



**AMBER  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2014-15 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 15, 2015

by Dr. Vasthi R. Acosta

**220 East 106 Street  
New York, NY 10029  
212-534-9667  
vacosta@ambercharter.org**

Dr. Vasthi R. Acosta, Executive Director prepared this 2014-15 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
David Briggs	Chairman, Executive committee and Ad hoc member of all board committees
Soledad Hiciano	Vice-chairman, Executive committee
Ellen Eagen	Secretary, Executive committee [until June, 2015]
Frank Aldridge	Treasurer, Executive committee and Finance committee
John Gutierrez	Member, Finance committee
Cecilia Castro	Member, Education Program committee
Jessica Jimenez	Vice-Chairman, Executive committee [until May, 2015]
Manuel Morales	Member, Finance & Facilities committee
Jenna Pantel	Member, Chair of Education Committee
James Serafino	Member, Chair of Facilities committee
Ann Weiner	Member, Education Program committee
Aileen Wilson	Member, Education Program committee [until March, 2015]
Kathleen McCann	Member, Education Program committee
Vasthi R. Acosta	Member, Ad hoc member of all board committees
Michael Stolper	General Counsel to the Board

**Dr. Vasthi R. Acosta has served as the school leader since 2008.**

## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2000, Amber's mission reads:

*Our mission is to provide our students an academically rigorous and well-rounded education, along with strong character development, that will enable them to prosper in top middle schools and beyond.*

Amber served over 485 students in 2014 – 2015 in grades K-5. Our students were approximately 33% African American, 58% Latino, 7% American Indian and 2% White/Asian/Multi-racial with 85% eligible for free and reduced lunch. There were 48% male and 52% female students.

This year we had 21 classes in grades K-5. An additional fourth grade class was added to accommodate the number of students moving into that grade. The final student body count was 485 students in June.

Amber entered its second year implementing *Journeys* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for literacy, and for math *Go Math!* also from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Science instruction continued through *K12* and *Scott Foresman*, and social studies through an internally created curriculum aligned with the NYS Standards. In addition, Amber continued to offer specialty classes in reading intervention, technology, Spanish, visual arts, music, and physical education.

Amber continued to serve the whole child by offering swimming classes to all second graders, a basketball team and pep squad for third to fifth graders, assemblies where students perform, student council, Honor Choir, Art Club, Ballroom Basix, National Elementary School Honor Society, and other enrichment opportunities. Amber continued its partnership with the Bubble program, which teaches students and families about good nutrition, and participating in the Broadway League, a program that offers families discounted tickets to Broadway shows

Amber students were accepted into top middle schools in the city, schools like East Harlem Exodus, Columbia Prep, Riverdale Country, De La Salle, Young Women's Leadership and Patrick Henry. All of our students were admitted into top charter and district middle schools.

This year Amber launched the Amber Parent University. While the students attend Saturday Academy the parents were invited to attend workshops. Workshops were offered in such topics as budgeting, science projects for the home, citizenship process, testing stress, and other topics of interest. Those parents who attended five or more workshops were recognized at the end of year Stepping Up ceremony with a certificate and a T-shirt that stated they were a 'Proud Amber Parent.' Amber Parent University will guest speakers on topics the parents have requested.

This past year instructional leadership with the board education committee crafted a tool that reflects each student's experience at Amber throughout their six years. It provides a fuller picture of the activities the student has experienced each year. Experiences that enrich and deliver a well-rounded education, such as trips, competitions, performances, community service, and areas of achievement. This tool will be rolled out in the coming school year, 2015-16.

Finally, this year was a transition year for Amber's leadership. Dr. Vasthi R. Acosta who has served as Head of School/Principal since 2008 stepped into the role of Executive Director in preparation for the expansion of Amber schools with the opening of a second charter school in 2016. Ms. Sashemani Elliott who served as Assistant Principal stepped into the role of Principal, and Ms. Veronica Almedina who served as Dean of Students stepped into the role of Assistant Principal. The transition was smooth and seamless as evidenced by the parent and staff survey results which rated the school in the high 90 percentile at the end of the school year.

### School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2011-12	86	79	89	72	59	49	434
2012-13	104	91	76	80	58	49	458
2013-14	96	95	84	67	71	48	461
2014-15	105	89	90	79	59	63	485

### School Enrollment by Ethnicity

	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total	%
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	4	25	3	2	0	34	7.01%
Asian / Pacific Islander	2	1	0	1	0	2	6	1.24%
Hispanic / Latino	74	58	18	47	44	41	282	58.14%
Black / African American	28	25	43	28	13	20	157	32.37%
White	1	0	3	0	0	0	4	0.82%
Other / Unclassified	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0.41%
Total	105	89	90	79	59	63	485	

### School Enrollment by Gender

	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total	%
Male	48	42	44	39	28	32	233	48.04%
Female	57	47	46	40	31	31	252	51.96%
Total	105	89	90	79	59	63	485	

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at Amber Charter School will be proficient readers and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of English-language reading skills.

### Background

Since 2013-14, Amber has used *Journeys* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as its literacy curriculum. *Journey's*, has an excellent balance of non-fiction and fiction texts, a balance and diversity of text genres, as well as a text complexity analysis for the main texts. Guided reading books are incorporated that can be used for ELL support/differentiation/small group instruction and they address a range of complexity levels.

In 2014-15, professional development to the faculty focused on the continued delivery of the curriculum as well as a focus on how teachers posed questions. A consultant was hired to work with the second adult in each room to maximize student learning and differentiation.

In the upper grades [4 & 5 grades] a pilot program to departmentalize the subjects was launched. Teachers taught one subject all day while students rotated from classroom to classroom. Teachers taught the subject they were passionate for and learned all the students in that grade. The departmentalization helped the teachers to focus in on one subject and prepare lessons that focused on the skills needed. In the coming year departmentalization will include third grade.

### Goal 1: 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 English language arts examination for grades 3-8.

### Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in 3 through 5 grade in April 2015. 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.

### 2014-15 State English Language Arts Exam

**Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>1</sup>			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	78	0	0	1	79
4	59	0	0	0	59
5	63	0	0	0	63
All	200	0	0	1	201

**Results**

All of the students tested were in their second year at Amber. Only 29% of the third graders, 29% of fourth graders, and 43% of fifth graders scored proficient in the English Language Arts Exam. The overall average in the NYS ELA exam was 34% proficient.

**Performance on 2014-15 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	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	29%	78	29%	78
4	29%	59	29%	59
5	43%	63	43%	63
All	34%	200	34%	200

**Evaluation**

Although, none of the grades met the proficiency goal of 75%, it is encouraging to see growth in fifth grade where there was a steep drop last year. It is discouraging to see no growth in third grade and a drop in fourth grade.

**Additional Evidence**

Third grade drop 1% and fourth grade 12%. Fifth grade increased by 30%. The overall proficiency rate for Amber students increased by 4% from the previous year, from 30% to 34%.

**English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested

<sup>1</sup> 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.

3	28%	80	30%	66	29%	78
4	24%	58	41%	71	29%	59
5	25%	49	13%	48	43%	63
All	25%	187	30%	185	34%	200

**Goal 1: Absolute Measure**

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the State English language arts exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.

**Method**

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state’s learning standards in English language arts. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2014-15 English language arts AMO of 89. The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.<sup>2</sup>

**Results**

In level 3 and 4 a total of 34% of Amber students tested at performance level. In Level 2 a total of 50% of Amber students scored and 17% scored at level 1. Amber’s PLI is 116.50.

---

<sup>2</sup> In contrast to SED’s Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.



### English Language Arts 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
200	17.00	49.50	28.50	5.00

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 49.50 & + & 28.50 & + & 5.00 & = & 83.00 \\
 & & & & 28.50 & + & 5.00 & = & \underline{33.50} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 116.50
 \end{array}$$

#### Evaluation

Amber’s PLI is 116.50 which surpassed the state’s AMO of 89 by 27.50. Amber has met the state’s Performance Level Index.

#### 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 local school district.

#### Method

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. 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.<sup>3</sup>

#### Results

Amber outperformed both CSD 4 and CSD 5 in grades 3-5. In third grade Amber had 29% of students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 28% and CSD 5 had 16%. In fourth grade Amber had 29% of students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 25% and CSD 5 had 13%. In fifth grade Amber had 43% students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 22% and CSD 5 had 11%. Overall, Amber outperformed both CSD 4 and 5 with 34% proficiency rate compared to CSD 4 25% and CSD 5 14%.

---

<sup>3</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its Access 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](#).

**2014-15 State English Language Arts Exam  
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency					
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		CSD 4 Students		CSD 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	29	78	28	963	16	834
4	29	59	25	969	13	898
5	43	63	22	950	11	826
All	34	200	25	2882	14	2558

**Evaluation**

Goal met. Amber exceeded the aggregate district performance for both CSD 4 and 5. In third grade, Amber students scored 1% higher than CSD 4 and 13% higher than CSD 5. In fourth grade, Amber students scored 4% higher than CSD 4 and 16% higher than CSD 5. In fifth grade Amber students scored 21% higher than CSD 4 and 32% higher than CSD 5. Overall, Amber scored 34% in ELA proficiency which is 9% higher than CSD 4 and 20% higher than CSD 5.

**Additional Evidence**

Once again Amber has outperformed both CSD 4 and CSD 5 as it has since 2008-2009. In 2010-2011 Amber outperformed CSD 4 by 17%, in 2011-2012 by 6%, in 2012-2013, by 5%, and this year by 1%. In 2010-2011, Amber outperformed CSD 5 by 31%, in 2011-2012, by 21%, in 2012-2013, by 14%, and last year, 2013-2014, by 16%.

**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 Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students								
	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15		
	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5
3	27.50%	21.00%	13.40%	29.85%	29.00%	14.00%	29.49%	28.04%	16.19%
4	24.10%	20.10%	11.70%	41.43%	21.00%	16.00%	28.81%	25.39%	13.03%
5	24.50%	20.40%	10.70%	12.50%	24.00%	13.00%	42.86%	22.32%	11.38%
All	25.37%	20.50%	11.93%	29.73%	29.00%	14.00%	33.50%	25.26%	13.53%

**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 small degree)

according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.<sup>4</sup>

## Method

The Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school’s performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. 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 economically disadvantaged percentage. The difference between the schools’ 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 small 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## Results

In 2013-14 the school’s overall comparative performance in ELA was higher than expected to a meaningful degree.

### 2013-14 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Proficiency		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	81.7	67	30	22.8	7.2	0.51
4	80.8	70	42	23.4	18.6	1.29
5	84.3	48	12	18.9	-6.9	-0.59
6						
7						
8						
All	82.0	185	29.9	22.0	7.9	0.52

<b>School’s Overall Comparative Performance:</b>
<b>Higher than expected to a meaningful degree</b>

<sup>4</sup> The Institute will continue using *economically disadvantaged* instead of *eligibility for free lunch* as the demographic variable in 2013-14. Schools should report previous year’s results using reported free-lunch statistics.

## Evaluation

The overall effect size goal was met. The individual grade effect size was met for all grades. Grade 3 had an effect size of 0.51; fourth grade had an effect size of 1.29, and fifth grade had an effect size of -0.59. The overall effect size was 0.52 with 0.22 points above the 0.30 required.

### Goal 1: Growth Measure<sup>5</sup>

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 state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

## 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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score from 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 score are ranked by their 2013-14 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 school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2013-14 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>6</sup>

## Results

Amber's overall ELA unadjusted mean growth percentile is 52.0.

### **2013-14 English Language Arts Unadjusted Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level**

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	54.0	50.0
5	50.5	50.0
All	<b>52.0</b>	50.0

## Evaluation

Amber's overall ELA mean growth percentile of 52.0 percentile is greater than the state median of the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. Fourth grade has a greater percentile than the state median at 54 percentile. Fifth grade had a greater percentile than the state median at 50.5 percentile but only by 0.5 points.

<sup>5</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

<sup>6</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

## Additional Evidence

Although Amber has a greater growth percentile than the state it is lower last year. The drop was in fourth grade while the growth percentile in fifth grade increased by 4.5 points from last year.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>7</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Average
4		61.5	54.0	50.0
5		46.0	50.5	50.0
All		<b>53.75</b>	<b>52.0</b>	50.0

#### Goal 1: Optional Measure

Each year, on a national norm-referenced assessment, all grade-level cohorts of students (in grades K-3) will reduce by one half the gap between their average NCE in the previous year and an NCE of 50 in the current year. If a grade-level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show a positive gain in the current year.

## Method

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they made towards the desirable outcome of grade level or an NCE of 50. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the same norm-referenced exam in 2013-14 and 2014-15. It includes students who repeated the grade. In addition, the school examines the aggregate of all cohorts to determine the growth of all students who took the exam in both years.

The norm referenced Terra Nova test was administered to grades Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> in May, 2015.

## Results

### Cohort Growth on Terra Nova Reading Test from Spring 2014 to 2015

Grade	Cohort Size	Average NCE			Target Achieved
		2013-14	Target	2014-15	
K	105	*	50.00	72.24	ACHIEVED
1	89	66.27	50.00	71.95	ACHIEVED
2	90	76.15	50.00	60.53	ACHIEVED
3	79	64.47	50.00	61.61	ACHIEVED
4	59	67.69	50.00	64.15	ACHIEVED

5	63	71.48	50.00	70.35	ACHIEVED
All	485	68.59	50.00	67.02	ACHIEVED

**Evaluation**

Goal met. All of the cohorts achieved their targets. Every grade not only met their target but surpassed the target.

**Additional Evidence**

The table below demonstrates that in the last three years every cohort has met their target.

**Cohort Performance on Terra Nova Reading Test by School Year**

School Year	Cohort Grades	# Cohorts Meeting Target	# Cohorts
2012-13	K-5	6	6
2013-14	K-5	6	6
2014-15	K-5	6	6

**Summary of the English Language Arts Goal**

Amber met all of the ELA measures except for the absolute goal of the NYS ELA exam. Amber met the comparative goal by exceeding the percent of students who performed at or above Level 3 compared to CSD 4 and CSD 5. Amber met the comparative goal of the predicted level of performance in 2013-14 by a higher than expected to a meaningful degree effect size. Amber met the unadjusted growth measure goal by having a greater than the state mean growth percentile of 52. Amber also met the growth goal for every cohort on the norm-referenced Terra Nova Exam. Amber did not meet its absolute goal of 75% of all students performing at or above proficiency on the New York State ELA examination in grades 3- 5, but that is the only goal not 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.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state English language arts exam will meet that year’s Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB 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 local school district.	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	Achieved

	among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2012-13 school district results.)	
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 4-5 will be above the state’s unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved
Optional	Each year, on a national norm-referenced assessment, all grade-level cohorts of students (in grades K-3) will reduce by one half the gap between their average NCE in the previous year and an NCE of 50 in the current year. If a grade-level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show a positive gain in the current year.	Achieved

**Action Plan**

Since 2013-14, Amber has used *Journeys* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as its literacy curriculum. *Journeys*, has an excellent balance of non-fiction and fiction texts, a balance and diversity of text genres, as well as a text complexity analysis for the main texts. Guided reading books are incorporated that can be used for ELL support/differentiation/small group instruction and they address a range of complexity levels.

In 2014-15, professional development to the faculty focused on the continued delivery of the curriculum as well as a focus on how teachers posed questions. A consultant was hired to work with the second adult in each room to maximize student learning and differentiation.

In the upper grades [4 & 5 grades] a pilot program to departmentalize the subjects was launched. Teachers taught one subject all day while students rotated from classroom to classroom. Teachers taught the subject they were passionate for and learned all the students in that grade. The departmentalization helped the teachers to focus in on one subject and prepare lessons that focused on the skills needed. In the coming year departmentalization will include third grade.

Academic Intervention continued to be provided through Title One Reading Specialist, the SETSS teacher, Saturday Academy and After School. Part-time tutors continued to be used in the upper grades to assist with lowering teacher student ratio and provide targeted remediation. During the literacy small group instruction period the Title One Reading Specialist, SETSS teacher and technology teacher were assigned to a grade to provide additional intervention.

The benchmark assessments from the *Journeys* curriculum were used to collect data on student progress and proficiency. This data was used to drive instruction and academic intervention. The continued use of the assessment data management system, INFORM, facilitated this process, as did the continuation of data analysis meetings between instructional leadership, teachers, and grade teams.

A three-prong writing approach that included writing through the literacy curriculum, *Journeys*; on-demand writing; and writing through the content areas was implemented. Publishing parties were held to celebrate the student’s writing. This will continue in the next school year with an

added emphasis of writing in other subject areas.

To promote the love of reading, DEAL: drop everything and listen, was implemented in every classroom at the end of each day. The teacher close the day with a daily read-aloud of a book that was at a higher reading level.

In the coming year Amber continues to work hard in closing the achievement gap in ELA and mathematics. With a slight increase in ELA overall and a drop in our math average on the state assessment, it was necessary to audit our practices.

We have switched our lesson plan format to one that is more student-centered, entitled the Amber Learning Experience. After up to 10 minutes of engaging and student-centered whole group instruction, the children are directed to work in stations. There will be 3 stations that have 3 different activities. Students will transition to each station after up to 20 minutes of small group instruction. The work will be differentiated according to formative assessments, formal assessments and other teacher gathered data.

For example in ELA:

Station 1: Phonics, Vocabulary, Decoding and Spelling will be the focus of this station. Children will receive targeted practice in whichever element the teacher focuses on for that day.

Because the station is designed to meet student needs, all children should not be working on the exact same task.

Station 2: This station is called the application station. Here the teacher will assign tasks to students that test their application of the skills or standard taught in unfamiliar text. This will help the teacher know if students are able to transfer the skill outside of the anchor text and if the students understood the instruction for that day. This work will be closely aligned to that of Terranova, State and other summative assessments.

Station 3: This station is named "Team Choice." As a group, teachers should discuss what areas of reinforcement or exposure are needed for their children. This could serve as an Academic Intervention moment as well.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Goal 2: Mathematics**

All students at Amber Charter School will become proficient in math and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of mathematical skills.

### **Background**

Since 2013 -14, Amber has used *Go Math!* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as the math curriculum. This curriculum has a strong alignment to the common core standards. The materials and instructional pacing demonstrates focus. Overviews and lesson introductions promote coherence and opportunities to support both fluency and deep understanding. The materials provide varied



modes of curriculum-embedded assessments that are well-sequenced as well as strong support for teachers in planning and providing an effective learning experience. Finally, the materials provide the appropriate level and type of scaffolding, differentiation, intervention and support for a broad range of learners.

An in-house staff developer focused solely on Math when working with the teachers. She was a source of guidance, resources, mentoring and encouragement.

Academic Intervention continued to be provided through the SETSS teacher, simulation tests and item analysis, Saturday Academy, and After School. Part-time tutors were used in the upper grades to lower teacher student ratio and provide targeted remediation.

The benchmark assessments from the *Go Math!* Curriculum were used to collect data on student progress and proficiency. This data was used to drive instruction and academic intervention. The continued use of the assessment data management system, INFORM, facilitated this process, as well as the continuation of data analysis meetings between instructional leadership, teachers, and grade teams.

For the sixth year, a Multiplication Marathon was conducted with students in grades 2-5. During this contest the student who successfully recited the multiplication tables from 2 - 12 without error won a prize. We also extended a Math Marathon to grades 1 and 2. Students engaged in a single digit addition contest. Students who performed the least amount of calculation errors won a prize.

In the upper grades [4 & 5 grades] a pilot program to departmentalize the subjects was launched. Teachers taught one subject all day while students rotated from classroom to classroom. Teachers taught the subject they were passionate for and learned all the students in that grade. The departmentalization helped the teachers to focus in on one subject and prepare lessons that focused on the skills needed. In the coming year departmentalization will include third grade.

### **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 3 through 5 grade in April 2015. 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.

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam  
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>7</sup>			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	77	0	0	2	79
4	59	0	0	0	59
5	63	0	0	0	63
All	199	0	0	0	201

**Results**

All the students tested were in their second year at Amber. In third grade 45% of the students tested scored proficient, in fourth grade 51% of the students tested scored proficient and in fifth grade 54% scored proficient. Overall, 50% of Amber students scored proficient in Math.

---

<sup>7</sup> 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.

**Performance on 2014-15 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	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	45%	77	45%	77
4	51%	59	51%	59
5	54%	63	54%	63
All	50%	199	50%	199

**Evaluation**

None of Amber’s testing grades met the goal of 75% proficiency rate.

**Additional Evidence**

In 2013-2014, Amber made strides to increase the proficiency rate of its students. In 2014-15 the proficiency rate dropped from 56% to 50%. There was a drop in both third and fourth grades. The drop in third was 7% and in fourth 21%.

**Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	40%	80	52%	67	45%	77
4	52%	58	72%	71	51%	59
5	31%	49	38%	48	54%	63
All	41%	187	56%	186	50%	199

**Goal 2: Absolute Measure**

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the State mathematics exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.

**Method**

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state’s learning standards in mathematics. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2014-15 mathematics AMO of 86.

The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.<sup>8</sup>

## Results

In level 3 and 4 a total of 50% of Amber students tested at performance level. In Level 2 a total of 42% of Amber students scored and 9% scored at level 1. Amber’s PLI is 140.50.

**Mathematics 2013-14 Performance Level Index (PLI)**

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	8.50	41.50	33.50	16.00

$$\begin{array}{rclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 41.50 & + & 33.50 & + & 16.00 & = & 91.00 \\
 & & & & 33.50 & + & 16.00 & = & \underline{49.50} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 140.50
 \end{array}$$

## Evaluation

Goal met. Amber’s PLI is 140.50 which exceeds the 2014-15 mathematics AMO of 86.

### 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 local school district.

## Method

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. 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.<sup>9</sup>

## Results

Once again Amber students outperformed students in CSD 4 and 5. Amber students outperformed students in CSD 4 in overall scores by 18%, and students in CSD 5 by 33%. In third grade Amber had 45% of students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 36% and CSD 5 had 20%. In fourth grade Amber had 51% of students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 32% and CSD 5 had 17%. In fifth grade Amber had 54% students at proficiency while CSD 4 had 27% and CSD 5 had 14%.

<sup>8</sup> In contrast to NYSED’s Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

<sup>9</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its Access 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](#).

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam  
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency					
	Amber Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		CSD 4 Students		CSD 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	45	77	36	973	20	888
4	51	59	32	978	17	913
5	54	63	27	948	14	835
All	50	199	32	2899	17	2636

**Evaluation**

Goal met. Amber students outperformed the students in CSD 4 and 5 by the largest margin in grade 5. Amber third graders outperformed CSD 4 by 9% and CSD 5 by 25%. Amber fourth graders outperformed CSD 4 by 19% and CSD 5 by 34%. Amber fifth graders outperformed CSD 4 by 27% and CSD 5 by 40%. Overall, 50% of Amber students scored proficient where only 32% of the students in CSD 4 and 17% of the students in CSD 5 scored proficient.

**Additional Evidence**

The table below provides evidence of how Amber has outperformed CSD 4 and CSD 5 in the last three years at every grade.

**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								
	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15		
	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5	Amber Charter	District 4	District 5
3	40%	25%	16%	52%	37%	17%	45%	36%	20%
4	52%	28%	15%	72%	26%	18%	51%	32%	17%
5	30%	22%	9%	38%	3%	15%	54%	27%	14%
All	41%	<u>25%</u>	13%	56%	37%	17%	50%	32%	17%

**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 small degree) according

to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.<sup>10</sup>

## Method

The Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school’s performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. 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 economically disadvantaged percentage. The difference between the schools’ 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 small 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## Results

In 2013-14 the school’s overall comparative performance in Math was higher than expected to a large degree.

### 2013-14 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Proficiency		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	81.7	67	52	32.0	20.0	1.09
4	80.8	71	72	31.4	40.6	2.05
5	84.3	48	37	27.5	9.5	0.54
6						
7						
8						
All	82.0	186	55.8	30.6	25.2	1.31

<b>School’s Overall Comparative Performance:</b>
<b>Higher than expected to a large degree</b>

## Evaluation

The overall effect size goal was met. The individual grade effect size was met for all grades. Grade 3 had an effect size of 1.09; fourth grade had an effect size of 2.05, and fifth grade had an effect size of 0.54. The overall effect size was 1.31 with 1.01 points above the 0.30 required.

<sup>10</sup> The Institute will continue using *economically disadvantaged* instead of *eligibility for free lunch* as the demographic variable in 2013-14. Schools should report previous year’s results using reported free-lunch statistics.

**Goal 2: Growth Measure<sup>11</sup>**

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 state’s unadjusted median growth percentile.

**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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score in 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 scores are ranked by their 2013-14 scores and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (mean growth percentile). Students’ growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school’s mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state’s release of Growth Model data, the 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>12</sup>

**Results**

The unadjusted Math Mean Growth Percentile for Amber was 40.0.

**2013-14 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level**

Grade	Unadjusted Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Average
4	42.5	50.0
5	38.5	50.0
All	<b>40.0</b>	50.0

<sup>11</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

<sup>12</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s business portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

## Evaluation

Amber’s Math unadjusted mean growth percentile at 40.0 is lower than the state’s average of 50%. Fourth grade’s unadjusted math mean growth percentile of 42.5 is lower than the state percentile. Fifth grade’s unadjusted math mean growth percentile of 38.5 is lower than the state percentile.

## Additional Evidence

Amber’s unadjusted growth percentile in Math dropped from 2013-14 by 15.25 points.

### Mathematics Unadjusted Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>13</sup>	2012-13 <sup>14</sup>	2013-14	Statewide Average
4		72.0	42.5	50.0
5		38.5	38.5	50.0
All		<b>55.25</b>	<b>40.0</b>	50.0

#### Goal 2: Optional Measure

Each 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 (i.e. grade level) in the current Spring. If a grade level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year

## Method

As per Charter Schools Institute: “If the plan contains a gap-closing outcome as a value-added measure, the results should be expressed as the extent to which cohorts are narrowing the difference between their scores in the previous spring and grade-level performance in the current spring. The school is expected to enable the cohorts to reduce the difference between the first year’s average NCE score and average NCE of 50, or above grade second year. (As per CSI guidelines, if a cohort scores above an NCE of 50 or above grade level in the first year, then it need only show *some* gain in the second year.)” The formula used to determine threshold is as follows:

$$\text{Target} = 50 + \left( \frac{(\text{2008} - \text{09 Average NCE}) - 50}{2} \right)$$

## Results

Every cohort met the target growth measure.

<sup>13</sup> Grade level results not available.



**Cohort Growth on Terra Nova Math Test from Spring 2014 to 2015**

Grade	Cohort Size	Average NCE			Target Achieved
		2013-14	Target	2014-15	
K	105	*	50.00	84.88	ACHIEVED
1	89	74.12	50.00	73.38	ACHIEVED
2	90	70.30	50.00	69.32	ACHIEVED
3	79	62.24	50.00	77.97	ACHIEVED
4	59	71.53	50.00	73.61	ACHIEVED
5	63	80.73	50.00	77.22	ACHIEVED
All	485	70.69	50.00	76.36	ACHIEVED

**Evaluation**

Goal met. Every grade from K-5 met and exceeded the target growth measure.

**Additional Evidence**

All the cohorts have met the target in the last three years in math on the Terra Nova exam.

**Cohort Performance on Terra Nova Mathematics Test by School Year**

School Year	Cohort Grades	# Cohorts Meeting Target	# Cohorts
2012-13	K-5	6	6
2013-14	K-5	6	6
2014-15	K-5	6	6

**Summary of the Mathematics Goal**

Amber met the comparative goal by exceeding the percent of students who performed at or above proficiency compared to CSD 4 and CSD 5. Amber met the comparative goal of the predicted level of performance in 2013-14 by a higher than expected to a large degree effect size. Amber did not meet the unadjusted math mean growth percentile goal with a percentile of 40. Amber met the growth goals for every cohort on the norm-referenced Terra Nova Exam. Amber did not meet its absolute goal of 75% of all students performing at or above the proficiency level on the New York State Math examination. Overall, Amber continues to meet the majority of the accountability goals in math.

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.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state mathematics exam will meet that year’s Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least	Achieved

	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 local school district.	
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 2012-13 school district 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 state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Did Not Achieve
Optional Growth Measure	Each year, on a national norm-referenced assessment, all grade-level cohorts of students (in grades K-3) will reduce by one half the gap between their average NCE in the previous year and an NCE of 50 in the current year. If a grade-level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show a positive gain in the current year.	Achieved

**Action Plan**

Since 2013 -14, Amber has used *Go Math!* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as the math curriculum. This curriculum has a strong alignment to the common core standards. The materials and instructional pacing demonstrates focus. Overviews and lesson introductions promote coherence and opportunities to support both fluency and deep understanding. The materials provides varied modes of curriculum-embedded assessments that are well-sequenced as well as strong support for teachers in planning and providing an effective learning experience. Finally, the materials provide the appropriate level and type of scaffolding, differentiation, intervention and support for a broad range of learners.

An in-house staff developer focused solely on Math when working with the teachers. She was a source of guidance, resources, mentoring and encouragement.

Academic Intervention continued to be provided through the SETTS teacher, simulation tests and item analysis, Saturday Academy, and After School. Part-time tutors were used in the upper grades to lower teacher student ratio and provide targeted remediation.

The benchmark assessments from the *Go Math!* Curriculum were used to collect data on student progress and proficiency. This data was used to drive instruction and academic intervention. The continued use of the assessment data management system, INFORM, facilitated this process, as well as the continuation of data analysis meetings between instructional leadership, teachers, and grade teams.

For the sixth year, a Multiplication Marathon was conducted with students in grades 2-5. During this contest the student who successfully recited the multiplication tables from 2 - 12 without error won a prize. We also extended a Math Marathon to grades 1 and 2. Students engaged in a single digit addition contest. Students who performed the least amount of calculation errors won a prize.

In the upper grades [4 & 5 grades] a pilot program to departmentalize the subjects was launched. Teachers taught one subject all day while students rotated from classroom to classroom. Teachers taught the subject they were passionate for and learned all the students in that grade. The departmentalization helped the teachers to focus in on one subject and prepare lessons that focused on the skills needed.

In the coming year Amber continues to work hard in closing the achievement gap in ELA and mathematics. With a slight increase in ELA overall and a drop in our math average on the state assessment, it was necessary to audit our practices.

We have switched our lesson plan format to one that is more student-centered, entitled the Amber Learning Experience. After up to 10 minutes of engaging and student-centered whole group instruction, the children are directed to work in stations.

There will be 3 stations that have 3 different activities. Students will transition to each station after up to 20 minutes of small group instruction. The work will be differentiated according to formative assessments, formal assessments and other teacher gathered data.

For example in Math:

Station 1: Arithmetic and fluency will be the main focus of this lesson. Students will have the opportunity to work on their math facts to build automaticity.

Station 2: This station allows the students to work on word problems connected to the skill of that week. Word problems have been an identified area of weakness. Here, students are given time to focus on this specific portion of mathematics and instructional staff are able to work closely with small groups of children.

Station 3: This station is named "Team Choice." As a group, teachers should discuss what areas of reinforcement or exposure are needed for their children. This could serve as an A.I.S. moment as well.

The Amber learning experience as it is rolled out will place more emphasis on student learning and exploration.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Goal 3: Science**

All students at Amber Charter will become proficient in science and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of scientific skills.

### **Background**

Amber continued to use Scott Foresman for grades 4 and 5, and K12 Solutions for grades K to 3. Supplemental science materials used are trade books and other resources identified by the teachers to teach the units of study not covered by the Scott Foresman and K12 curricula. The in-house staff developer provides guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum and supplemental resources.

As a result of a grant from the National Council of La Raza [NCLR] Amber participated in an after school science program in partnership with the American Museum of Natural History [AMNH]. This program included an exploratory science curriculum for grades K-5 delivered to students in conjunction with a parent training program that helps parents use the museum as a lab for learning.

**Goal 3: 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 science examination.

**Method**

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in spring 2015. 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 (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at proficiency.

**Results**

Amber’s 4<sup>th</sup> graders did extremely well on the Science Exam, 97% scored proficient. The majority of the students scored at level 4, 58%, and 39% scored at level 3.

**Charter School Performance on 2013-14 State Science Exam  
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent at Each Performance Level					Number Tested
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3/4	
	All Students	0.00%	3.39%	38.98%	57.63%	96.61%	59
4	Students in At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	0.00%	3.39%	38.98%	57.63%	<b>96.61%</b>	59

**Evaluation**

Goal met. Amber 4<sup>th</sup> grade students did extremely well on the NYS Science test with a majority scoring at the highest level. The students exceed the goal of 75% by 22%.

**Additional Evidence**

Amber is maintaining a high level of performance in Science. Each of the last three years the percent of students scoring proficient has been in the ninety percentile.

**Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	94.83%	58	100.00%	71	96.61%	59
All	94.83%	58	100.00%	71	96.61%	59

**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 local school district.

**Method**

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. 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 local school district.

**Results**

\*The results of the NYS Science exam in the local public school district are not available to us therefore, it is impossible to compare Amber to the district.

**2014-15 State Science Exam  
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency					
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		CSD 4 Students		CSD 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	96.61%	59	*	*	*	*

**Evaluation**

\*The results of the NYS Science exam in the local public school district are not available to us therefore, it is impossible to compare Amber to the district.

**Summary of the Science Goal**

Amber met the accountability goal of attaining 75% or more of the students to score at or above proficiency. The percentage of students attaining proficiency was 97%, well above the required 75% benchmark. The absence of reported scores for the local public school district prevents us from comparing the school to the local district for this past year or the last three years. Yet, based on the

information from the previous years where Amber students out-performed the students from both CSD 4 and 5, the comparative goal has been met.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at 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 local school district.	Achieved

**Action Plan**

Amber’s high scores on the NYS Science exam demonstrate that the curriculum and teaching methodology used are effective. Amber will continue to use both the K12 and Scott Foresman Science curricula. The in-house staff developer will continue to provide guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum and supplemental resources.

Amber will continue to participate in the grant from the National Council of La Raza [NCLR] that offers an after school science program in partnership with the American Museum of Natural History [AMNH].

**NCLB**

**Goal 4: NCLB**

**Goal 4: Absolute Measure**  
 Under the state’s NCLB accountability system, the school’s Accountability Status is in good standing: the state has not identified the school as a Focus School nor determined that it has met the criteria to be identified as a local-assistance-plan school.

**Method**

Since *all* students are expected to meet the state's learning standards, the federal No Child Left Behind legislation stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet state proficiency standards. New York, like all states, established a system for making these determinations for its public schools. Each year the state issues School Report Cards. The report cards indicate each school’s status under the state’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.

**Results**

Amber Charter School is a "School In Good Standing" as per the New York State Department of Education for the school year 2014-15. Amber has held this designation since its inception in 2000.

**Evaluation**

Amber has held this designation, “Good Standing”, since its inception in 2000. To be in compliance with the New York State Education Department/Title 1 requirements we publicize our good standing on our school’s web site and in written communication.

**NCLB Status by Year**

Year	Status
2012-13	Good Standing
2013-14	Good Standing
2014-15	Good Standing

## APPENDIX B: OPTIONAL GOALS

The following section contains a Parent Satisfaction optional goal, as well as examples of possible optional measures.

**Goal S: Parent Satisfaction**

Amber will maintain strong enrollment and strong parent interest.

**Goal S: Absolute Measure**

Each year two-thirds of parents will demonstrate satisfaction with the school’s program based on a parent satisfaction survey.

**Method**

In the spring of 2015 an in-house parent survey was distributed to all parents at Amber. This survey was the same survey used every year with a few additional questions targeted at the new initiatives.

**Results**

The response rate this year at 85% was higher than last year when the response rate was 57%. The parent satisfaction on key survey items was very high ranging from 90% to 100%.

**2014-15 Parent Satisfaction Survey Response Rate**

Number of Responses	Number of Families	Response Rate
376	405	84%

**2014-15 Parent Satisfaction on Key Survey Results**

Item	Percent of Respondents Satisfied
Communication with my child’s teacher	100%
Access to administration	96%
My child’s academic progress	99%
My child’s homework	98%
How the school keeps parents informed	99%
How my child feels about the school	98%
My child’s safety at Amber	99%
How Amber handles discipline	97%
The teachers at Amber	100%
The school’s special activities	93%



## Evaluation

Goal met. Every area was above 90% in parent satisfaction with the school. It is gratifying to see that the parents trust and are satisfied with the school.

## Additional Evidence

The results of the NYC DOE Learning Survey reflect a similar pattern of parent satisfaction with Amber. In the key areas the results are high see Table below.

**Percent of parents who responded satisfied in NYC DOE Learning Survey**

<b>Key Area</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
Academic Expectations	91	89	96*	94%**
Communication	87	90	96*	98%**
Engagement	87	85	95*	85%**
Safety and Respect	93	91	95*	91%**

\*NYC DOE Learning Survey changed the categories to be: Instructional Core, Systems for Improvement, and School Culture. Engagement and Safety & Respect are included in the School Culture score.

\*\* NYC DOE School Survey changed the categories to be: Rigorous instruction, Supportive Environment [score for Communication], Collaborative Teachers [score not included: 95%], Effective School Leadership {score not included: 89%}, Strong Family-Community Ties [score for Engagement], and Trust [score for Safety & Respect].

The results of the above table clearly indicate that over two-thirds of our parents are satisfied with the school. Between 85 – 98% of parents were highly satisfied with Amber in the areas of academic expectations, communication, engagement, and safety and respect throughout the last four years.

In addition, 100% of Amber parents completed the NYC DOE Survey in 2014-15. This is a remarkable achievement and demonstrates that the high ratings are not from a select group but the full parent community.

### **Goal S: Absolute Measure**

Each year, 90 percent of all students enrolled during the course of the year return the following September.

## Method

All Amber parents receive “Intent to Return Form” in January. This form is completed by them to let the school know their plans for the coming school year as it relates to their child. The forms are collected and tabulated to ascertain the projected number of students per class and per grade. Based on these numbers the data for the chart below was tabulated.

## Results

Amber had a student retention rate of 95%.

### **2014-15 Student Retention Rate**

2013-14 Enrollment	Number of Students Who Graduated in 2013-14	Number of Students Who Returned in 2014-15	Retention Rate 2014-15 Re-enrollment ÷ (2013-14 Enrollment – Graduates)
461	48	391	95%

### Evaluation

Goal met. This 95% is near the retention rate as last year.

### Additional Evidence

In the last three years, Amber has had a student retention rate in the ninetieth percentile. This speaks to high parent satisfaction with Amber.

Year	Retention Rate
2012-13	99%
2013-14	99%
2014-15	95%

### Goal S: Absolute Measure

Each year the school will have a daily attendance rate of at least 95 percent.

### Method

Amber uses PowerSchool student data management software to keep records of student attendance as well as other pertinent student demographics.

### Results

The attendance rate for 2014-15 was 94%.

#### 2014-15 Attendance

Grade	Average Daily Attendance Rate
K	94%
1	91%
2	95%
3	94%
4	95%
5	95%
Overall	<b>94%</b>

### Evaluation

Goal was not met, although once again Amber came very close to meeting the goal with an attendance rate of 94% for this school year, 2014-2015. Amber is proud of this attendance rate.

**Additional Evidence**

Amber has been close to meeting its goal of 95% attendance rate for the last three years. Amber will continue to strive to meet the goal.

Year	Average Daily Attendance Rate
2012-13	94%
2013-14	93%
2014-15	94%

**Legal Compliance**

**Goal: Amber will be in legal compliance**

**1. Measure:**

**Each year, the school will generally and substantially comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, the New York Charter Schools Act, the New York Freedom of Information Law, the New York Open Meetings Law, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and the provisions of its by-laws and charter.**

Amber has complied with all federal, state, and municipal rules and regulations. Amber has posted meeting dates, time, and location on its web site, in mailings to parents, and staff have participated in appropriate workshops (e.g., Individuals with Disability Education Act training) to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. We received no request under the New York Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).

**Measure:**

**Each year, the school will have in place and maintain effective systems, policies, procedures and other controls for ensuring that legal and charter requirements are met.**

Amber has established, and refined effective systems, policies, and procedures ensuring that all legal and charter requirements are met. Amber board members meet monthly, document all board meetings, and take an active role in creating and enforcing policies.

**Measure:**

**Each year the school will maintain a relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, incidents and makes recommendations as needed, and in proportion to the legal expertise on the board of trustees, if any.**

Amber has maintained a relationship with independent legal counsel Michael Stolper, Esq. Mr. Stolper and his firm have contributed hundreds of hours *pro bono* in reviewing relevant policies, documents, incidents and have designed and made recommendations as needed. Mr. Stolper serves as counsel to the board.

### **Fiscal Soundness**

**Goal: Amber will make sound decisions, effective, and responsible use of financial resources to maximize student learning.**

**Measure—Budgeting: Each year, the school will operate on a balanced budget meaning actual revenues will equal or exceed actual expenses.**

On a monthly basis, Amber's fiscal office produces a balance sheet for the current fiscal year. The balance sheet is reviewed by the board treasurer and additional members of the board who serve on the finance committee. The balance sheet is filed quarterly with the Charter Schools Institute as well as additional agencies that oversee Amber's fiscal matters, including La Raza Development Fund, which holds the mortgage for Amber's building. In the year ending June 30, 2015 representing the 2014-15 fiscal and school year, Amber demonstrates a balance between resources and expenses. Total revenue for 2014-2015 was \$7,537,099 with total expenses at \$7,002,704. The resulting \$534,395 was added to our net assets. Net assets include revenue that will support operations in the subsequent fiscal year.

Amber continues to abide by GAAP, engages an external auditing firm to review its books, materials, resources, and procedures. An audit was conducted, completed and approved in 2014. This audit was delivered to the Charter School Institute.

**Measure—Financial Condition:**

**Beginning with the school's first operating year, at the end of each fiscal year, unrestricted net assets will be equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.**

Amber's unrestricted net assets were equal to two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

**Measure—Internal Controls and Compliance**

**Each year the school will take corrective action, if needed, in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, SED, or the Institute.**

No corrective actions were needed to address internal controls or compliance deficiency.