

Accountability Plan Progress Reports for the 2006-07 School Year

Reader's Guide

SUNY Authorized Charter Schools

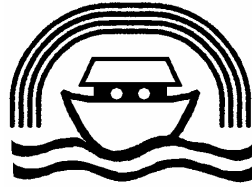
As set forth in the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees*, the single most important factor that the Charter Schools Institute and the State University Board of Trustees consider in making renewal determinations is the school's record in generating successful student achievement outcomes. In order to determine whether a school has met that high standard, **each charter school that the State University Board of Trustees authorizes is required to enter into an accountability agreement, known as an Accountability Plan**, which ultimately becomes part of its charter.

The Charter Schools Institute closely monitors each school's progress toward achieving the goals outlined in its Accountability Plan.

In addition, as part of its annual reporting requirements, **each SUNY authorized charter school must submit an Accountability Plan Progress Report which, from its vantage point, addresses each of the goals and outcome measures contained in its Accountability Plan.**

The information presented in these Progress Reports constitutes important evidence that a school is keeping its promises to its students, parents and community, and is critical to making its case for renewal at the end of its charter period. The most important parts of Progress Reports are student achievement results on state exams and other assessments. However, not all schools will have tested grade levels for a particular state exam. Each year, the state administers English language arts and mathematics tests to 3rd through 8th grade, science tests to the 4th and 8th grades, and social studies tests to the 5th and 8th grades.

Important Note: **The Accountability Plan Progress Report is authored by the charter school.** In reporting school progress toward meeting the outcome measures set forth in the Accountability Plan, schools are encouraged to build a case for the effectiveness of their program, and to lay the groundwork for writing a Renewal Application and ultimately for charter renewal. **The school's evaluation of its own progress does not necessarily reflect the conclusions of the Institute.** Further, the Institute does not affirm the completeness or accuracy of the report's data and may not endorse the school's characterization of the progress it has made toward achieving its Accountability Plan goals. Throughout the life of the school's charter, the Institute will visit each school, generating Institute School Visit Reports, and at the end of each charter period, a Renewal Report (select the <back> button in your browser to return to the school profile to see any/all available reports). These reports include detailed summaries of the Institute's observations of the school, as well as its evaluation of student performance and progress toward meeting the academic subject goals in its Accountability Plan.



Ark Community Charter School

Accountability Progress Report

2006-07

DUE 5PM AUGUST 1, 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ark Community Charter School (ACCS) has been serving the needs of historically underserved elementary students in the city of Troy for six years. From its inception, the school has maintained an enrollment based on a weighted lottery that gives first preference to children from low income families in Troy. Throughout our history, over 95% of our students have qualified for free and reduced lunch and come with a variety of disabilities, ethnicities, and language backgrounds. Currently at 97.9% free and reduced lunch, ACCS has the most impoverished student population of any public school in Troy, New York.

We embrace the simple truth that many of our students will not be reading anywhere near grade level when they enter our school, and the associated challenge of moving them forward. We embrace our cultural diversity in that 28% of our families speak a language other than English in their homes. We embrace the fact that virtually all of our families view us as a solution to the academic frustration they have experienced in other settings, where classes are too large and attention to their needs too inconsistent. We continuously remind ourselves that in order to call ourselves a public charter school, we must stay true to our mission, “everyone is celebrated, respected, and heard.” In the following pages, the reader will learn about goals that are met, and others we are still moving towards. One thing remains clear to us: we move students forward from where they begin with us.

Since our two year charter renewal in July 2006, we heeded the advice and recommendations of the Charter School Institute and instituted a host of changes in curriculum, instruction and instructional support, essentially declaring a new beginning in fall 2006. Although these changes only went into effect for 2006-07, and still need time to be fully absorbed into our culture, we are immediately encouraged by school-wide gains in 2006-07 ELA and Math performance, when compared to 2005-06. Our Math cohort proficiency nearly doubled, from 42 to 73%. Our English Language Arts scores showed more moderate gains, and an in-depth analysis reveals an upward trend of students moving forward in every ELA measure. We are confident that, with the current curriculum, intense intervention and instructional supports now firmly in place, student achievement will continue and increase in pace and we will continue to move towards our accountability goals on the 2007-08 state assessments and beyond.

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2006, when our school was embarking on the first of two renewed years of charter authorization, the school's leadership team, with full support of the Board of Trustees, finalized significant academic and programmatic changes. The overall goal was to ensure a stronger and more tightly aligned, standards based ELA and Math curriculum; one that would better prepare students for the rigors of mastering the NY State standards . By doing so, we took a calculated risk by changing our instructional program at the beginning of a new charter period. It is a risk that has paid immediate dividends in student achievement and immediate improvement in moving towards our ELA and Math accountability goals.

In the following sections, we show statistical evidence that we improved both in NYS Assessments and value added internal measures from our disappointing performance in 2005-06. In fact, when considering every single ELA and Math measure in this report, the students moved forward in every area. That said, given the timetable of charter renewal process, we were in the unique position of instituting massive, school-wide programmatic changes, then applying for renewal almost immediately. Thus we describe our performance in terms of progress towards proficiency, not necessarily absolute proficiency We are confident that the changes made in 2006-07 increased student achievement from 2005-06 and it is reasonable to predict continued success in the second year of our renewal, and then beyond.

ACADEMIC GOALS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding, for literary response and expression, for critical analysis and evaluation, and for social interaction.

- I. Absolute Measure:** *Each year, 75 percent of 3-6 graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination.*

A. Method

Third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth grade ACCS students took the ELA exam in January 2007. This administration was the second to include our students in grades 3-5, and our first year of testing 6th graders. The exam is a cumulative assessment, measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge during the course of their schooling. The 2006-07 cohort group includes all students who were enrolled before BEDS Day, October 4th, 2005.

B. Results

Table 1 shows the test results for all students and for those students who were enrolled in our cohort.

Table 1. 2007 Summary ELA Results with Cohort and Entire Group Comparison by Grade Level

Group	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Proficient %	(N)
Grade 6 Cohort	0	37.5	62.5	16
Grade 5 Cohort	23	38.5	38.5	13
Grade 4 Cohort	7.7	76.9	15.4	13
Grade 3 Cohort	15.4	30.8	53.8	13
All Cohort Students	10.91	45.45	43.64	55
Grade 6	0	35.29	64.71	17
Grade 5	15.8	52.6	31.6	19
Grade 4	23.8	66.7	9.5	21
Grade 3	10.5	31.6	57.9	19
Total Students	13.16	46.15	39.47	76

Evaluation

We have not yet met this outcome measure. However, we are so encouraged about the progress our cohort group has made since 2005-06, when only 26% of this group passed the ELA test. This year, 44% of the cohort group achieved proficiency and we attribute this 18 point gain entirely to the ELA changes we made, and of course, the continued dedicated effort of our staff. We now have a trend line moving upward. We can predict success right down to the student, because our entire model now generates such predictable data throughout the year. In fact, our ELA Scott Foresman curriculum is so closely aligned to the New York State's standards (and therefore the NYS ELA test) that we anticipate similar, consistent, gains in 2007-08, leaving us in the mid to high 60% range for 2007-08.

Evaluation of 6th Grade

The 6th grade cohort responded so positively to the changes we put in place in September 2006, and doubled their proficiency rate from five students to ten students, from 31.25% last year to 62.5% this year. This group has nearly 100% cohort representation, so less time was spent introducing these students to our culture, and more attention therefore went straight to acclimating to the new curriculum. This particular group of students who has been with us for so long is our highest performing group.

Evaluation of 5th Grade

The 5th grade cohort improved by 25% this year versus their cohort performance in 2005-06. Four students passed last year, five passed this year.) In order to reach our 75% accountability goal with this cohort in 2007-08, we will need to bring five of our remaining eight non-proficient cohort students to level 3. Five in this cohort were *above* the cutoff for a high 2, so the trend looks positive for proficiency next year. In 2005-06, four of these five scored in the high 1 or low 2 range, so for these students to have become part of the high 2 group is a significant advancement from last year. Additionally, we delved deeper into the fifth grade data and determined that our fifth grade scale score cohort average on the NYS ELA increased by 16 points, going from 636 to 652. Since 650 is the level 3 cutoff, it clearly displays how close this cohort is to proficiency.

Evaluation of 4th Grade

We were discouraged to see the performance of this group not change from 2005-06 to this year. We must do a better job of preparing this cohort for mastery of the NYS standards and middle school. We saw no increase in this group's ELA performance from 2005-06. In retrospect, we recognize several weaknesses in delivery of ELA instruction: This group has always had a very wide range of levels, and we were too slow to split them into groups based on past performance, i.e. we did not differentiate ELA instruction until December. Thus there was not enough time before the ELA test to have these

changes make a meaningful difference. In contrast, these changes had two extra months to impact the Math scores, which resulted in the highest scoring group in the school.

Evaluation of 3rd Grade

We are encouraged by our 3rd grade results; we are close to our goal. Out of thirteen students who have been with us since fall 2005 (13 in the cohort), seven of these students have already passed. Should this cohort remain at the same size, only three additional students will need to achieve proficiency in order for us to reach our 75% cohort goal. Since three of our cohort students are scoring in the high 2 range, we are more than optimistic going into next year.

II. Absolute Measure: *Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index on the NYSTP ELA assessment will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.*

A. Method

Under the current federal elementary and secondary education law, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), public schools are expected to enable all students to meet state performance standards. In New York State, the standard is met by showing that an absolute proportion of students who have taken the state's ELA exam has scored at the partially proficient, proficient, or advanced performance levels (Levels 2, 3, and 4). The specified proportion is called the Performance Index (PI). The Annual Measurable Objective (AMO)¹ is the PI value that signifies that tested students in the aggregate are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that all students will be proficient in the State's ELA performance standard by 2013–14.

The Performance Index is based on the following calculation:

$$\text{PI} = (\text{percent of students at Levels 2+3+4}) + (\text{percent of students at Levels 3+4})$$

It is based on all students taking the January 2007 ELA examination, not only continuously enrolled students.

¹ Under the state's NCLB accountability system, schools are evaluated to determine if they have made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) based on additional factors besides if they have exceeded the AMO. To facilitate school reporting, the Institute considers the aggregate AMO alone as an absolute measure of performance in ELA and math, aside from the state's system which incorporates the other factors. The state's analysis is presented in its annual accountability report in which it indicates if the school is in *good-standing* by virtue of having made AYP. See the NCLB Accountability measure below.

B. Results

Table 2 – AYP from ELA performance for 2006-07 for 76 total tested students in grades 3-6

Group	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	PI (2+3+4) + (3+4)	Effective AMO	AYP Met
School wide	13.00%	47.00%	38.00%	1%	123.00	122	Yes
Grade 3	10.53%	31.58%	52.63%	5.26%	147.37	122	Yes
Grade 4	23.81%	66.67%	9.52%	0.00%	85.71	122	No
Grade 5	15.79%	52.63%	31.58%	0.00%	115.79	122	No
Grade 6	0.00%	35.29%	64.71%	0.00%	164.71	122	Yes

Evaluation

We met this outcome measure in 2006-07. This was an important winning measure for us, because we did not meet it in 2005-06. We surpassed this school wide AMO goal for 2006-07, and this correlates well with our moderate improvement compared to 2005-06. Specifically, we only scored a PI of 109 (school wide) in 2005-06.

III. Comparative Measure: *Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of the local school district.*

A. Method

The Ark Community Charter School’s cohort proficiency rate is compared to the proficiency rates of the entire Troy School District.

B. Results

Table 3. District Comparison on 2007 NYS English Language Arts Exam

School or Cohort	Poverty	Students tested	2007 Proficiency
Ark 6 th Grade Cohort	94.0% ²	16	62.5%
Troy City Schools 6th	55.4% ³	268	47.6%
Ark 5 th Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	38.46%
Troy City Schools 5th	55.4%	295	56.00%
Ark 4 th Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	15.38%
Troy City Schools 4th	55.4%	274	49.50%
Ark 3rd Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	53.85%
Troy City 3rd	55.4%	268	54.90%
Total Ark Cohort	94.0%	55	43.64%
Troy Schools	55.4%	1105	51.75%

Evaluation

We did not meet this measure in 2006-07. Table 3 shows that on assessments given in 2006-07, ACCS is comparing favorably with the city schools, even though our students are nearly 40% more impoverished. Consider the following, which we think is the most profound point when comparing ourselves to the district. Last year, our cohorts were only 26% proficient overall, and the district was 50% proficient, translating to a **24%** difference. After all of our aforementioned academic changes instituted in 2006-07, we have now closed that performance difference to **8%**. Troy’s NYS tested students raised

² Based on Ark 2005-06 Report Card, <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2006/AOR-2006-491700860034.pdf>

³ Based on Troy Schools’ K-12 2005-06 report Card, <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/reprcd2005/cir/491700010000.pdf>

their 3-6 performance levels from 50 to 51.75%, (1.75 points) while ACCS raised its 3-6 performance levels by 18 points, from 26% to 44%. Given the fact that we significantly reduced the performance gap in one year, and the same programs, structures and personnel will be in place, we expect to surpass the district's performance in 2007-08. We feel this is remarkable considering the difference in poverty rates. While we certainly realize the room for improvement in the coming years, particularly with our remaining non-proficient cohorts, we are also encouraged by the progress we have made compared to our local school district.

Additional Evidence

We also realize that we have higher scoring averages in 2006-07 than (four) of Albany's six charter schools with NYS Testing in the same grades, and five in the Capital Region⁴. Specifically, the Ark has higher average NYS ELA scores than International Charter School of Schenectady, Achievement Academy, Albany Preparatory, KIPP Tech Valley, and New Covenant. In fact, although our cohorts did not yet meet the 75% passing criteria in ELA Measure 1, it is not a small point that only two elementary school buildings in the entire Capital Region (Albany, Troy or Schenectady charter or traditional public schools) had any grades scoring above 75% on any 3-6th grade ELA test.⁵ This is a compelling testimony to how much work all of us have left to do in English Language Arts, a subject that clearly is challenging in urban settings.

IV. Comparative Proficiency: *Each year, the school will exceed its expected level of performance on the State ELA exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.*⁶

A. Method

Predicted Percent of Students at Levels 3&4 will be calculated by CSI after performing a regression to measure the effect on outcomes of a school's free lunch population, based on all public schools, including charter schools, in New York State in which students were tested in 2006 and applying that effect to each school.

B. Results

This is an analysis performed by The Charter Schools Institute (CSI) for schools with accountability plans from 2005 and later. Results from CSI's analysis were distributed to schools during 2006-07 and represent scores from the 2006 tests, not the 2007 tests,

⁴ <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/ela-math/ela-07/2007Grades3-8ELAPublicDistrict-School-ISR-ELA.pdf> (When ranking these schools, we used published scale scores, and only the published 'all student' levels are compared, not cohorts)

⁵ Out of all traditional public or public charter schools in the cities of Albany, Schenectady and Troy, only Troy's PS 16 and 18 had any 3-6th groups over 75% proficient.

⁶ This complex and fair statistical analysis utilizes demographic and state assessment data, which gives schools an opportunity to see where they stand compared to demographically similar schools across the state. The analysis is performed each year by CSI.

which make up this report. We expect the 2006-07 CSI analysis to be available to schools in late 2006.

- V. Value Added Measure:** *For the 2006-07 school year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one half the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed ELA test, and an NCE of 50 in the current spring. If a grade level exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort will show an increase in the current year.*

A. Method

The Terra Nova was administered in the spring of 2006 and then again in the spring of 2007. Every student who took the test in both years is considered a ‘cohort’ student for value added purposes. These do not necessarily correlate exactly with our NYS testing cohorts, which use BEDS dates. Table 4 below presents spring to spring Terra Nova Reading results for NCE growth grouped by cohort averages.

B. Results

Table 4. Terra Nova Reading NCE differences, 2006 to 2007

2006-07 Reading Terra Nova	Cohort Size	Class Cohort Average Terra Nova NCE (Spring 2006)	Goal of at least 1/2 difference between Average and (50)	Class Cohort Average Terra Nova NCE (Spring 2007)	Difference Between Years	Goal Met "Yes" or "No"
Grade 1	27	32.33	8.84	47.00	14.67	Yes
Grade 2	12	32.50	8.75	45.83	13.33	Yes
Grade 3	11	39.18	5.41	41.91	2.73	No
Grade 4	13	36.54	6.73	44.53	7.99	YES
Grade 5	11	45.09	2.45	43.33	-1.76	No
Grade 6	16	52.81	0.10	53.35	0.54	YES
School wide	90	39.74	5.13	45.99	6.25	YES

Evaluation

We met this outcome measure in 2006-07. For 90 students tested in both spring 2006 and spring 2007 (Table 4), our NCE growth shows that we surpassed our needed mark of 5.13 points by gaining 6.25 points. This comes on the heels of a successful NYS ELA exam in which we showed growth in moderate amounts. But the most important aspect of this growth is that it was steady essentially across the board, instead of the wild swings of the past, where one group would spike extremely high, and another would bottom out. This value-added winning measure is important additional affirmation that our NYS ELA improvements were accompanied by Language Arts success in other areas. Specifically in 4th grade, the fact that the value added Terra Nova in the late spring was nearly four

months after the ELA test, this group clearly needed that additional time to show progress, and they did.

VI. Value Added Measure: *Each year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s State ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year’s State ELA exam.*⁷

A. Method

For this value-added measure, cohort students are considered those students who have taken the 2006 and 2007 NYS ELA. For that reason, only students in grades 4-6 will be shown, since current 3rd graders have no 2nd grade data. If the column ‘difference between years’ exceeds the goal in each applicable grade, we will have met our goal.

B. Results

Table 5. NYS ELA differences, 2006 to 2007

	Cohort Size	Class Cohort Proficiency % (NYS ELA, January 2006)	Goal of at least 1/2 difference between 2006 ELA and (75)	Class Cohort Proficiency % (NYS ELA, January 2007)	Difference Between Years	Goal Met "Yes" or "No"
Grade 4	13	15.38%	>30	15.38%	0	No
Grade 5	13	30.7%	>22	38.46%	7.7%	No
Grade 6	16	31.25%	>21.88	62.5%	31.25%	Yes

Evaluation

Although we had ELA growth in 2006-07, we did not meet this particular measure. Due to our low performance in 2005-06, tremendous gains were required in 2006-07 to ‘split the difference’ to 75%.

⁷ If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

SUMMARY OF ELA GOAL

Going into 2006-07, we recognized the urgency of our Language Arts situation. Specifically, we realized our immediate need to improve on our past NYS ELA performance, and do so by January. Our results during the previous several years were unacceptable to us, and to change that, it required structural and systematic change to the way we delivered English Language Arts. That said, we only had approximately eighty school days to introduce an entirely new Language Arts curriculum and have it result in school wide movement forward in ELA.

It was incredibly rewarding to see our significant investment pay such immediate dividends during 2006-07. We showed steady growth towards our absolute ELA measure, resulting in nearly half of our cohort students proficient in ELA. Last year, it was only one in four. We gained significant ground on the district, and expect to pass them in 2007-08, evidenced by the number of students at the very highest non-proficient level. We eclipsed our AMO, something we had not done in prior years. Finally, we had similar gains in our Terra Nova value-added measure, which convinced us that what we were seeing in NYS ELA test performance was being supported by other assessments. In the end, everything moved forward; nothing backward. We are very pleased that nearly all of our measures in this report show the same moderate and consistent improvement.

Next year now holds such promise. If we can show such school wide ELA movement forward in less than half of a school year, we realize the progress we can make given a whole year. We have now experienced a year where progress was school wide, measured, and explainable, because it can be tied so closely to the program overhaul in the summer of 2006. The confidence that our teachers and students have gained from this successful year is clearly our greatest asset going forward.

ACTION PLAN FOR ELA 2007-08

A. Test preparation using Scott Foresman Reading Street Program

1. Teachers will administer their grade level baseline test during the first 2 days of school.
2. After grading the test, teachers will meet with curriculum coordinators to complete an item analysis of the tests. Students will be grouped based on these results.
3. In grades K-3, the teachers will administer the Scott Foresman Word List three times per year.
4. In grades 1-6, the teachers will administer running records/Fresh Reads on a rotation plan that will be determined in September.
5. In grades 1-6, the teachers will provide daily oral language (DOL) activities.
6. In grades 1-6, the teachers will administer spelling tests weekly.
7. Teachers in grades 1-6 will administer Scott Foresman selection tests weekly. The selection test questions mirror the NYS ELA test.
8. Teachers correct the weekly tests and post results on the school's server for review by ELA Curriculum Coordinator.
9. Students who have not mastered the skills taught are grouped and re-taught the skill by teacher, TA, or AIS support teacher. Scott Foresman provides an immediate intervention plan.
10. Every five to six weeks, teachers administer a unit benchmark test to assess skills and strategies taught in unit. The benchmark test questions mirror the NYS ELA test. These results are posted on the school's server for review by the ELA Curriculum Coordinator.
11. In grades K-6, the teachers will administer an end of the year test. After grading the test, teachers will meet with curriculum coordinators to complete an item analysis of the tests. These test results along with other assessments will be used to group students for the next school year.

B. DIBELS (K-6)

- Training in DIBELS will be provided to all new teachers.
- In grades K-6, the teachers will administer benchmark tests three times a year.
- All students scoring below benchmark level will be regrouped and re-taught targeted skills by the teacher, TA, and AIS teachers.
- All students in the intensive intervention group will be progress monitored every 10 days. The students in the strategic intervention group will be progress monitored every 30 days. The teacher will meet with the ELA Curriculum Coordinator to identify strategies and interventions.

C. Test Preparation

1. Teachers will review last year's ELA test and discuss with students.
2. AIS students who score a level 1 or 2 will receive in-class support supplemental instruction as required by the state.

3. Students who score a level 2 or 3 will be provided additional test prep.

D. Placement of New Students

1. Students will be administered the Scott Foresman ELA Baseline test upon entry into grade.
2. Terra Nova will be administered to new students until 12/31.

E. Criteria for Inclusion in AIS

- Student scores at a level 1 or 2 on state test
- Student's score on Terra Nova at the 30th percentile or less
- Student scores at less than 75% performance on the report card

F. Curriculum Team

- a. The teachers will send completed record forms and tests to the curriculum team for review.
- b. The curriculum team will meet with each teacher on a regular basis (biweekly) to discuss students' individual progress.
- c. On Monday and Tuesday of each week, the curriculum team will meet to review the results of all posted material. (Monday-ELA Tuesday-Math).
- d. The curriculum team will review lesson plans posted on www.betterclassrooms.com weekly.
- e. The curriculum team will report all formative assessments to Leadership Team at weekly team meetings.

MATHEMATICS

Goal: Students will understand mathematics and become mathematically confident by communicating and reasoning mathematically, by applying mathematics in real-world settings, and by solving problems through the integrated study of number systems, geometry, algebra, data analysis, probability, and trigonometry.

I. Absolute Measure: *Each year, 75 percent of 3-6 graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Mathematics examination.*

A. Method

Third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth grade ACCS students took the Math exam in March 2007. This administration was the second to include our students in grades 3-5, and our first year of testing 6th graders. The 2006-07 cohort group includes all students who were enrolled before BEDS Day, October 4th, 2005.

B. Results

Table 6 – 2007 NYS Math Results (cohort and all students)

Group	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Proficient %	(N)
Grade 6 Cohort	0	25	75%	16
Grade 5 Cohort	0	46.15	53.85%	13
Grade 4 Cohort	7.69	7.69	84.62%	13
Grade 3 Cohort	0	23	77%	13
All Cohort Students	1	26	73 (%)	55
Grade 6	0	24	76%	17
Grade 5	14	33	53%	21
Grade 4	14	14	72%	21
Grade 3	0	20	80%	20
Total Students	7	23	70%	76

Evaluation

2006-07 marked such a positive turnaround from our 2005-06 math results, which were poor. Last year, our cohort students were 42% successful, and this year that number increased 31 points to 73%, just two points shy of 75% proficiency. We take great comfort in knowing that 40 out of 55 cohort students scored a 3 or higher this year, and if

we had one more student pass the test, we would have been 75% proficient. This 31 point leap was actually very consistent with our 18 point cohort gain in ELA, if you consider our students had two extra months to prepare for Math. This gain was also rather notable in its unique predictability, meaning nearly 40 % of our total cohort that was non-proficient in Math in 2005-06 was also scoring at the upper 2 range, at the very nearest point of proficiency, according to the cut scores. Therefore, the large scale increase of many level 2 students becoming level 3 was predictable. Our proudest moment came recently when we performed a more in depth student by student comparison of 2006 versus 2007 Math scores. It revealed that 42 of our current 4th – 6th graders also took the Math test in 2005-06 (our 4-6 cohort). Out of those 42 students, 22 moved up at least one performance level, 18 stayed the same, and only 2 went down. Almost by itself, that statistic explains why we went from 42% cohort success to 72% .

II. Absolute Measure. *Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State math exam will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.*

A. Method

Under the current federal elementary and secondary education law, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), public schools are expected to enable all students to meet state performance standards. In New York State, the standard is met by showing that an absolute proportion of students who have taken the state's math exam has scored at the partially proficient, proficient, or advanced performance levels (Levels 2, 3, and 4). The specified proportion is called the Performance Index (PI). The Annual Measurable Objective (AMO)⁸ is the PI value that signifies that tested students in the aggregate are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that all students will be proficient in the State's math performance standard by 2013–14.

The Performance Index is based on the following calculation:

$$\text{PI} = (\text{percent of students at Levels 2+3+4}) + (\text{percent of students at Levels 3+4})$$

It is based on all students taking the March 2006 math examination, not only continuously enrolled students.

⁸ Under the state's NCLB accountability system, schools are evaluated to determine if they have made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) based on additional factors besides if they have exceeded the AMO. To facilitate school reporting, the Institute considers the aggregate AMO alone as an absolute measure of performance in ELA and math, aside from the state's system which incorporates the other factors. The state's analysis is presented in its annual accountability report in which it indicates if the school is in *good-standing* by virtue of having made AYP. See the NCLB Accountability measure below.

B. Results

Table 7 – 2007 Math results versus the Annual Measurable Objective

Group	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	PI (2+3+4) + (3+4)	Effective AMO	AYP Met
School wide	8.0%	23.0%	62.0%	8.0%	163	86	YES
Grade 3	0.0%	20.0%	70.0%	10.0%	180	86	YES
Grade 4	14.0%	14.0%	67.0%	0.05%	148	86	YES
Grade 5	14.0%	33.0%	48.0%	5.0%	139	86	YES
Grade 6	0.0%	24.0%	65.0%	12.0%	178	86	YES

Evaluation

We met this measure by a considerable margin in every grade. We also met this measure last year, but by a much slimmer margin.

III. Comparative Measure: *Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of the local school district.*

A. Method

The Ark Community Charter School’s cohort proficiency rate is compared to the proficiency rates of the entire Troy School District.

B. Results

Table 8 – Ark Community Charter School/Troy City School District Comparison, Math 2007

School or Cohort	Poverty	Students tested	2007 Proficiency
Ark 6 th Grade Cohort	94.0% ⁹	16	75%
Troy City Schools 6th	55.4% ¹⁰	292	52.1%
Ark 5 th Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	53.85%
Troy City Schools 5th	55.4%	290	54.5%
Ark 4 th Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	84.62%
Troy City Schools 4th	55.4%	273	60.8%
Ark 3rd Grade Cohort	94.0%	13	77%
Troy City Schools 3rd	55.4%	289	73%
Ark Total Cohort 3-6	94.0%	55	73%
Troy (3-6)	55.4%	1144	<u>60.1%</u>

Evaluation

We met this outcome measure. Seen in the table above, we are outperforming the district by 13 points (73 to 60). We contend that this is remarkable considering the difference between Troy district’s poverty and our school’s poverty rate. In 2005-06, we trailed the district by 15 points, (42% cohort passing to the district’s 57% passing), so to now have overtaken the district in Math is an important accomplishment.

⁹ Based on Ark 2005-06 Report Card, <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2006/AOR-2006-491700860034.pdf>

¹⁰ Based on Troy Schools’ K-12 2005-06 report Card, <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/reprcd2005/cir/491700010000.pdf>

IV. Comparative Measure: *Each year, the school will exceed its expected level of performance on the State Math exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.*¹¹

A. Method

Predicted Percent of Students at Levels 3&4 will be calculated by CSI after performing a regression to measure the effect on outcomes of a school's free lunch population, based on all public schools, including charter schools, in New York State in which students were tested in 2005 and applying that effect to each school.

B. Results

This is an analysis performed by The Charter Schools Institute (CSI) for schools with accountability plans from 2005 and later. Results from CSI's analysis were distributed to schools during 2006-07 and represent scores from the 2006 tests, not the 2007 tests, which make up this report. We expect the 2006-07 CSI analysis to be available to schools in late 2006.

V. Value Added Measure: *For the 2006-07 school year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one half the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed Math test, and an NCE of 50 in the current spring. If a grade level exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort will show an increase in the current year.*

A. Method

The Terra Nova was administered in the spring of 2006 and then again in the spring of 2007. Every student who took the test in both years is considered a 'cohort' student for value added purposes. These do not necessarily correlate exactly with our NYS testing cohorts, which use BEDS dates. Table 9 below presents spring to spring Terra Nova Math results for NCE growth grouped by cohort averages.

¹¹ This complex and fair statistical analysis utilizes demographic and state assessment data, which gives schools an opportunity to see where they stand compared to demographically similar schools across the state. The analysis is conducted by CSI staff and presented to the school for incorporation into the annual Accountability Plan Progress Report.

B. Results

Table 9 – Terra Nova Math gains, 2006 to 2007

Math						
2006-07 Math Terra Nova	Cohort Size	Class Cohort Average Terra Nova NCE (Spring 2006)	Goal of at least 1/2 difference between Average and (50)	Class Cohort Average Terra Nova NCE (Spring 2007)	Difference Between Years	Goal Met "Yes" or "No"
Grade 1	25	29.46	10.27	43	13.54	YES
Grade 2	12	34.5	7.75	55.33	20.83	YES
Grade 3	13	31	9.50	47.38	16.38	YES
Grade 4	13	39.08	5.46	40.69	1.61	No
Grade 5	12	36.75	6.63	42.16	5.41	No
Grade 6	17	42	3.94	51.31	9.19	YES
School wide	92	35.49	7.26	46.65	11.16	YES

Evaluation

We met this goal in 2006-07. As with ELA, our Terra Nova gains closely matched our State testing performance, providing us with an exceptionally reliable added piece of statistical information.

VI. Value Added Measure: *Each year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State Math exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State Math exam.*¹²

A. Method

For this value-added measure, cohort students are considered those students who have taken the 2006 and 2007 NYS Math. For that reason, only students in grades 4-6 will be shown, since current 3rd graders have no 2nd grade data. If the column 'difference between years' exceeds the goal in each applicable grade, we will have met our goal.

¹² If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

B. Results

Table 10 – NYS Math improvement between 2006 and 2007

	Cohort Size	Class Cohort Proficiency % (NYS Math, March 2006)	Goal of at least 1/2 difference between 2006 ELA and (75)	Class Cohort Proficiency % (NYS Math, March 2007)	Difference Between Years	Goal Met "Yes" or "No"
Grade 4	13	38.46%	>18.27	84.62%	46.16	YES
Grade 5	13	15.30%	>29.85	53.85%	38.55	YES
Grade 6	16	62.50%	>6.25	75.00%	8.65	YES

Evaluation

We met this goal in 2006-07, and did so in all grades. We needed profound improvement in grades 4 and 5, and our students came through in both instances. As we mentioned earlier in the report, had one more cohort student passed, we would be 75% proficient in Math. Our internal Math goal for the years to come is to exceed and stay consistently over the absolute proficiency mark.

SUMMARY OF MATHEMATICS GOAL

The fundamental changes we made in Math were as profound as they were in ELA, and our impressive success can be tied to our program changes, the hiring of a Math Coordinator, and daily test preparation questions aligned directly with the New York State Math Test. All changes clearly made a significant difference, evidenced by our 73% proficiency, exceeding the district and the NYS AMO, and unveiling very similar improvement on our Math Terra Nova. Anecdotally, our teachers provide continuous positive feedback on the Math curriculum's pacing charts, standards-aligned chapters, and its general user friendly format. We feel very confident about continued Math success going forward.

ACTION PLAN FOR MATHEMATICS 2007-08

The ACCS faculty and administration will continue to use a core math program by Scott Foresman which is aligned with the New York State Math Standards and performance indicators. Grades 3-6 will follow curriculum guidance materials (NYS) pre/post March. These materials indicate the Performance Indicators (content) that students need to learn prior to taking the NYS test in March. They also highlight those concepts that must be taught to prepare students for the next grade level. The guidance materials coincide with the text pacing materials. Text pacing has been structured so that appropriate topics will be covered prior to the NYS testing in March.

NYS recommended Mathematics vocabulary has been given to all teachers. In addition, teachers received a **Glossary – Grades PreK – 8** of New York State Mathematics terms. This document provides an understanding of mathematical terms used in grade level instruction as reflected in the NYS Core Curriculum. Teachers (Grades 3 – 6) also received a set of sample tasks which have been developed by New York State Teachers. These tasks help to clarify the Core Curriculum Performance Indicators by further explaining the language used and the meaning of the Performance Indicators. These materials will be used as guidelines to help strengthen the instruction.

In order to reach our target goal in Math, ACCS will implement the following action plan:

A. Math Grades K-6: Using Scott Foresman Math Program

1. Teachers will administer their grade level baseline test during the first 2 days of school.
2. After grading the test, teachers will meet with curriculum coordinators to complete an item analysis of the tests. Students will be grouped based on these results.
3. In Kindergarten, students will be assessed at the end of each chapter.
4. Teachers will administer Scott Foresman short test prep daily.
5. In grades 1-6, students will be tested using quizzes that assess the concepts (performance indicators) taught. These quizzes are in NYS test format.
6. Students who do not master a concept will be grouped and re-taught the skill by the teacher, TA, or AIS support teacher or in after-school tutoring sessions. Scott Foresman provides an immediate intervention plan.
7. In grades, 1-6, students will be administered benchmark tests that mirror the NYS test. They will be administered at the end of chapters 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10.
8. In grades K-6, the teachers will administer an end of the year test. After grading the test, teachers will meet with curriculum coordinators to complete an item analysis of the tests. These test results along with other assessments will be used to group students for the next school year.
9. Using the Scott Foresman program and NYS standards, the teachers will be assigned lessons needed at each level to be taught before March in preparation for the NYS test. Scott Foresman provides this pacing chart in the teacher manuals.

10. Teacher will record tests and quiz results on the school's server and will meet with Math Curriculum Coordinator to discuss lessons, planning, pacing and most importantly student progress.

B. Math: Test Preparation using results from NYS Math test

1. Math Curriculum Coordinator will meet with each teacher to review last year's NYS Math test.
2. Teachers will review the math test with the students and use it as a teaching tool to prepare for the next test.
3. The current grade level test from last year will be administered. The results of the test will be used as a teaching tool.
4. Teachers will meet with the Math Coordinator to discuss the test results and determine a plan of action. Additional math support will be determined at this time.

C. Placement of New Students

3. Students will be administered the Scott Foresman Math Baseline test upon entry into grade.
4. Terra Nova will be administered to new students until 12/31.

D. Criteria for Inclusion in AIS

- Student scores at a level 1 or 2 on state test
- Student's score on Terra Nova at the 30th percentile or less
- Student scores at less than 75% performance on the report card

F. Curriculum Team

- f. The teachers will send completed record forms and tests to the curriculum team for review.
- g. The curriculum team will meet with each teacher on a regular basis (biweekly) to discuss students' individual progress.
- h. On Monday and Tuesday of each week, the curriculum team will meet to review the results of all posted material. (Monday-ELA Tuesday-Math).
- i. The curriculum team will review lesson plans posted on www.betterclassrooms.com weekly.
- j. The curriculum team will report all formative assessments to Leadership Team at weekly team meetings.

SCIENCE

Goal: Students will understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.

I. Absolute Measure: *Each year, 75 percent of fourth graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.*

A. Method

Fourth grade students took the Science exam in spring 2007. The exam is a cumulative assessment, measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge during the course of their schooling and includes a hands-on section. The cohort group includes all students who were enrolled before October 4, 2005. (BEDS Day)

B. Results and Evaluation

We did not meet this outcome measure. Our cohort 4th grade science students were 69% proficient (9 of 13 cohort students passed). Had one more student passed, this measure would have been met.

Additional Evidence

Even with so much emphasis on ELA and Math, we have been vigilant about keeping science relevant with our staff. To that end, we retained a science coordinator to consult with our faculty to keep lessons interesting and students engaged. Based on our results, this personnel decision has paid dividends.

II. Comparative Measure: *Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Science exam will be greater than that of the local school district.*

A. Method

Fourth grade students took the Science exam in spring 2007. Cohort results will be compared to the Troy School District performance on 4th grade science.

B. Results and Evaluation

We are not able to assess this measure since we have no way of determining how the local school district performed on 4th grade science during 2006-07. All we can do at this point is report on our success versus our absolute measure of 75% cohort proficiency.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Goal: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York

I. Absolute Measure: *Each year, 75 percent of fifth graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS Social Studies Exam.*

A. Method

Fifth grade students took the Social Studies exam in November 2006. The exam is a cumulative assessment, measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge during the course of their schooling. The cohort group includes all students who were enrolled before October 4, 2005. (BEDS Day)

B. Results

We did not meet this outcome measure. We were not successful in Social Studies in 2006-07, but were in 2005-06. In 2005-06, 80% of our cohort 5th graders were proficient in Social Studies, and this past year, we dropped to 31% (4 of 13 cohort students passed). The administration was very disappointed and takes full responsibility for this decline. We spent such considerable time on our programmatic overhaul in ELA and Math; we were guilty of neglecting Social Studies in 2006-07. We realize that the content of the 5th grade Social Studies is primarily based on 4th grade material, and we did not emphasize the type of review in the first few months of 5th grade that was clearly necessary. We have learned from this mistake, and will rectify this in 2007-08.

II. Comparative Measure: *Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Social Studies exam will be greater than that of the local school district.*

A. Method

Fifth grade students took the Social Studies exam in November 2006. Cohort results will be compared to the Troy School District performance on 5th grade Social Studies.

B. Results

We are not able to assess this measure since official results have not been posted, and we have no way of determining how the local school district performed on 5th grade Social Studies during 2006-07. All we can do at this point is report on our success versus our absolute measure of 75% cohort proficiency.

NCLB

Goal: The school has made adequate yearly progress as required by NCLB.

Results

According to the 2005-06 New York State School Report Card issued in the spring of 2007, Ark Community Charter School remains a 'school in good standing.'