

**GRAND CONCOURSE ACADEMY  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2014-15 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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Ira Victor, school leader, prepared this 2014-15 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Joyce Higginson-Davis	Chair
Howard Banker	Treasurer
Linda Manley	Secretary
Jeannette Engels	Trustee
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**Ira Victor has served as the school leader since 2004.**

## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School (GCACS) is to create a challenging learning environment that addresses and meets the learning needs of students in New York City, especially those at risk of academic failure.

In a concentrated effort to prepare our students for entry into the very best high schools in New York City, GCACS will seek to foster a sense of strong character, ethics, and personal responsibility, as well as high expectations for academic success.

GCACS will place a strong emphasis on the CORE subject areas, as well as offering focused enrichment in music, art, critical thinking skills, and foreign languages. The Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will diligently seek to prepare students to meet and/or exceed New York State Common Core performance standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, GCACS students will demonstrate advanced skills in the arts and will begin developing conversational skills in Spanish. The school will align and adjust student learning to the State performance standards, and use a variety of assessments to measure student progress in skills and content learning.

GCACS will support and encourage professional development opportunities aligned to the instructional program and will diligently seek and encourage active parental involvement and participation in the academic goals of the student. In addition, the school will seek to involve and engage a variety of community organizations and community leaders as partners to enhance the academic success of every student.

### **Our Philosophy**

The fundamental belief at the Academy is that ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN. All children have the right to attend schools in which they can progress and learn. They shall have a real opportunity to learn equally rigorous content. We hold our school accountable to the same standards as those of the highest performing schools in our state.

The Academy encourages teachers to engage in “Performance-based/Mastery” instruction, so that our students learn both the basics and the higher-level skills they will need after graduation. Performance-based classes are more difficult to design and teach than the lecture approach, but they help children learn better and become excited about learning. Children learn by doing. Students are required to prove, through their projects and presentations, that they have mastered knowledge and skills in language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science.

Our school slogan is *“Young children...Great Visions...Extraordinary Achievements”*

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, GCACS is leasing significant space on the campus of Monsignor Scanlon High School. GCACS currently serves grades K-5. In the 2015-16 school, GCACS will welcome our first sixth grade class. We will continue to grow to ultimately serve grades K-8 in 2017-18. Our new facility will fully accommodate the additional grades. It will also provide a gym, athletic fields, and space for enrichment such as a library, music room, speech and language room, an ESL room, a room designed for small group instruction to meet the needs of students with special needs or at-risk, a literacy lab and a science lab.

The new campus is five miles away from our current location. Although our school will remain in the Bronx, it will no longer be located in New York City Community School District #9. Our new district will be New York City Community School District #8. To ensure retention of current GCACS families, if need be, the school is prepared to lease private busses to provide student transportation. Demand for the GCACS program remains strong. There are currently over 2,000 students on our waiting list.

By moving to a Campus setting, and utilizing our environmental resources, we will be able to provide our students with many opportunities for discovery to assist in developing evidenced-based strategies and activities, critical thinking strategies, advanced reasoning skills, as well as, leadership, and organizational skills. Joining clubs, serving as class officers, participating on sports teams (soccer, basketball, softball, track), and student-initiated activities, are some of the ways to contribute to the GCA campus community while learning valuable life skills. This campus setting is the perfect backdrop for the myriad extracurricular, co-curricular, and social activities that build and sustain the community life of our school.

Students will focus on healthy choices (anti-bullying, character-building, conflict resolution, good eating habits, exercise, etc...) as students grow and develop emotionally and academically. Students will learn to reflect on learning, develop advanced study skills, set realistic personal and academic goals, and research concepts and topics using technology. Two "Deans of Student Life" (Grades K-3 and Grades 4-8) will work closely with the students and staff to ensure there is positive reinforcement of all student behavior issues. The Deans will work with students and teachers to integrate curricular activities so students can work in collaborative groups on projects. The Deans will also conduct extensive outreach to improve parental involvement in a meaningful way. Parents and staff can sponsor clubs and teams, and these will serve as springboards for authentic problem-solving, good sportsmanship, and character-building skills. This component will serve as a cohesive bond among all the integral constituents of our school life on campus, developing a true partnership among students, parents, and staff.

In our Early Childhood department (Grades K-1), it is necessary to teach the foundations of numeracy, problem solving, and literacy, as well as, build the foundation to create the possibility for

dramatic increases in language and literacy skills, math skills, social-emotional skills, and fine motor skills that are critical building blocks to later success. Every kindergarten class will have a full time teacher and a certified Teacher Assistant. Grade 1 classes will have a General Education Teacher full time, a certified Teaching Assistant 4 hours daily to support ELA and Mathematics. All Integrated Co-teaching Classes will be supported by a Special Education Teacher for at least three (3) hours a day. Children will have many opportunities for healthy outdoor and indoor play, as there are outdoor fields, and a large indoor gymnasium in the Kindergarten building. Outdoor play areas provide a rich arena for natural exploration and physical development.

The GCACS community looks forward to the enhancements that our new space will provide our academic program as well as the expanded options for sports and other enrichment activities.

**School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year**

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2011-12	63	90	78	53	45	51	380
2012-13	63	78	105	72	41	33	392
2013-14	49	63	86	100	60	32	390
2014-15	44	59	66	83	85	51	388

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### **Goal 1: English Language Arts**

**All students at the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School (GCACS) will become proficient in reading and writing of the English Language.**

### **Background**

Grand Concourse Academy Charter School uses Common Core-aligned curricula for all grades. GCA utilizes Pearson Reading Street as its primary reading component of our English Language Arts Curriculum. We believe strongly that our core language arts instruction, with internal assessments driving differentiation, remediation, and enrichment, has been the driving factor behind the multi-subject successes we have had in Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. It is apparent that Grand Concourse Academy Charter School has placed the teaching of literacy at the forefront of their instructional goals, and ensures that all of the elements of language arts are addressed with the dedication and intensity they warrant. In the past seven years of NYS Testing in ELA and Mathematics, our instructional program has prepared our student body to place GCA among the better performing charter schools in New York State.

In prior years, we supplemented the Scott Foresman Reading Street Program with Reading Unwrapped in the K-2 grades. The intent was that students would arrive in grade 3 with better reading skills and then be able to focus on the comprehension piece. This was effective for many, but students still existed who continued to need a more extensive supplemental phonemic awareness/phonics program. Therefore, in 2014-15, we implemented a research-based program, Explode the Code, in grades K-2 and for at-risk students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners, in grades 3-5, and we will continue to use this program during the 2015-2016 school year. Explode the Code offers consistency to those who require remediation throughout their years at GCACS. The program includes 30 minute daily ongoing systematic, direct phonics and phonemic awareness instruction, provides daily practice in matching sounds to symbols and accurate pronunciation. It also addresses phonemic awareness difficulties and articulation issues.

In 2014-2015, we began to introduce students in Grades 3-5 to the concept of close reading mid-year. Commencing with the onset of the 2015-2016 school year, all teachers in Grades 3-6 will place an emphasis on the close reading of passages from authentic, literary, grade-appropriate texts in order to focus on author's craft, literary elements, and the meaning the author wishes to convey, and the organization of the text. Students will learn how to focus on individual words, syntax, and the order in which sentences and ideas unfold as they are read.

We also initiated the concept of Exit and Stamina Passages every week to build stamina in Grades 3-5 mid-year during school year 2014-2015. This year, we will continue to administer the Stamina passages, which provide the student with longer passages at higher lexiles to read in a shorter period of time. This school year, we intend to continue using the Exit and Stamina passages and will begin October 1, and use even higher lexiles for the students to read. We will continue to administer the Stamina passages monthly but will cut the Exit passages to bi-weekly while using higher lexiles than last year.

Grade 6 students will be continuing their reading instruction with Houghton Mifflin’s *Journeys* a research-based reading program that will challenge our Middle School students, and set them apart from the elementary school. *Journeys* will provide multiple opportunities for close reading with more challenging texts.

We have purchased McGraw Hill Education new Social Studies textbooks that *specifically* address New York State Common Core Social Studies Standards this year. These textbooks have been bought for Grades 3-6 and will provide the students with project-based common core tasks and research-based projects. The books also provide the students with another opportunity to read nonfiction texts. We have adjusted our Curriculum Maps to reflect this product, as well as, the New York State Common Core Social Studies Standards.

GCACS administers ELA cycle tests that include pre-assessment packages to ensure mastery of specific skills and reading strategies addressed in each curricular cycle.

**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 third through fourth 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 (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school 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	80			1	81
4	85			0	85
5	50			0	50
All	215			1	216

<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.

## Results

43 percent of all students and 42 percent of students in at least their second year at GCACS performed at standards 3 and 4 on the 2015 NYS ELA exam.

### 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 Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	38%	80	38%	77
4	54%	85	54%	85
5	30%	50	30%	50
All	<b>43%</b>	215	<b>42%</b>	195

## Evaluation

GCACS did not achieve this measure. The fourth grade students outperformed the third and fifth graders by quite a bit, which is worth noting. The ELA team is analyzing the test results to determine where gaps exist and address going forward.

## Additional Evidence

Overall, the GCACS 3-5 grade scholars have improved year to year as evidenced in the table below.

### 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
3	34%	70	40%	90	38%	77
4	31%	36	29%	58	54%	85
5	32%	31	30%	30	30%	50
All	<b>33%</b>	137	<b>34%</b>	178	<b>42%</b>	195

#### 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 97. 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

The GCACS Performance Level Indicator in ELA calculates to 126, which is greater than the AMO of 97.

### 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
215	15	42	33	9

$$\begin{array}{rcccccccc} \text{PI} & = & 42 & + & 33 & + & 9 & = & 84 \\ & & & & 33 & + & 9 & = & \underline{42} \\ & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 126 \end{array}$$

## Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

### 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>

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

<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](#).

## Results

GCACS outperformed the local district overall, 42% vs 13%, and in each grade.

### 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		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	38%	77	14%	2939
4	54%	85	13%	2904
5	30%	50	12%	2682
All	<b>42%</b>	195	<b>13%</b>	8525

## Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

## Additional Evidence

GCACS continues to outperform the local district on the NYS English Language Arts exam.

### 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	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	34%	12%	40%	13%	38%	14%
4	31%	10%	29%	%	54%	13%
5	32%	13%	30%	11	30%	12%
All	<b>33%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>13%</b>

#### Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

## Method

The 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 meaningful degree is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Given the timing of the state’s release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

**Results**

The comparative performance 2013-14 ELA effect size is 1.23, greater than the target 0.3.

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

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	<b>87.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>1.48</b>
4	<b>95.0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>0.79</b>
5	<b>96.9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>1.25</b>
6						
7						
8						
All	<b>91.1</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>1.23</b>

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

**Evaluation**

GCACS achieved this measure.

**Additional Evidence**

GCACS continues to perform well versus similar schools.

### English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2011-12	3-5	82	149	59.7	40.4	1.20
2012-13	3-5	92.4	142	33.1	17.1	1.36
2013-14	3-5	91.1	187	35.3	19.2	1.23

#### Goal 1: Growth Measure<sup>4</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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>5</sup>

#### Results

The 2013-14 mean growth percentile in ELA is 54.4, exceeding the statewide median of 50.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4		50.0
5		50.0
All	54.4	50.0

<sup>4</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

<sup>5</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s Business Portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

## Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

## Additional Evidence

The mean growth percentile has been greater than 50 in both 2013 and 2014.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>6</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4				50.0
All		62.2	54.4	50.0

### Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Although GCACS scholars did not reach the absolute goal of having 75 percent of students score at levels 3 and 4 on the NYS ELA exam, the students did demonstrate improved performance, growth and outperformed the local district again.

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 among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2013-14 school district results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved

<sup>6</sup> Grade level results not available.

## **Action Plan**

GCA will introduce additional opportunities for reading intervention in the 2015-16 school year. Students who require reading intervention will receive additional small group support from two Corrective Reading Teachers (K-2 and Grades 3-6).

### **ELA and Math**

To further target student achievement in both ELA and math, GCA will emphasize a school wide focus on analyzing and sharing student data for the 2015-16 school year. Grade level and cluster teams meet twice a month for inquiry, analyzing student work, adjusting lessons, materials, and teaching practices by implementing instructional shifts. This inquiry process has given teachers the ability to analyze data and trends and come up with actionable plans. Vertical inquiry teams will meet monthly to analyze and share data. All teachers are invested in analyzing trends on their grade to create specific activities geared toward those trends. Vertical inquiry teams will also meet monthly to discuss common trends in writing across the school.

GCA has recently reworked our curriculum maps for all subjects, and this effort will continue throughout the 2015-16 school year. This will contribute to stronger vertical alignment of the GCA curriculum.

It is imperative for a successful school to have strong collaboration among, staff, parents, and students. School priorities should be determined by a team of parents and staff, led by a strong leadership. There must be clear communication and clearly articulated goals and mandated participation and involvement among all members of the school community. A Parent Liaison position new for the 2015 – 2016 school year will serve as communication facilitator and organizer of parent/ school activities and workshops. He/she will work to increase and support parent involvement, as well as supporting staff/parent collaboration.

At the heart of these improvements is a shift in our instructional leadership structure. Our teachers are GCACS's most valuable asset and we therefore seek ways to elevate and further professionalize their role. To this end, GCACS will transition away from a traditional model of hierarchical leadership and embrace a culture of Shared Decision Making. GCACS began empowering teachers to have more input in guiding curriculum and sharing decision-making, and sharing accountability for student achievement by developing Professional Learning Communities. Since 2013, teachers have had even more control over the choices that affect their classrooms. To do this, we have added a layer of support and move away from a top-down leadership model. We have reached a point in our evolution where we can restructure in order to enable even more participation in a collaborative framework that includes staff and other stakeholders. Our goal is to empower our staff to guide our students toward the acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and to master the CCSS. This paradigm shift will retain many valid features that have proven effective over the past ten years.

<b>Professional Learning Team Members</b>		
<b><u>Leadership Support</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned Resources</u></b>	<b><u>Available Resources</u></b>
Principal	Deans of Student Life (K-3 and Grades 4-6)	Parents and Guardians
Assistant Principals	Reading Support Teacher	Peer Instructional Coach
Classroom Teacher (Team Leaders)	Corrective Reading Teacher ( K-2 and Grades 3-6)	ESL Teacher
	Title 1 Teachers (Grades 3 to 6) or Classroom Assistants (K-2)	Special Education teachers
	Classroom Assistant	Operations Manager
	Special Ed Coordinator	
	ESL Coordinator/teacher	

To ensure that GCACS teachers have the resources needed to make informed and effective decisions going forward, we plan to make the following three changes: (1) Restructure our leadership team to reflect an increased focus on instruction, (2) Empower teachers to become primary decision makers, and (3) Provide increased opportunities for job-embedded professional development. What follows is a description of each change.

*1) Restructuring Instructional Leadership.* This new organizational structure will result in increased support for teachers, creating a learning-centered environment where teachers have the requisite tools to drive student academic achievement. In our next charter term, GCACS will transition our leadership team from an oversight-based model to a coaching model. Our principal’s position will remain largely unchanged; he will continue to be involved in both instruction and business/operations matters. GCACS will add two leadership positions to our leadership team. The formal titles of “Assistant Principal,” will support curriculum, instruction and assessment as well as business and student services. An Instructional Coach will also provide direct support for teachers; demonstrating strategies and lessons activities, support planning and professional development while providing leadership for Professional Learning Teams.

The Deans of Student Life positions (Grades K-3 and Grades 4-6) are instructional positions that include parent outreach responsibilities, positive behavioral supports (Student of the Month, individual behavior charts, healthy choices, etc.). The Deans will provide instructional support for Science, Humanities and Mathematics.

*2) Empowering Teachers.* Currently GCACS promotes a culture of collaboration via our PLTs. Our teachers have responded favorably to the support offered by the PLTs. In our next charter term, we will seek to increase the horizontal leadership that PLTs promote. GCACS instructional leadership will continue to work with teachers throughout the school year, providing informal and formal feedback on teacher work. These evaluations will assign our teachers to one of following categories, Tier 1: Intern/ Developing Teacher, Tier 2: Effective Teacher and Tier 3: Master Teacher. All teachers, regardless of tier, will be directly involved in instructional decision-making and the

creation of intervention and enrichment activities. Tier 2 and 3 teachers will be given more autonomy to design instruction, whereas a Tier 1 teacher who is developing skills, will receive more instructional decision making support from a GCACS Instructional Coach, Assistant Principal and Principal. A description of each Tier is below; salary scale will be commensurate with the appropriate tiers.

*Tier 1 - Intern Teachers:* Are newly certified intern teachers. Intern teachers are expected to make professional growth within a two-year probationary period. Tier 1 teachers will work under the guidance of successful, experienced Tier 2 or 3 teachers, and will be supported by the Coaches and AP's or the Principal while they are gaining professional experience to make independent instructional decisions. Tier 1 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. One of the above mentioned mentors will be assigned to all Tier 1 teachers.

*Tier 2 - Effective Teachers:* Are teachers appointed to a high stakes assignments and assume the role of major decision-makers and stakeholders for their students, guide and mentor colleagues, and assume more leadership responsibilities. Tier 2 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. They exhibit professional initiative to ensure student achievement. They achieve consistent, repeated results on an effective level and are key stakeholders in maintaining our status and standing.

*Tier 3 - Master Teachers:* Are teachers appointed to a high stakes assignments and assume the role of major decision-makers and stakeholders for their students, guide and mentor colleagues, and assume more leadership responsibilities. Tier 3 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. They possess special training, skills or experience in in academic area that will serve as a model for others. They exhibit tremendous professional initiative to ensure student achievement. They achieve consistent, repeated results on a highly effective level and are key stakeholders in maintaining our status and standing.

*3) Job-embedded Professional Development.* GCACS will continue to facilitate traditional professional development workshops for our faculty in areas of development that pertain to our entire faculty. Our Principal, AP's, Coordinators and Instructional Coach will lead these workshops. In order to address the unique development needs of different teachers, GCACS Instructional Coach and AP will run job-embedded coaching cycles with our teachers. They will infuse differentiated professional development by providing teachers with immediate and specific feedback relevant to their own practice. They will also model lessons and strategies for teachers in a classroom setting. GCACS teachers will engage in one-on-one meetings as needed.

Pre-Service Professional Development will spanned approximately of seven days and covered topics including the reading and math programs, PLTs, utilization of data to drive instruction and content delivery, classroom design, center development, and groupings in order to meet mandated Common Core.

## MATHEMATICS

### **Goal 2: Mathematics**

**All students at the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will become proficient in Mathematics.**

#### **Background**

Grand Concourse Academy uses Common Core-aligned curricula for all grades. GCA implements a both a direct instruction and constructivist approach in the teaching of Mathematics with a school wide use of the researched-based series, Pearson enVisionMATH Common Core, and all of its manipulative and classroom supports. enVisionMATH Common Core was written specifically for the Common Core State Standards, and is based on critical foundational research and proven classroom results. enVisionMATH Common Core provides the same strong development of conceptual understanding through daily Problem-based Interactive Learning and step-by-step Visual Learning, bar diagrams, and solid and effective intervention. All students in Grades 1-6 supplement mathematics instruction with another research-based program by Houghton Mifflin, OnCore Math, which provides multiple opportunities to address problem-solving and for students to experience multiple ways to solve problems in new and varied formats. These materials provide a math learning experience that will deepen their understanding of concepts presented and build on previously taught skills.

Grade 6 will be challenged by Houghton Mifflin's Go Math! Middle School Program.

As with ELA, our in house monthly assessments drive our instruction, student grouping, and re-teaching when a topic was not mastered by the whole group or individual students.

We schedule an extended thirty minute Mathematics instructional block in each classroom to address On Core math. During that time, we adhere to a strict schedule of pacing, which addresses the first one hundred days of instruction to align with the New York State Mathematics Assessment. During the second instructional block, teachers use a constructivist approach to the learning of mathematics, focusing on hand-on applications, discovery activities and the development of alternative solutions.

Students in Grade 6, and Grade 5 General Ed classes, will departmentalize for Reading and Social Studies, and Science and Math.

**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 third through fourth 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	81				83
4	85				85
5	50				51
All	216				213

**Results**

53 percent of all students and 53 percent of students in at least their second year at GCACS performed at standards 3 and 4 on the 2015 NYS Math 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 Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	43%	81	43%	77
4	60%	85	60%	85
5	56%	50	56%	50
All	<b>53%</b>	216	<b>53%</b>	213

<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.

## Evaluation

GCACS did not achieve this measure.

## Additional Evidence

The math performance has been steady over the past three years.

### 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	50%	70	51%	90	43%	77
4	43%	35	59%	58	60%	85
5	65%	31	54%	30	56%	50
All	<b>51%</b>	136	<b>54%</b>	178	<b>53%</b>	213

### 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 94. 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

The GCACS Performance Level Indicator in math calculates to 147, which is greater than the AMO of 94.

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

### Mathematics 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
216	6	41	34	19

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 41 + 34 + 19 = 94 \\
 &= 34 + 19 = \underline{53} \\
 \text{PLI} &= 147
 \end{aligned}$$

#### Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

#### 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 the performance of tested students enrolled in at least their second year to that of 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

GCACS outperformed the local district overall, 53% vs 19%, and in each grade.

#### 2014-15 State Mathematics 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		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	43%	77	20%	3034
4	60%	85	16%	2989
5	56%	50	20%	2759
All	<b>53%</b>	213	<b>19%</b>	8782

<sup>9</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

## Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

## Additional Evidence

GCACS continues to outperform the local district on the NYS math exam.

### 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	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	50%	14%	51%	18%	43%	20%
4	43%	14%	54%	17%	60%	16%
5	65%	13%	54%	18%	56%	20%
All	<b>51%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>19%</b>

#### Goal 2: Comparative Measure

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

## Method

The 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 meaningful degree is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## Results

The comparative performance 2013-14 math effect size is 1.54, greater than the target 0.3, and deemed higher than expected to a large degree.

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

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	<b>87.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>1.18</b>
4	<b>95.0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>1.80</b>
5	<b>96.9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>1.63</b>
6						
7						
8						
<b>All</b>	<b>91.1</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>1.44</b>

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

**Evaluation**

GCACS achieved this measure.

**Additional Evidence**

The 2013-14 comparative math results are in line with past performance, always exceeding the 0.3 effect size target.

**Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year**

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2011-12	3-5	82.00	149	77.2	51.4	1.32
2012-13	3-5	92.4	142	50.7	20.5	1.97
2013-14	3-5	91.1	187	53.5	27.4	1.44

**Goal 2: Growth Measure<sup>10</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 (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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>11</sup>

**Results**

The 2013-14 mean growth percentile in math is 52.9, far exceeding the statewide median of 50.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4		50.0
5		50.0
All	<b><u>52.9</u></b>	50.0

**Evaluation**

GCACS achieved this measure.

**Additional Evidence**

As evidenced by the table below, GCACS has shown a mean growth percentile greater than the statewide median of 50 in 2012 and 2013.

<sup>10</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

<sup>11</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s business portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>12</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4				50.0
5				50.0
All		73.4	52.9	50.0

### Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Although GCACS scholars did not reach the absolute goal of having 75 percent of students score at levels 3 and 4 on the NYS math exam, the students did demonstrate improved performance, growth and outperformed the local district again.

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 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.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2013-14 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.	Achieved

### **Action Plan**

Please refer to the aforementioned school wide and math plans within this document.

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<sup>12</sup> Grade level results not available.

## SCIENCE

### Goal 3: Science

All students at Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

#### Background

The GCA science curriculum reflects STEM activities and students have multiple opportunities for hands on inquiry and critical thinking. GCA uses Pearson Interactive Science for Grades K-6, with a focus on Earth Science in Grade 6. The Science curriculum reflects STEM activities and students have multiple opportunities for hands on inquiry and critical thinking. Outdoor gardening opportunities provide students with space for creating a space for planning a garden, using mathematical measurement and planning skills.

### 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 to score at proficiency.

#### Results

**100 percent** of all students and students in at least their second year at GCACS scored at levels 3 and 4 on the NYS Science 4 exam in 2015.

#### Charter School Performance on 2014-15 State Science Exam By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	100%	85	100%	85

#### Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure.

**Additional Evidence**

GCACS fourth grade students perform very well on the science exam each year.

**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 Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	100%	37	99%	58	100%	85

**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**

2015 district results are pending.

**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		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	100%	85	TBD	

**Evaluation**

Pending

**Additional Evidence**

GCACS consistently outperforms the local district on the NYS science 4 exam.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Proficiency and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	100%	73%	99%	70%	100%	TBD

**Summary of the Science Goal**

GCACS performs very well on the NYS science 4 exam, achieving our absolute measure and we expect to outperform the district again this year.

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 in 2014

**Action Plan**

GCACS will continue with the existing science program as our students are learning, enjoy it and perform well on the NYS Science 4 exam. GCA has moved to a new facility that will provide space for enhancements to our science program. Outdoor gardening opportunities will provide students with space for creating a garden, using mathematical measurement and planning skills. A Science Lab, Library / Technology Center will provide students with the appropriate tools for research and real lab experimentation.

## NCLB

### Goal 4: NCLB

The school will make Adequate Yearly Progress.

### 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 school requiring a local assistance plan.

### Method

Because *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

GCACS continues to be in "Good Standing."

### Evaluation

GCACS achieved this measure and has been in "Good Standing" since opening in 2004.

**NCLB Status by Year**

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