared to their prior year cohorts, as reflected in the Table 1, above.

While the tested achievement of the 3rd grade students in both schools was undoubtedly affected positively by a confluence of factors, especially in P.S. 111, where the performance of its students increased dramatically in all three of the testing grades, it is clear that the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning not only met, but exceeded by a comfortable margin, its measurable student achievement objective for Year 2 of the Dissemination Grant.