



**HARLEM LINK
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2014-15 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

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By Steven Evangelista

20 West 112th Street, 3rd Floor
New York, New York 10026
(212) 289-3249

Steven Evangelista, Principal and Co-Founder, prepared this 2014-15 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Jonathan Barrett	Chair/President, Executive, Development, Finance
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John Reddick	Trustee

Steve Evangelista has served as the Principal since 2011 and as the Co-Director from 2004 to 2011.

INTRODUCTION

Harlem Link is an independent charter school serving students in grades K-5. The school opened with grades K-1 in September 2005 with the mission of graduating articulate scholars who meet or exceed state performance standards and active citizens who learn and serve in their communities. The SUNY Charter Schools Institute granted Harlem Link a three-year charter renewal in 2010 and a five-year renewal in 2013. In the future, Harlem Link's board would like to expand to serve students in grades K-8.

Harlem Link's design is distinguished by an emphasis on teaching students critical thinking skills, encouraging students to take an active role in their own learning and empowering students to develop good character. Teacher's guide student learning through literary analysis, mathematical process and student discussion. Harlem Link's culture emphasizes collaboration at all levels including with staff through our co-teaching model and with the community via numerous public and private partnerships to advance student learning.

Though the school is located in Community School District 3 in upper Manhattan, a plurality of students reside in Community School District 5, which encompasses central Harlem. The remainder of students reside in more than 10 other districts throughout New York City. Each year, the school attracts an increasing number of families eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a federal indicator of poverty level. In 2014-15, approximately 93% of Harlem Link students fell into this category. Since inception, the ethnic demographics of the student population have held constant with approximately 80% of students identifying as African-American, non-Hispanic and the remainder identifying as Hispanic.

Harlem Link currently aids its fourth and fifth grade students to gain admission to high performing, competitive public and private middle schools. With the exception of these grades, Harlem Link's goal is to enroll 54 students per grade. (Since many charter schools and other competitive middle school programs begin in fifth grade, the school experiences and even encourages greater student attrition for the final years of enrollment. In 2012, for example, the school facilitated four top students to gain admission to the Upper West Side's exclusive Center School, and nominated them as honorary Harlem Link alumni.)

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2011-12	50	50	51	52	52	37	292
2012-13	55	51	51	51	54	40	302
2013-14	50	53	53	48	53	48	305
2014-15	51	54	53	56	52	46	312

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

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

Background

Harlem Link uses a balanced literacy approach to teaching English Language Arts (ELA). Teachers use the Reader's and Writer's Workshop as a guide for instruction. This includes the use of read aloud, shared reading, guided reading and other small group instruction, independent reading with teacher conferencing, shared writing, interactive writing, guided writing and independent writing as elements of classroom instruction. Teachers use individual conferences and a variety of unit-level and term-level formal assessments to gauge student achievement and to plan differentiated instruction based on individual student needs. Harlem Link uses the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) as a school-wide reading level benchmarking tool. Teachers use results to plan small group instruction and develop student goals.

Harlem Link employs two Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teachers who provide interventions to struggling readers and writers through a robust Student Support and Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Harlem Link's RTI program is organized through Child Study Team meetings. As part of RTI, each student receives targeted goals with expected periods for improvement, interventions and frequent progress monitoring. The school emphasizes classroom-based interventions with the goal of sparingly referring students for a special education designation and only when school-based interventions are ineffective, in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Despite identifying a small percentage of enrolled students as disabled, the school maintains a similar rate of enrollment of students with disabilities to the surrounding community.

Harlem Link's curriculum is completely aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the culmination of a process that began with staff, administrators and faculty in January 2011. As part of this transition, the school modified the Reading and the Writing scopes and sequences in each grade to increase nonfiction reading and persuasive writing. Based on these and other small changes to the ELA program, a large percentage of returning students are arriving to the school on or above grade level for ELA.

Despite making few changes to the ELA program and implementing it as described above, Harlem Link experienced significant staff turnover in the upper grades during the 2014-15 academic year. In addition to replacing the fifth grade teaching team, Harlem Link brought on all but one new teacher for each of the third and fourth grade teaching teams. With some staff new to teaching and all new hires unfamiliar with the education program, Harlem Link invested heavily in ongoing professional development throughout the year to increase teacher effectiveness with instruction, differentiation, data analysis and co-teaching strategies.

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 3rd through 5th 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 ¹			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	56			1	57
4	52			1	53
5	45			1	46
All	153			3	156

Results

In April 2015, 12.8% of students enrolled in at least their second year with Harlem Link attained proficiency on the state English Language Arts (ELA) exam. Fourth grade students attained the highest levels of performance this year with 19.0% of students attaining proficiency.

**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	16.1	56	16.3	49
4	21.4	52	19.0	42
5	4.4	45	2.4	42
All	14.0	153	12.8	133

¹ 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

Harlem Link did not meet the measure for 2015 with only 14.0% of all students and 12.8% of students enrolled for two or more years attaining proficiency. Of note, one fourth grade classroom performed better than others to have 27% of students attain proficiency. This performance however falls below the 75% target. Harlem Link attributes these results to a number of challenges experienced during the 2014-15 academic year, the greatest of which was teacher turnover.

More than 80% of the teaching staff for grades 3-5 did not finish teaching at the school during the 2014-15 academic year. Harlem Link replaced 10 of the 12 staff for these grades including the entire fifth grade team and all but one staff on each of the third and fourth grade teams. All replacements were new to the school and its program and required intensive and ongoing professional development to understand the curriculum and the school's approach to instruction. While supporting these teachers to properly implement the education program and use data to target student's skills gaps, students did not have the numerous opportunities, as in past years, to gain familiarity and build stamina for the state exam.

Additional Evidence

The 2012-13 academic year began a new Accountability Period for the school which coincided with the release of a new state ELA test. Harlem Link, similar to many schools across the state, continues to face challenges with meeting the demands of the new test.

The following chart depicts Harlem Link student performance on the state's ELA exam throughout the charter term.

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	13.9	36	17.1	35	16.3	49
4	26.6	43	11.4	44	19.0	42
5	13.9	36	17.1	41	2.4	42
All	18.3	115	15.0	120	12.8	133

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 200.²

Results

Harlem Link’s Performance Level Index for 2014-15 is 63.7.

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
	50.3	35.7	13.3	0.7

$$\begin{array}{rcccccccl}
 \text{PI} & = & 35.7 & + & 13.3 & + & 0.7 & = & 49.7 \\
 & & & & 13.3 & + & 0.7 & = & \underline{14.0} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 63.7
 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Harlem Link did not meet the measure. The school’s PLI of 63.7 falls 33 points below the state AMO of 97.

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

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.³

Results

New York City (NYC) Community School District (CSD) 3 is Harlem Link’s district of location where 47% of students attained proficiency on the state exam. Very few students (17.5%) attending Harlem Link during 2014-15 resided in CSD 3. The district with the largest population of students attending Harlem Link (38%) is CSD 5 where 14% of students attained proficiency on the 2014-15 state ELA exam. 12.8% of Harlem Link students enrolled for two or more years attained proficiency on this year’s state exam.

**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 nd Year		District of Location CSD 3		District w/ Greatest Attendance CSD 5	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	16.3	49	36.4	1278	13.5	932
4	19.0	42	53.2	1313	16.1	896
5	2.4	42	52.1	1339	13.0	769
All	12.8	133	47.3	3930	14.2	2597

Evaluation

Harlem Link did not meet this measure. The performance of Harlem Link’s third and fourth graders in at least their 2nd year exceeded that of third and fourth graders in CSD 5. However, overall student performance did not meet that of the other districts.

³ 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](#).

Additional Evidence

Since the 2013 test administration, Harlem Link has been challenged to experience the same levels of student performance as those attained in CSD 3. However, when compared with the district of residency for most Harlem Link students, the school has consistently outperformed this district (CSD 5) with the exception of the 2014-15 year. This is clearly demonstrated in the table below.

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	CSD 3	CSD 5	Charter School	CSD 3	CSD 5	Charter School	CSD 3	CSD 5
3	13.9	48.8	14.0	17.1	45.0	13.9	16.3	36.4	13.5
4	26.2	44.5	12.0	11.4	54.0	16.0	19.0	53.2	16.1
5	13.5	41.3	11.0	17.1	48.0	13.0	2.4	52.1	13.0
All	18.3	45.0	12.0	15.0	49.0	14.4	12.8	47.3	14.2

Harlem Link also compares its performance to P.S. 208, a district run public school serving grades 3-5. Both schools share facility space and serve the same tested grades. As a comparison target, Harlem Link and P.S. 208 are located in the same district, serve the same grades and recruit a similar population of students. The key difference between the schools is the educational program implemented. As demonstrated in the chart below, Harlem Link students have outperformed the students in P.S. 208 on the state's ELA exam in four of the last five test administrations.

English Language Arts Performance of School and Comparison School(s) by School year

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All students in Comparison School(s) Scoring Proficient on the State Exam by Year			
		Harlem Link		P.S. 208	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2010-11	3-5	35.7	115	29.2	195
2011-12	3-5	52.4	105	39.5	172
2012-13	3-5	18.3	115	7.7	155
2013-14	3-5	15.0	120	12.8	141
2014-15	3-5	12.8	133	13.9	158

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

Harlem Link attained an overall ELA effect size of -0.34. Third grade student performance attained a positive effect size of 0.05.

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	92.0				0.05	
4	93.0				-0.83	
5	93.0				-0.18	
All	93.0		15.6		-0.34	

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Lower than Expected

Evaluation

With a negative effect size, Harlem Link did not meet the measure.

Additional Evidence

Since 2012, Harlem Link’s effect size has declined while its enrollment of students eligible for free and reduced priced lunch has increased.

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	74.6	141	51.0	43.9	0.45
2012-13	3-5	90.5	145	17.3	17.6	-0.03
2013-14	3-5	93.0	136	15.6		-0.34

Goal 1: Growth Measure⁴

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.⁵

Results

Harlem Link’s 2013-14 mean growth percentile is 56.0. NYCDOE did not share grade level growth percentiles. Consequently, the school does not have access to this information at this time.

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

⁵ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	N/A	50.0
5	N/A	50.0
All	56.0	50.0

Evaluation

Harlem Link’s performance exceeded the target for this measure. The school’s overall mean growth percentile of 56.0 exceeds that of the state median of the 50th percentile.

Additional Evidence

For the two years where data is available, Harlem Link’s mean growth percentile has exceeded the statewide median.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 ⁶	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4		63.8	N/A	50.0
5		48.8	N/A	50.0
All	N/A	57.6	56.0	50.0

⁶ Grade level results not available.

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Harlem Link has not met its ELA Accountability Plan goal. With the median growth percentile exceeding the statewide median, Harlem Link achieved one of the five measures comprising this goal.

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.	Did Not Achieve
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.	Did Not Achieve
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.)	Did Not Achieve
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

Action Plan

The most significant change in the school’s program for the 2015-16 school year is not a specific piece of curriculum or pedagogy; rather it is the coalescence of, for the first time since the school’s charter was written in 2004, a clear Instructional Vision statement. The vision will allow teachers to provide coherent instruction with confidence across the school, and allow administrators and coaches to align feedback for student success, rectifying significant challenges in 2014-15 as the school dealt with a rush of new faculty members in the upper grades.

The vision statement, like the school’s mission, is designed to include high student achievement. There are three parts to the statement: a summary sentence (“We align our practice and use our relationships to support students achieving world-class scholarship and character.”); the three Responsive Classroom domains (“engaging academics, positive community and effective management), which form a circular diagram that sets the conditions for world-class scholarship and character; and qualitative descriptors at the center (“Rigorous, data-driven learning and leadership.”).

To immediately improve student academic performance, Harlem Link will significantly decrease teacher turnover and implement the ELA program with fidelity. At the start of the 2015-16 academic year, Harlem Link has retained 100% of all upper grade teachers, some of whom moved to the lower grades. In hiring only two new teachers for the upper grades, Harlem Link has significantly decreased

teacher turnover as compared to the prior school year.

With a strong understanding of the new teaching staff's strengths and opportunities, Harlem Link has restructured 3rd through 5th grade classrooms to improve student learning and teacher effectiveness. Structural changes include the elimination of co-teaching in one classroom per grade. New teachers struggled with effective implementation of co-teaching strategies during 2014-15. By replacing co-teaching with a push-in and pull-out model for small and individual group instruction, Harlem Link maximizes teacher strengths while ensuring student needs are met. This new structure also contributes to class size reduction by five students and often results in more than two adults in each classroom. In alignment with Harlem Link's philosophy to backfill classrooms as vacancies occur, this push-in and pull-out model grants flexibility for providing students new to the school with the support needed to perform at the same level as their peers.

The board and leadership at Harlem Link believe that only authentic, rigorous instruction with embedded opportunities for test preparation can produce students who excel academically and on state tests. This approach provides students with the skills and content necessary to meet grade level expectations while familiarizing them with the end of year assessments. Harlem Link's ELA program in 2015-16 will include test preparation opportunities for all third through fifth grade students.

In collaboration with teachers, school leaders will set individual performance targets for each student. Teachers will provide them with individualized instruction based on their learning needs and then assess and re-assess learning and growth with assessments that mimic the state test until skills are developed and targets are met. This process will repeat throughout the year until students meet state and grade level expectations. This use of data will stand in contrast to the practice in 2014-15, when teachers struggled to keep up with simply understanding the large volume of assessment data collected by the school. Teachers will also benefit from having an Education Pioneers Fellow in the building to support with data analysis.

In addition, Harlem Link teachers will implement a school designed phonics program to improve fluency in the upper grades. Harlem Link has historically provided phonics instruction only to students in grades K-2. Last year's assessments revealed a drop in fluency and the need for prolonged phonics instruction and support in the upper grades. Students will receive this support during ELA instruction along with daily vocabulary instruction using Wordly Wise to increase student vocabulary. Wordly Wise provides a systematic routine and structure for vocabulary instruction providing guidance and support for teachers and students.

To increase student performance in writing, grade teams will meet monthly to identify what blocks each student from meeting the state standard and develop an action plan. Teachers will implement the action plan for four weeks inclusive of ongoing assessments to measure growth and student learning. During the following grade team meeting, teachers will re-visit each student's performance and update action plans as needed to ensure improvement.

After piloting Responsive Classroom (RC) in five classrooms last year, Harlem Link will move forward with full implementation of the research based approach to classroom community design and instructional delivery associated with greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement and improved school climate. All teachers were trained on the program this summer and will spend the

first six weeks of the school year implementing strategies for effective classroom management, engaging instruction and building a positive community. This includes an increased focus on providing students with direct feedback on their academic and behavioral performance through demonstrations of knowledge and incorporating a higher degree of structure into classroom rituals such as Morning Meeting to set a foundational tone that conveys belonging, importance and fun throughout the entire education program.

With the above changes in place, the Harlem Link team is confident that student performance on the 2015-16 state tests will match student ability leading to the school's achievement of its ELA charter goal.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

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

Background

In its ten years of existence, Harlem Link has built a comprehensive, standards-based math curriculum aligned with the school's mission.

Harlem Link teachers implement the TERC math program and provide students with skills practice during Morning Meeting and direct skills instruction through assessment-driven, teacher designed instruction. Teachers also implement the Contexts for Learning program, which supplements conceptual gaps in TERC such as measurement of time and money and basic number sense while using the same pedagogical philosophy. As constructivist math programs, TERC and Contexts for Learning foster mathematical thinking. The Common Core's eight Standards for Mathematical Practice, with their focus on student argumentation, communication, and problem solving, are consistent with the school's structured constructivist approach.

Teachers create individualized math stations and lead Guided Math groups to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students. This combination of programs ensures students have the number sense and basic number fact recall to wrestle with and master conceptual problems. It also allows students to understand and apply mathematical computation and problem solving to situations that arise in everyday life.

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 ⁷			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	57				57
4	53				53
5	45				46
All	155				156

Results

At the administration of the 2014-15 state math exam, 25.6% of Harlem Link students enrolled in at least their second year attained proficiency. This performance exceeds that of all Harlem Link students tested (23.2%) and demonstrates that students who have the benefit of attending Harlem Link for multiple years' experience higher levels of math achievement. At the time of testing, all enrolled students took the test, however one student's test was invalidated for cheating.

**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	22.8	57	26.5	49
4	37.3	53	42.9	42
5	6.7	45	7.1	42
All	23.2	155	25.6	133

Evaluation

With 25.6% of Harlem Link student's enrolled for two or more years attaining proficiency, the school did not meet the 75% target for this measure by almost 50 points. Areas of notable achievement during this test's administration include fourth grade student performance which exceeded that of other grades with 42.9% of students enrolled for at least two years attaining proficiency and a fourth grade classroom experiencing 44.4% proficiency levels. In addition, 50% of the fourth grade's English Language Learners enrolled for at least two years attained proficiency on the state exam.

Responsive classroom, as described in the ELA section, is designed to bring the strengths identified in the performances noted above into each classroom through a shared instructional vision of rigorous data-driven learning and leadership.

⁷ 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.

Additional Evidence

As demonstrated in the table below, Harlem Link’s 2014-15 performance on the state math exam, while higher than the performance on the ELA exam, represents a significant decline from the prior year. Harlem Link attributes this decline to increased teacher turnover during the 2014-15 academic year.

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	8.3	36	40.2	34	26.5	49
4	60.5	43	63.6	45	42.9	42
5	19.4	36	52.5	40	7.1	42
All	31.3	115	52.9	119	25.6	133

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 200.⁸

Results

Harlem Link’s PLI for 2014-15 is 87.

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
	36.1	40.6	18.7	4.5

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

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 40.6 & + & 18.7 & + & 4.5 & = & 63.8 \\
 & & & & 18.7 & + & 4.5 & = & \underline{23.2} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 87.0
 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Harlem Link did not meet this measure. The school's PLI of 87 falls short of the state AMO of 94 by 8 points.

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.⁹

Results

Harlem Link student's outperformed the students in Community School District (CSD) 5.

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 nd Year		District of Location CSD 3		District w/ Greatest Attendance CSD 5	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	26.5	49	52.5	1304	19.9	888
4	42.9	42	58.8	1343	17.4	913
5	7.1	42	59.1	1344	13.8	835
All	25.6	133	56.8	3991	17.1	2636

Evaluation

Harlem Link met this measure. The school exceeded the performance of CSD 5, which sends the largest number of students to the school at 38% of all students enrolled. Harlem Link's performance

⁹ 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](#).

(25.6%) exceeded CSD 5 performance by 8 points. Harlem Link’s student performance fell below that of students in CSD 3, the school’s district of location, however only 17% of enrolled students reside in this district.

Additional Evidence

The table below demonstrates a three year performance trend. In two of the last three years, Harlem Link students have outperformed students in CSD 5. The table below also demonstrates that CSD 3, Harlem Link’s district of location, has consistently outperformed students at Harlem Link and CSD 5. However, the demographics of CSD 3’s students do not match the demographics of students from CSD 5 of which Harlem Link enrolls a majority.

**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	CSD 3	CSD 5	Charter School	CSD 3	CSD 5	Charter School	CSD 3	CSD 5
3	8.3	52.1	36.8	40.0	54.0	17.0	26.5	52.5	19.9
4	60.5	51.9	39.7	63.6	61.0	18.0	42.9	58.8	17.4
5	19.5	40.0	41.5	52.5	55.0	15.0	7.1	59.1	13.8
All	31.3	48.0	35.8	52.9	56.7	16.8	25.6	56.8	17.1

The table below compares the performance of Harlem Link to P.S. 208, a district school serving grades 3-5 in the same building as Harlem Link. In each of the last five years, Harlem Link student performance on the state math exam exceeded the performance of students at P.S 208.

**Mathematics Performance of
School and Comparison School(s) by School year**

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All students in Comparison School(s) Scoring Proficient on the State Exam by Year			
		Harlem Link		P.S. 208	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2010-11	3-5	66.1	121	31.8	194
2011-12	3-5	89.4	115	43.1	201
2012-13	3-5	31.3	105	6.4	157
2013-14	3-5	52.9	119	17.4	144
2014-15	3-5	25.6	133	16.9	142

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

Harlem Link met this measure by obtaining a positive effect size exceeding 0.3.

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	93.0	135	25.2	25.2	0.3	0.3	
4							1.52
5							1.22
All	93.0	135	25.2	25.2	1.03	1.03	

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Greater than Expected</i>

Evaluation

Harlem Link met the measure. The school’s aggregate effect size exceeded 0.3 by more than 0.7 points. Fourth grade had the largest effect size of 1.52.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has obtained an effect size greater than 0.3 during the three previous years. The 2013-14 academic year yielded the largest overall effect size over the last three years even as the school's enrollment of students experiencing poverty has increased.

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	78.0	143	65.0	50.1	0.80
2012-13	3-5	90.5	145	28.9	21.1	0.47
2013-14	3-5	93.0	135	25.2		1.03

Goal 2: Growth Measure¹⁰

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.¹¹

Results

Harlem Link achieved an overall mean growth percentile of 79.0. Grade level median growth percentile data was not made available to the school and is not included in the charts below.

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

¹¹ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's business portal: portal.nysed.gov.

2013-14 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	N/A	50.0
5	N/A	50.0
All	79.0	50.0

Evaluation

Harlem Link's mean growth percentile of 79.0 far exceeds the statewide median of 50.0

Additional Evidence

In the two years for which data is available, Harlem Link's mean growth percentile has exceeded the statewide median.

Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 ¹²	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4		67.7	N/A	50.0
5		43.3	N/A	50.0
All		57.7	79.0	50.0

¹² Grade level results not available.

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Harlem Link has met its math goal. The school met three of the five measures for which data is available.

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.	Did Not Achieve
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

As in ELA, the school expects that a stronger, clearer Instructional Vision statement, coupled with a revised instructional leadership organizational model and a more experienced returning teacher corps in the testing grades will lead to stronger classroom communities, a greater sense of urgency and ultimately higher student achievement.

In addition to these changes, there is one programmatic innovation the school is implementing. Aligning with Harlem Link's constructivist approach to math, teachers will implement cognitively guided instruction (CGI), a problem solving approach used successfully by Success Academy Charter Schools. CGI addresses all of the common core number sense standards; a significant area of growth for Harlem Link students as demonstrated on the 2014-15 state assessment results.

In addition to greater teacher intentionality behind the selection of math problems presented to students and why, when using CGI students will attempt to solve problems without direct instruction from teachers. Instead, the teacher will guide students to understand the different strategies used by others in the class to solve the math problem. The class will collaboratively identify the most efficient strategies with students teaching each other how to use the strategies through modeling and teacher guidance. With a high degree of student engagement, this approach places the onus of learning on the student rather than the teacher.

In years past when Harlem Link met its math measures and goal, the school followed a similar

constructivist approach. Harlem Link anticipates that adhering to this approach with fidelity throughout the whole school and for the entire academic year will result in a repeat of the school's ability to meet its math goal.

In 2015-16, nine out of 13 classrooms will pilot this model, including four of the six classrooms in Grades 3 through 5. Significantly, all of the Grade Team Leaders in Grades 3 through 5 are piloting CGI; their explicit responsibilities include spreading knowledge about the program to teachers who are not part of the pilot. This summer piloting teachers received two days of training and support to implement CGI. This training will be further amplified by an additional five days of professional development during the school year.

The transition to CGI will be supported by Harlem Link's data initiative to ensure that all collected assessment data is used to improve teacher effectiveness and student learning. The Education Pioneers Fellow will work with teachers to effectively analyze and use data in a timely and streamlined manner. This will result in teachers having access to data analysis within hours and receiving support with interpreting results.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

Background

Harlem Link uses and supplements the FOSS (Full Option Science System) program, an inquiry-driven set of units that align to New York State Learning and Performance Standards. The school staffs science instruction with two Specialty Teachers. Students receive science instruction three periods per week. The school also sets aside time and when necessary extra funding for external enrichment programs that support science units. The school takes advantage of its proximity to Central Park and the variety of museums in New York City for hands-on experiences that support curriculum units.

Internal science assessment is done primarily through the use of curriculum-based measures provided with the FOSS kits. For the past six years, the school has hired an independent contractor, Garo Tekeyan, with extensive experience in FOSS instruction, to provide professional development to the teaching staff twice a month. The school has also begun adjusting the science curriculum to meet Common Core learning standards. As a result, science instruction is closely aligned to ELA standards, mirrors the constructivist math approach and includes small and whole group instruction.

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 4th 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

Harlem Link achieved this measure with 88% of students enrolled in at least their 2nd year attaining proficiency on the state science exam.

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

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	88.1	42	NA	NA

Evaluation

Harlem Link exceeded the target by 13 points when 88.1% of fourth grade students enrolled in at least their second year attained proficiency.

Additional Evidence

In each of the three most recent academic year’s, Harlem Link students far exceeded the target of 75% for this measure. From year to year, the school maintains a high level of science performance.

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	100.0	43	90.9	44	88.1	42
All	100.0	43	90.9	44	88.1	42

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

District data is not yet available; however based on prior year performance it is highly likely that Harlem Link met this measure.

**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 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	88.1	42	-	-

Evaluation

District data is not yet available.

Additional Evidence

District performance data for 2014-15 is not yet available. However, based on the performance in prior years, it is highly likely that Harlem Link met, if not exceeded, this measure.

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	CSD 3	Charter School	CSD 3	Charter School	Local District
4	100.0	93.0	90.9	90.0	88.1	-
All	100.0	93.0	90.9	90.0	88.1	-

Summary of the Science Goal

Harlem Link fully expects to meet its science goal for the 2014-15 academic year. At this time, the school does not yet have sufficient data to evaluate the outcome of this goal. However, of the two measures for this goal, Harlem Link has met one and fully expects to meet the other once data is available.

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.	Data not yet available

Action Plan

Harlem Link will continue the current program in 2014-15, with no significant changes planned for curriculum, staffing or instruction.

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

Harlem Link is in good standing.

Evaluation

Consistent with prior years, Harlem Link has met this measure.

Additional Evidence

During the last three years, Harlem Link has maintained good standing.

NCLB Status by Year

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