



BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL FOR BETTER LEARNING 2

2016-17 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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By Kevin Brennan, Ed.D.

3740 Baychester Ave. – Annex
Bronx, NY 10466

718-655-6660

www.bronxbetterlearning.org

Dr. Kevin Brennan, Executive Director, and Mrs. Nysheria Sims-Oliver, Principal, prepared this 2016-17 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Kimberly Kelly	Board Chairperson, Complaint Review Committee, Teacher Employment Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
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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 2 (BBL 2) on June 4, 2014. BBL 2 opened in the fall of 2015 with an enrollment of 75 students in Kindergarten. For the 2016-17 school year, BBL 2 added a 1st grade, increasing its enrollment to 150 students. BBL 2 will continue to add one grade each year, with a projected enrollment of 425 students at full capacity in 2020. As of September 2015, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning Educational Corporation (Board of Trustees) governs both charters, i.e., Bronx Better Learning 1 (BBL 1) and BBL 2.

Prior to the first year of operation, BBL 2 reached a shared space agreement with the New York City Department of Education, through which BBL 2 received permission to co-locate in the JHS 144 Michelangelo campus, sharing space with two public middle schools: JHS 144 and Pelham Gardens. BBL 2 is located at 2545 Gunther Avenue, on the 3rd floor, in CSD 11, approximately two miles from BBL 1. The campus will accommodate BBL 2's growth up to full enrollment. Its new Kindergarten classes were situated there in 2015-2016, and 1st grade classes were added for the 2016-2017 school year. Beginning September 2015, BBL 2 occupied a total of 16 full or half size classrooms. For the 2016-2017 school year, BBL 2 occupied a total of 17 full or half size classrooms. The school will occupy two extra full size classrooms for the 2017-2018 school year, with plans to eventually occupy the entire 3rd floor at full capacity.

The mission of The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 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 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.

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2:

- 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
- serves all students, including those eligible for free and reduced lunch, eligible for special education services and/or eligible for support as English Language Learners (ELL).

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2015-2016	75													75
2016-2017	78	72												150

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

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

Background

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 (BBL 2) maintains a 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.

During the 2016-17 school year, BBL 2 maintained its strong commitment, as a replication of Bronx Better Learning 1 (BBL 1), to ensure 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 Common Core Standards by:

- Emphasizing the consistent application of Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*;
- Refining the curriculum to ensure its alignment with the State's Common Core Standards;
- Incorporating as part of its reading foundation the use Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop throughout the school;
- Fostering a joy for reading through the Growing Great Readers program;
- Making available to all students, access to an extensive classroom library and school library;
- Closely monitoring each student's progress through the use of regularly scheduled interim assessments and the scheduling of a monthly "Data Day;"
- Providing supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;
- Appointing a high performing teachers to the position of Academic Leader assigned to further support teacher development at each grade level;
- Providing professional development through our in-house professional development specialists to both teachers and assistants to enhance each person's readiness to support the needs of all of our students;
- Utilizing writing rubrics that are aligned with the State's Common Core Standards; and
- Providing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through increasing the frequency of classroom observations and "walkthroughs" by administration.

Goal: Growth Measure

Each Year, 75% of all tested students will demonstrate a minimum growth of one grade level (September to June for Kindergarten; June to June for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades on the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P) assessment, based on a set of strict procedures for norming the scoring, to assure reliability in test administration.

Method**Kindergarten:**

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of Kindergarten students from beginning of the year in September to the end of the year in June, including students who were retained from the 2015-16 school year. The analysis includes only those students who were enrolled in the school at the time of the test administration in September (n=74), and not four students who were backfilled. Teachers trained in administering the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P) used the system to assess students three times formally during the school year to measure growth; September, February and June. Students' growth was measured by level according to the F&P Instructional Levels Expectations for Reading Chart.

1st Grade:

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of 1st grade students from June of the 2015-16 school year to June of the 2016-17 school year. The analysis includes only the cohort of students who were enrolled in the school at the time of the test administration in June 2016 (n=56), and not the sixteen backfilled students*. Teachers trained in administering the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P) used the system to assess students three times formally during the school year to measure growth; September, February and June. Students' growth was measured by level according to the F&P Instructional Levels Expectations for Reading Chart.

*Backfilled students explained: Eleven students from the 2015-2016 Kindergarten cohort were retained in Kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year. The families of three students who were promoted to 1st grade for the 2016-2017 school year moved, and as a result, enrolled their children schools proximate to their new homes. Two students who were retained in Kindergarten in the 2016-2017 school year did not return to the school for the 2016-2017 school year. Thus, sixteen seats were ready to be filled for the 2016-2017 school year: thirteen in Kindergarten and three in 1st grade.

Results**Kindergarten:**

All students in the Kindergarten cohort demonstrated some level of growth on the F&P assessment. One student demonstrated one level of growth, totaling 1.35% of the cohort; eight students demonstrated two levels of growth, totaling 10.81% of the cohort; sixty-five (65) students demonstrated three or more levels of growth, totaling 87.83% of the cohort.

Seventy-three (73) of the seventy-four (74) students enrolled since September (98.6%) demonstrated a growth of at least one grade level from September to June.

1st Grade:

All students in the first grade cohort demonstrated some level of growth on the F&P assessment. One student demonstrated four levels of growth, totaling 1.78% of the cohort; seven students demonstrated five levels of growth, totaling 12.5% of the cohort; twenty-nine (29) students demonstrated six levels of growth, 51.78% of the cohort and nineteen (19) students demonstrated seven or more levels of growth totaling 33.92%.

Forty-eight (48) of the fifty-six (56) students enrolled in the 1st grade cohort (85.71%) demonstrated a growth of at least one grade level from June to June.

Evaluation

Kindergarten:

As reflected in the table below, the school met this measure for Kindergarten, exceeding it by 23.6 percentage points.

Kindergarten Student Growth in ELA*

	No Growth	1 Level of Growth	2 Levels of Growth	3 or More Levels of Growth	Total Achieving at Least 2 Levels of Growth
Number of Students Achieving Levels of Growth	0	1	6	65	71
Percentage of Total Cohort (N=74)	0%	1.35%	10.81%	87.83%	98.65%

*To show growth of one grade level from September to June, students must have shown an increase in their F&P reading level of two levels by June, per F&P criteria for Kindergarten.

1st Grade:

As reflected in the table below, the school met this measure for 1st grade, exceeding it by 10.71 percentage points.

1st Grade Student Growth in ELA*

	No Growth	4 Levels of Growth	5 Levels of Growth	6 Levels of Growth	7 or More Levels of Growth	Total Achieving at Least 6 Levels of Growth
Number of Students Achieving Levels of Growth (N=56)	0	1	7	29	19	48
Percentage of Total Cohort	0%	1.78%	12.5%	51.78%	33.92%	85.71

*To show growth of one grade level from June to June, students must have shown an increase in their F&P reading level of six levels by June, per F&P criteria for 1st grade.

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

The school met the measure of this goal that is applicable for Kindergarten and 1st grade.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Growth	Each year, 75% of all tested students will demonstrate a minimum growth of one grade level (September to June for Kindergarten; June to June for 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd grades) on the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P) assessment, based on a set of strict procedures for norming the scoring, to assure reliability in test administration.	Achieved

Action Plan

As with the 2015-2016 school year, the school exceeded its growth measure goal for the 2016-17 school year. Nevertheless, we intend, not just to sustain, but to bolster our efforts to ensure our students are proficient readers and writings of the English language.

While our ongoing analysis of individual student test results and an analysis of the administration of the F&P will likely lead to additional adjustments in the ELA program as the next school year begins, we have already instituted the following targeted steps:

1. Daily Reading Programs: We will continue to enhance reading comprehension by focusing on our Growing Great Readers Program to foster a joy for reading. We will allocate time in our daily schedule for that program.
2. Instructional Rigor: We will continue to maintain:
 - a. A High Level of Administrative Support: The Principal will make frequent classroom visits to ensure instructional rigor and continuity in the instructional program across the two grades. She will review weekly lesson plans and provide targeted feedback during “walkthroughs”.
 - b. An Increase in Academic Leadership: A second Academic Leader has been assigned, to support the Kindergarten, first and second grade teachers for next school year. Her role, in coordination with the existing Academic Leader, will be to assist with instructional planning, facilitate collaborative planning, provide professional development and support teachers as needed with the instructional program and our approach.
3. Continued Increased Adult Supervision: We will continue with the model of two assistants in the Kindergarten classes and one assistant in each grade following. That arrangement will maintain our student to adult ratio, and will allow the teacher to focus more closely on creating smaller groups during instruction and more individualized instruction.
4. Data Driven Decision Making: Monthly reviews of running records will take place during our Data Day time allotment to ensure that students are on target toward making substantial growth throughout the school year.
5. Student Support: We will identify students who are “at-risk” early in the school year to ensure that they receive the support services needed.

- a. Special Education Instructional Options: Students identified as needing special education services will continue to receive those services throughout the school day, including integrated co-teaching (ICT) and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS).
 - b. English Language Learners: We will ensure that students identified as English language learners receive all specialized instructional services to meet their needs, in full accord with our charter.
 - c. Academic Support: We will review and, as necessary, expand the scheduling of academic support, both during and after school hours, to address fully the needs of underperforming students.
 - d. Students Performing Above Grade Level: We will ensure that the students performing above grade level receive supports based on their academic levels by providing enriching programs to support their academic abilities. Such programs may include:
 - i. before school programs
 - ii. after school program
 - iii. lunch support groups
6. Professional Development: The ELA professional development staff will continue to work with teachers and classroom assistants to provide the highest quality of instruction through professional development sessions during lunch and after school hours, along with in-class support.
 7. School Collaboration: We have partnered with Pelham Gardens Middle School (Pelham Gardens) through a collaborative literacy program. Students from Pelham Gardens volunteer to read with our students to promote school collaboration and a culture of literacy throughout the building.
 8. ELA Nights for Parents: We will host a series of ELA nights for parents to provide insight into our ELA program. They will learn strategies they can use at home to supplement our efforts at school, which will support our literacy efforts.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

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

Background

BBL 2 maintains a 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.

BBL 2 demonstrates a strong commitment to those school-wide priorities, as a replication of BBL 1, to ensure the delivery of a challenging and meaningful instructional program in mathematics for all of its students by:

- Reviewing 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;
- Maintaining a strong commitment to the Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning;
- Consistently applying the use of manipulatives, primarily Cuisenaire rods, even in the earliest stages, so students develop models for thinking mathematically;
- Providing supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;
- Continuing to provide professional development, through our in-house professional development specialists, to both teachers and assistants to bolster each person's readiness to meet the needs of all of our students;
- Increasing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through more frequent classroom visits by the Principal;
- Emphasizing our students' development of two overarching capacities, i.e., becoming swift and accurate in computation skills and increasing their ability to focus on problem solving activities that involve practice and real world application of those skills; and
- Ensuring 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.

Goal 2: Growth Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students in Kindergarten will demonstrate a minimum growth of (8) months (October to June) and 75 percent of all tested students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade will demonstrate a minimum growth of one grade level (June to June) on the Terra Nova Standardized Achievement Test.

Method**Kindergarten:**

This measure examines the change in performance, from October to June of a consistent group of Kindergarten students, including students who were retained from the 2015-16 school year. The analysis includes only those students who were enrolled in the school at the time of the first administration of the Terra Nova assessment in October (n=74), and not four students who were backfilled after the October administration of the test. Students are assessed based on their achieved Grade Equivalent (GE). To show a growth of eight months, students' GE performance must increase, from October to June, by a minimum .8.

1st Grade:

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of 1st grade students from June of the 2015-16 school year to June of the 2016-17 school year. The analysis includes only those students who were enrolled in the school at the time of the test administration in June of 2016 (n=56), and not the sixteen backfilled students*. Students are assessed based on their achieved Grade Equivalent (GE). To show a growth of one grade level, students' GE performance must have increased, from June 2016 to June 2017, by a minimum 1.0.

*Backfilled students explained: Eleven students from the 2015-2016 Kindergarten cohort were retained in Kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year. The families of three students who were promoted to 1st grade for the 2016-2017 school year moved, and as a result, enrolled their children schools proximate to their new homes. Two students who were retained in Kindergarten in the 2016-2017 school year did not return to the school for the 2016-2017 school year. Thus, sixteen seats were ready to be filled for the 2016-2017 school year: thirteen in Kindergarten and three in 1st grade.

Results**Kindergarten:**

All students in the Kindergarten cohort demonstrated some level of growth on the Terra Nova assessment. One student demonstrated a growth level of .3, totaling 1.35% of the cohort; the remainder of the cohort – seventy-three (73) students – demonstrated a growth of .8 or more, totaling 98.65% of the cohort.

1st Grade:

All students in the 1st grade cohort demonstrated some level of growth on the Terra Nova assessment. Ten students demonstrated a growth level of 0-0.9, totaling 17.86% of the cohort; twenty students demonstrated a growth level of 1-1.5 totaling 35.7% of the cohort, eighteen (18)

students demonstrated a growth level of 1.6-2, totaling 32.14% of the cohort and eight (8) students demonstrated a growth level of 2.1 or more totaling 14.3% of the cohort.

Evaluation

Kindergarten:

As reflected in the table below, the school met this measure for Kindergarten, exceeding it by 23.65%.

Kindergarten Student Growth in Mathematics*

	No Growth	.1-.6 Growth	.7 Growth	.8 or more Growth
Number of Students Achieving Growth Level	0	1	0	73
Percentage of Total Cohort (N=74)	0%	1.35%	0%	98.65%

*For a student to show growth of eight months from October to June, students must have shown a GE increase on the Terra Nova assessment by a minimum of .8.

1st Grade:

As reflected in the table below, the school met this measure for 1st grade, exceeding it by 7.1%.

1st Grade Student Growth in Mathematics*

	0-9 Growth	1-1.5 Growth	1.6-2 Growth	2.1 or more Growth	Total Achieving at Least 1 Year's Growth
Number of Students Achieving Growth Level	10	20	18	8	46
Percentage of Total Cohort (N=56)	17.86%	35.7%	32.14%	14.3%	82.14

*For a student to show growth of one year from June 2016 to June 2017, students must have shown a GE increase on the Terra Nova assessment by a minimum of 1.0.

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

The school met the measure of this goal that is applicable for Kindergarten and 1st grade.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Growth	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students in Kindergarten will demonstrate a minimum growth of (8) months (October to June) and 75 percent of all tested students in 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd grade will demonstrate a minimum growth of one grade level (June to June) on the Terra Nova Standardized Achievement Test.	Achieved

Action Plan

After falling short of our goal in mathematics for the 2015-16 school year, the school leader and the Academic Leader were especially diligent in monitoring students' growth in mathematics to ensure that the school met the goal this year. As a result, we handily met our goal this school year, exceeding the objective in both grades.

Nonetheless, student performance in mathematics remains one of our highest priorities. Though we met the goal this year, we have developed an action plan to ensure that we meet or exceed our targeted goal for next school year.

While the ongoing analysis of individual student test results and an item analysis of the Terra Nova assessment will likely lead to additional adjustments in our mathematics program as the school year begins, we have already implemented the following targeted steps:

1. Instructional Alignment: Our mathematics professional development staff, as well as the academic leader and teachers, will continue review our informal assessments, and our in-class assignments to reflect the structure of the assessment questions of the Terra Nova, thereby ensuring students' familiarity of the nature of the assessment when tested.
2. Instructional Rigor: The mathematics program will continue to focus on ensuring that students demonstrate competence in their understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving through the appointment of an additional Academic Leader assigned to support our Kindergarten, first and second grade teachers next year, in concert with our returning Academic Leader. She has several years' experience with the mathematics curriculum, and has proven to be a highly qualified teacher at the school. Her expertise will aid in professional development, curriculum planning, the facilitation of common planning meetings, one-on-one targeted coaching with the teachers around our approach and the use of manipulatives in the classroom.
3. Data Driven Decision Making: Monthly informal Terra Nova-like practice assessments will help monitor student progress and to identify where the instructional program requires modification to better support student learning.
4. Increased Adult Supervision: An additional assistant will continue to be in place for each of the Kindergarten classes to maintain our student to adult ratio. That practice will allow the teacher to focus more closely on creating smaller groups during instruction.
5. Student Support: We will identify students who are "at-risk" early in the school year to ensure that they receive the support services needed.
 - a. Special Education Instructional Options: Students identified as needing special education services will continue to receive those services throughout the school day, including integrated co-teaching (ICT) and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS).
 - b. English Language Learners: We will ensure that students identified as English language learners receive all specialized instructional services to meet their needs, in full accord with our charter.
 - c. Academic Support: We will review and, as necessary, expand the scheduling of academic support, both during and after school hours, to address fully the needs of underperforming students.

- d. Students Performing Above Grade Level: We will ensure that the students performing above grade level receive supports based on their academic levels by providing enriching programs to support their academic abilities. Such programs may include:
 - i. before school programs
 - ii. after school program
 - iii. lunch support groups
- 6. Professional Development: The mathematics professional development staff will continue to work with teachers and classroom assistants to provide the highest quality of instruction through regularly scheduled professional development sessions during lunch and after school hours, as well as in-class support to ensure the application of the school's pedagogy throughout each class.
- 7. Administrative Support: The school leader will make more frequent visits into the classrooms to ensure continuity in the instructional program across the grades, as well as to ensure instructional rigor. The school leader will continue to closely monitor the mathematics program to ensure that students' needs are met and progress is being made by:
 - a. frequent visits to the classrooms.
 - b. reviewing weekly lesson plans and homework.
 - c. providing targeted feedback to both teachers and assistants.
 - d. working closely with the academic leader and teachers for math to ensure the consistency in rigor throughout all grades.