



Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School

2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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By Dylan Schaffer

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Dylan Schaffer, planning and external affairs manager for Ascend Learning, prepared this 2018-19 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school’s board of trustees:

Trustee’s Name	Board Position
Stephanie Mauterstock	Chair
Shelly Cleary	Treasurer
Christine Schlendorf	Secretary
Kwaku Andoh	Trustee
Amanda Craft	Trustee
Glenn Hopps	Trustee
Nadine Sylvester	Trustee
Oral Walcott	Trustee

Shani Foster has served as lower school director since July 2019.

Brittney Jean-Louis has served as middle school director since March 2019.

The mission of all Ascend schools is to equip our students with the knowledge, confidence, and character to succeed in college and beyond. By offering a rich liberal arts education in a supportive environment, we animate children’s natural sense of curiosity and prepare students to think on their own, thrive on their own, and engage the world as informed, responsible citizens.

At Ascend, our mission is to provide an extraordinary education to the children of Brooklyn, placing them firmly on a path to success in college and beyond. Our model focuses on developing in our students critical thinking skills and a sense of agency and independence. Ascend’s value proposition rests on three pillars.

1. A rich and rigorous liberal arts curriculum that drives student achievement
2. A warm, joyful school culture built on Responsive Classroom and, in the high school, a restorative practices model, both of which foster student independence and agency
3. A commitment to operate truly public schools

Central Brooklyn Ascend opened in September 2014 and has grown to serve students in kindergarten through grade 5 in school year (SY) 2018-19. It will continue to grow by a grade per year to offer at maturity a comprehensive K-12 college-preparatory program. Central Brooklyn Ascend is located in Community School District 22 in Brooklyn. In SY 2018-19, 89 percent of students qualified for free or reduced-priced lunch, 91 percent were black or Latino, 13 percent were special education students, 5 percent were English language learners.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year														
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2014-15	76	75												151
2015-16	76	78	77											231
2016-17	87	79	77	82										325
2017-18	89	91	90	80	77									427
2018-19	83	93	97	95	94	83								545

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School students will meet grade level expectations in English language arts.

BACKGROUND

Central Brooklyn Ascend implements the Ascend Common Core curriculum. In SY 2018-19, the components of the English language arts program included:

- *Phonics* (kindergarten through grade 2). *Foundations* is a phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling program for the general education classroom. *Foundations* is based upon the Wilson Reading System principles and serves as a prevention program to help reduce reading and spelling failure.

The Ascend teacher will deliver one 30-minute *Foundations* whole-class lesson each day. *Foundations* lessons focus on carefully sequenced skills that include print knowledge, alphabet awareness, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and spelling. Critical thinking, speaking, and listening skills are practiced during story-time activities. Furthermore, targeted small group intervention is available for struggling students.¹

- *Read Aloud* sessions with students in grades K-2 occur daily through the first term of grade 2 with the class gathered on a rug while the teacher reads a carefully selected high-quality text and provides a model of fluent, expressive reading which helps children recognize the value of reading for pleasure. Read Aloud promotes vocabulary acquisition, models the habits of a skilled reader, and supports deep discussion of excellent texts through strategic “turn and talks.”
- *Writing* (kindergarten through grade 4). Students will study writing—which also includes grammar instruction—for 45 minutes four times per week from kindergarten through the grade 2, then three times per week in grades 3 and 4. Ascend has developed a unique writing program based loosely on the work of Lucy Calkins and The Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University’s Teacher’s College. Ascend’s writing curriculum is genre-based and rooted in the belief that students need to write frequently and produce a high volume of writing. Grammar is strategically embedded in the units of study so that students learn grammar skills explicitly and then apply them immediately to the writing they do in class. The program requires teachers to provide frequent feedback to small groups of students in writing conferences while other students work independently. Ascend’s writing program teaches students that writing is powerful, fun, beautiful, and purposeful.
- *Guided Reading* (kindergarten through grade 4). Guided Reading, taught in small, leveled groups, has been at the center of the schools’ ELA program since 2010; it is deployed five times per week, for 60 minutes in grades K-2 and 45 minutes in grades 3-4. During Guided Reading period, students are divided into leveled groups of six to eight students. Homogeneous groups—defined by students’ reading level or specific skill deficits—meet with teachers who guide the students through reading a text of the appropriate level; when not meeting with a teacher, students read independently. Teachers will continue to use the Ascend Guided Reading lesson plan templates and existing lesson plans that have been developed over the last three years. The schools carefully track each student’s individual reading progress through use of the STEP assessments, developed by the University of Chicago; STEP, or Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress, is an acclaimed system designed to help students from Pre-K to third grade learn to read.

In class libraries, books are organized by level and by subject, so that teachers can match students quickly to books appropriate to their STEP level and emerging curiosities.

- *Literature Circle* (grade 3 through grade 4). In the Ascend-developed Literature Circle program, piloted in school year 2012-13 and now in all Ascend schools, teachers in help students to mine

¹ This text has been adapted from the publisher’s description at <http://www.foundations.com>.

the deepest meaning of the finest children's literature. The Ascend literacy team has carefully chosen books of the highest quality and literary complexity, balancing fiction and non-fiction; Ascend has sequenced these anchor texts to align with E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge history and geography sequence. Books are selected for their capacity to intrigue students by posing genuine ethical dilemmas or addressing conflicts or longings in their lives. Students develop the habits of excellent readers, build reading comprehension skills, build their base of core knowledge, learn how to express and exchange ideas, and most importantly, discover a love for great books.

- *Shared Text* (grades 2, term 2 through grade 8). In the Shared Text component, deployed three times per week for 45 minutes, the teacher models the habits of a skilled reader, and leads students briskly to the meaning of a short complex text. Students are guided in answering Common Core-style comprehension questions and short response questions. In the lower school, shared text is a companion component to Literature Circles. Shared Text includes fiction, non-fiction, and poetry texts.
- *Humanities (grades 5-8)*. Beginning in grade 5, students participate in Ascend's humanities, writing, and arts program for two periods a day. Excellent critical thinking, close-reading, writing, arts appreciation, and public speaking skills are the primary goals of the program. Modeled on the practices of the city's finest private and selective public schools, the program develops the individual voice and reading sensibility of each Ascend student with a customized syllabus that includes a cross-cultural selection of classic literature.

Ascend has created a powerful culture of response to instructional data (RTI) to support and enhance learning, and will continue to develop and employ a variety of assessments to measure progress towards mastering standards. In addition to New York State exams administered each spring, teachers use benchmark and mock assessments, unit tests, STEP assessments, norm-referenced NWEA MAP assessments, and other measures of student performance during the course of the year. The Illuminate Data and Assessment (DnA) system allows staff to monitor progress and assess student comprehension, and supports data-driven teacher training and evaluation through access to instant feedback. Teachers and leaders consistently review student work and achievement data and trends, resulting in effective planning for upcoming lessons and timely and purposeful feedback to students. Recognizing the impact of feedback on student access of knowledge and academic achievement, Ascend in SY 2016-17 implemented the Continuous Monitoring and Response to Student Work initiative. The initiative, which has remained a network-wide focus since SY 2016-17, focuses on frequent review and analysis of student data to support accurate teacher diagnosis of misconceptions, allow strategic instructional adjustments, and ensure that students receive effective feedback in order to improve their understanding.

All Ascend schools participate in Teacher Planning and Development (TPD), a network-wide program begun in SY 2015-16 aimed at improving teaching and learning and creating a platform for teacher collaboration. Through unit studies, planning and assessment studies, lesson debriefs, teach-backs, and data meetings, TPD meetings represent a critical piece of a professional development program that also includes pre-service training, full professional development days, afterschool sessions, and ongoing coaching and modeling. The TPD program complements the Continuous Monitoring initiative by providing dedicated time in teachers' and leaders' schedules for analysis of student work, tracking data, and developing teacher strategies for improving their response to student performance during lessons.

In school year 2018-19 the Ascend network initiatives were (1) Strengthening Early Literacy in grades K-2, (2) Continuous Monitoring of Student Work (K-8), (3) Strengthening Implementation of Responsive Classroom in grades K-8.

The intended outcomes of the Early Literacy initiative were to establish a network-wide vision of excellent guided reading instruction and provide guided reading training and oversight throughout the year, increase Read Aloud instruction to take place every day in grades K, 1, and the first term of grade 2 to ensure that students listen to and discuss great books and see models of the thinking readers do, and establish Readers Workshop to ensure teachers strategically introduce to all students the skills and strategies needed to tackle grade level texts.

The intended outcomes of the Continuous Monitoring initiative were to improve student reading and math achievement by improving the ability of teachers and leaders to accurately evaluate student work to assess mastery; improve the ability of teachers to identify misconceptions evidenced in student work; plan and deliver effective student feedback; improve student mastery through application of frequent, targeted teacher feedback; improve the efficacy and efficiency of instruction through analysis of regularly collected student work; and improve the mechanisms for monitoring student progress daily and weekly.

Through the Responsive Classroom initiative, we sought to create a sense of community, increase cognitive engagement and student autonomy, and improve academic performance. Improvement will be measured by positive responses to staff and student survey questions on order, discipline, and respect, and by improvements in reading and math achievement.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above 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 (“ELA”) assessment to students in third through fifth grade in April 2019. 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).

2018-19 State English Language Arts Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested						
Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ²				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	87	2	0	0	2	91

² 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.

4	90	0	0	0	0	90
5	83	5	0	0	0	88
All	260	7	0	0	2	269

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Fifty-nine-point-two percent of Central Brooklyn Ascend students enrolled in at least their second year achieved proficiency on the NYS English language arts exam in SY 2018-19, compared to 56.9 percent of all students. In each grade, more than half of students enrolled in at least their second year were proficient, including in Central Brooklyn Ascend’s first middle school grade 5 cohort.

Performance on 2018-19 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	69.0%	87	66.7%	69
4	57.8%	90	57.8%	64
5	43.4%	83	51.7%	58
All	56.9%	260	59.2%	191

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Student performance in ELA at Central Brooklyn Ascend has increased significantly—by 21.7 percentage points—from SY 2016-17 to Sy 2018-19, including a nearly seven-point increase over last year. In both grade 3 and 4, performance has increased each year. We are particularly encouraged by the performance of the school’s first grade 5 cohort, which has increased its performance steadily year-over-year.

ELA Performance by Grade Level and Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	37.5%	56	60.3%	62	66.7%	69
4	n/a	n/a	44.2%	57	57.8%	64
5	37.5%	56	n/a	n/a	51.7%	58
All	37.5%	56	52.3%	119	59.2%	191

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (“PI”) on the State English language arts exam will meet that year’s state Measure of Interim Progress (“MIP”) set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the English language arts test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2018-19 English language arts MIP for all students of 105. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In English language arts, Central Brooklyn Ascend achieved a PI of 149.4, exceeding the MIP of 105 and thereby meeting the measure.

English Language Arts 2018-19 Performance Index				
Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
260	14.2%	28.8%	43.5%	13.5%

PI	=	28.8	+	43.5	+	13.5	=	85.8
				43.5	+	13.5	=	56.9
					+	(.5)*13.5	=	6.7
						PI	=	149.4

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 school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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 AND EVALUATION

Canarsie Ascend's aggregate performance on the NYS English language arts exam outpaced Community School District 22, Central Brooklyn Ascend's home district for the first time in SY 2018-

³ 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](#).

19, by nine percentage points. Thus, the school met this measure. Each tested grade outpaced the district.

**2018-19 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	66.7%	69	56.3%	2,608
4	57.8%	64	53.1%	2,738
5	51.7%	58	41.4%	2,699
All	59.2%	191	50.2%	8,045

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend has steadily improved its performance compared to its host district since SY 2016-17. In SY 2017-18, grade 3 students exceeded their district peers for the first time by 8.4 percentage points; in SY 2018-19, they increased the margin to 10.4 points over the district. After underperforming the district by 11.3 points in SY 2017-18, Central Brooklyn Ascend grade 4 students outperformed their district peers by 4.7 points in SY 2018-19. Central Brooklyn Ascend's outperformance of CSD 22 is in spite of the fact that the school enrolls a significantly higher percentage of students of color and economic disadvantage than its large and diverse host district, CSD 22.

**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 Scoring at or Above Proficiency Compared to District Students					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
3	37.5%	46.6%	60.3%	51.9%	66.7%	56.3%
4	n/a	n/a	44.2%	55.5%	57.8%	53.1%
5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	51.7%	41.4%
All	37.5%	46.6%	52.3%	53.7%	59.2%	50.2%

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 SUNY Charter Schools Institute ("Institute") conducts a comparative performance analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. 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 concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school’s 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 2018-19 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2017-18 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In SY 2017-18, Central Brooklyn Ascend performed 14.5 percentage points better than expected when controlling for the number of economically disadvantaged students taking the exam. This resulted in an Effect Size of 0.77, thereby meeting the measure for performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree.

2017-18 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	85.1%	78	60.3%	40.2%	20.1%	1.06
4	90.5%	77	44.2%	35.4%	8.8%	0.48
All	87.8%	155	52.3%	37.8%	14.5%	0.77

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:

Higher than expected to a meaningful degree

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend has achieved meaningfully large Effect Sizes since SY 2016-17. The school’s Effect Size increased from SY 2016-17 to SY 2017-18.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2016-17	3	91.5%	82	40.2%	28.4%	0.66
2017-18	3-4	87.8%	155	52.3%	37.8%	0.77

Goal 1: Growth Measure⁴

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

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 target of 50.

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 2017-18 and also have a state exam score from 2016-17 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2016-17 score are ranked by their 2017-18 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 target for this measure, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state’s release of Growth Model data, the 2018-19 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2017-18 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁵

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In SY 2017-18, Central Brooklyn Ascend achieved a mean growth percentile of 38.9, compared to the statewide median of 50.0. Thus, Central Brooklyn Ascend did not meet this measure. We attribute this to the weaker than expected performance of grade 4 in SY 2017-18; given that cohort’s improvement in SY 2018-19, we expect this year’s growth percentile to exceed the target.

2017-18 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	38.9	50.0
All	39.8	50.0

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

SY 2017-18 was the first year that Central Brooklyn had a growth percentile.

SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

While the school did not meet the Accountability Plan’s first absolute measure of 75 percent proficiency, Central Brooklyn Ascend students remain on a path toward continued progress in ELA.

We are deeply encouraged by this year’s strong results following what proved to be Central Brooklyn Ascend’s challenging first two years with tested grades. Following targeted intervention and intense focus from the network team, the school has shown significant progress this year. Each cohort either increased on maintained its SY 2017-18 proficiency level, and grades 3 and 4 have showed impressive gains over previous years. Central Brooklyn Ascend’s first middle school grade—grade 5—performed well. Central Brooklyn Ascend students for the first time outperformed CSD 22

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

students overall and in each tested grade, and students performed better than expected to a meaningful degree when compared to similarly economically disadvantaged students statewide. Though we did not meet the growth percentile target for SY 2017-18, we are eager to exceed the target in SY 2018-19 given our growth this year.

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 meet
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's English language arts exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Met
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 school district of comparison.	Met
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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2017-18 results.)	Met
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 target of 50. (Using 2017-18 results.)	Did not meet

ACTION PLAN

Through the next accountability period, Central Brooklyn Ascend will continue to build on its most successful practices and results in ELA, while improving on areas of weakness with targeted adjustments and interventions.

Central Brooklyn Ascend will effect Ascend's network-wide initiatives in SY 2019-20: Strengthening Foundations in Reading in grades K-2, Closing the Gap in grades 5-8, the Continuous Monitoring of Student Work in K-8, and Launching Strong and Refining the Ascend Culture in K-8. These initiatives represent the continuation and refinement of initiatives begun in previous school years at Ascend.

Network-wide, Ascend will focus in SY 2019-20 on improving reading instruction in grades K-2, in order to ensure students are armed with the foundational reading skills necessary to succeed in the upper grades. As part of this initiative, Ascend's curriculum and instruction team (CIT) will focus its supports to the schools on phonics instruction and will continue to promote high-quality guided reading instruction. Additionally, the school will set incremental targets for phonics unit tests to ensure the school meets its end-of-year goal. School directors and network leaders will devote time to observing guided reading and phonics lessons on network-wide implementation visits, and will provide feedback and targeted interventions to the schools based on the results of these observations. Finally, schools have shifted from STEP assessments to F&P assessments in reading in order to improve the way reading assessment data leads to teacher-led instructional adjustments and interventions. Schools will establish new end-of-year reading targets for F&P assessments after the first round of the assessment is administered in late September.

The Continuous Monitoring of Student Work Initiative begun in SY 2015-16 will again be implemented to support accurate teacher diagnosis of misconceptions, allow strategic instructional adjustments, and ensure effective feedback in order to improve student understanding. Continuous Monitoring will continue to inform the Teacher Planning and Development (TPD) program, as well as teacher evaluations and coaching.

In grades 5-8, in the effort to close the gap and ensure all students are learning and achieving, we will focus on implementing with rigor and fidelity Leveled Literacy Intervention for students reading significantly below grade level; create, train, and implement a modifications manual to ensure all students have access to tier 1 curriculum at the middle school level, and adjust scheduling guidelines to allow students reading significantly below grade level to receive Shared Text instruction in smaller groups with texts closer to their grade level.

The network's initiative related to strong school launches and refining Ascend's distinctive culture will establish the Ascend vision for school culture. Schools' managing directors will explicitly define excellence in Ascend student culture through a new student culture rubric and will consistently observe school routines and deans of students' referrals. School directors were trained throughout Summer Institute on whole school routines and procedures, and will continue to train on and practice these procedures through the first few weeks of schools. These cultural refinements will contribute meaningfully to increased academic performance across all grades.

As Central Brooklyn Ascend Middle School continues to grow, we will continue to support the school at the network level through the line structure—namely, a capable managing director of upper schools—and through the network's curriculum and instruction team.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School students will meet grade level expectations in mathematics.

BACKGROUND

Central Brooklyn Ascend implements the Ascend Common Core curriculum. In SY 2018-19, mathematics curriculum and instruction was structured as follows:

Math in the lower school will be taught daily in two periods of 45 minutes each on Monday through Thursday, and one 45-minute period on Friday, covering the following components of math instruction:

- The first math period per day (Monday-Friday) covers *Math Workshop*. Our math program is built on the Launch, Explore, Discuss (LED) model, deployed in Math Workshop. In the LED approach, students build enduring conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills by progressing through three stages of learning: concrete (manipulatives), pictorial (visual representations and models), and abstract (equations).

- The second period (Monday-Thursday) covers both *Number Stories* and *math fluency*. In *Number Stories*, an Ascend-developed program, students spend an entire period studying a single Common Core-style math problem, constructing their own solutions, defending their thinking, and comparing their approaches. When they see the approaches other scholars devise, they learn that there isn't one "right" way to solve a problem. When they then grasp the logic that bridges the several approaches, they deepen their understanding of essential concepts—and behold math's beauty. In preparing for *Number Stories* lessons, teachers anticipate methods of varying sophistication that students will use to solve the problem. Teachers track the levels of individual students and facilitate the advancement of each scholar to the next level. Taught using Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), *Number Stories* was launched throughout the Ascend network in spring 2014.

For approximately 10 minutes a day, students will practice math routines to build automaticity and fluency in computation.

In the middle school, one 90-minute math period per day will be deployed for the EngageNY math sequence, which also uses the Launch, Explore, Discuss model. This edition is highly aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards.

Ascend has created a powerful culture of response to instructional data (RTI) to support and enhance learning, and will continue to develop and employ a variety of assessments to measure progress towards mastering standards. In addition to New York State exams administered each spring, teachers use benchmark and mock assessments, unit tests, STEP assessments, norm-referenced NWEA MAP assessments, and other measures of student performance during the course of the year. The Illuminate Data and Assessment (DnA) system allows staff to monitor progress and assess student comprehension, and supports data-driven teacher training and evaluation through access to instant feedback. Teachers and leaders consistently review student work and achievement data and trends, resulting in effective planning for upcoming lessons and timely and purposeful feedback to students. Recognizing the impact of feedback on student access of knowledge and academic achievement, Ascend in SY 2016-17 implemented the Continuous Monitoring and Response to Student Work initiative. The initiative, which has remained a network-wide focus since SY 2016-17, focuses on frequent review and analysis of student data to support accurate teacher diagnosis of misconceptions, allow strategic instructional adjustments, and ensure that students receive effective feedback in order to improve their understanding.

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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 fifth grade in April 2019. 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.

2018-19 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁶				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	86	4	0	0	0	90
4	90	0	0	0	0	90

⁶ 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.

5	83	5	0	0	0	88
All	259	9	0	0	0	268

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Sixty-five-point-three percent of Central Brooklyn Ascend students enrolled in at least their second year achieved proficiency on the NYS mathematics exam in SY 2018-19, compared to 64.5 percent of all students in tested grades who achieved proficiency, putting the school in striking distance of the 75-percentage point proficiency threshold. Though Central Brooklyn Ascend did not meet the threshold overall, students enrolled in at least their second year in grade 3 achieved 76.5 percent, exceeding the threshold. Students in fourth and fifth grade also achieved strong results.

Performance on 2018-19 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	74.4%	86	76.5%	68
4	62.2%	90	57.8%	64
5	56.6%	83	60.3%	58
All	64.5%	259	65.3%	190

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend increased its overall proficiency markedly, by nearly 20 percentage points, from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19, for a more than 15-point gain over the two-year period. Students' performance in grade 3 increased 26.5 points since SY 2016-17, and in a notable achievement, proficiency in grade 4 increased 28.2 points in just one year. Central Brooklyn's first grade 5 cohort, in which only 29.6 percent of students were proficiency last year, increased their proficiency by 30.7 percentage points to 60.3 percent this year.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	50.0%	50	61.3%	62	76.5%	68
4	n/a	n/a	29.6%	54	57.8%	64
5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	60.3%	58
All	50.0%	57	46.5%	116	65.3%	190

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index ("PI") on the state mathematics exam will meet that year's state Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the mathematics test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2018-19 mathematics MIP for all students of 107. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In mathematics, Central Brooklyn Ascend achieved a PI of 162.7, compared to the MIP value of 107, thereby meeting this measure.

Mathematics 2017-18 Performance Level Index (PI)				
Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
259	16.6%	18.9%	34.7%	29.7%

PI	=	18.9	+	34.7	+	29.7	=	83.4
				34.7	+	29.7	=	64.5
					+	(.5)*29.7	=	14.9
						PI	=	162.7

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 school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares the performance of tested students enrolled in at least their second year to that of all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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.⁷

⁷ 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](#).

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Central Brooklyn Ascend’s overall performance on the NYS mathematics exam outpaced Community District 22, the school’s home district, by 11.2 percentage points overall in the corresponding tested grades for the first time. The school exceeded the district’s performance in each tested grade, by between 3.3 points in grade 4 to 18.6 points in grade 3.

2018-19 State Mathematics Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	76.5%	68	57.9%	2,660
4	57.8%	64	54.5%	2,784
5	60.3%	58	49.9%	2,740
All	65.3%	190	54.1%	8,184

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend’s performance relative to its host district has steadily improved since SY 2016-17. After failing to exceed the district in that year, Central Brooklyn Ascend third grade students outperformed their district peers by 5 percentage points. In SY 2018-19, grade 3 students’ outperformance increased to nearly 20 points.

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					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
3	50.0%	51.8%	61.3%	56.3%	76.5%	57.9%
4	n/a	n/a	29.6%	51.9%	57.8%	54.5%
5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	60.3%	49.9%
All	50.0%	51.8%	46.5%	54.1%	65.3%	54.1%

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 Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. 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 concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school's 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 2017-18 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2017-18 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In SY 2017-18, Central Brooklyn Ascend performed 8.9 percentage points better than expected when controlling for the number of economically disadvantaged students taking the exam. This resulted in an overall Effect Size of 0.41, thereby meeting the measure for performing better than expected to a meaningful degree. Grade 3 achieved an Effect Size of 0.85, performing better than expected to a large degree; however, grade 4 did not achieve a positive Effect Size.

2017-18 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	85.1	78	61.5	43.0	18.5	0.85
4	90.5	76	32.9	33.8	-0.9	-0.04
All	87.8	154	47.4	38.5	8.9	0.41

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Better than expected to a meaningful degree.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Since SY 2016-17, Central Brooklyn Ascend has maintained a meaningfully positive Effect Size. We expect the Effect Size to grow in SY 2018-19 given the school's stronger overall performance.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2016-17	3	91.5	82	50.0	33.5	0.79

2017-18	3-4	87.8	154	47.4	38.5	0.41
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Goal 2: Growth Measure⁸

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 target of 50.

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 2017-18 and also have a state exam score in 2016-17 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2016-17 scores are ranked by their 2017-18 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 meet the measure, the school would have to achieve a mean growth percentile above the target of 50.

Given the timing of the state’s release of Growth Model data, the 2018-19 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2017-18 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁹

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Central Brooklyn Ascend achieved a mean growth percentile of 33.3 in SY 2017-18, compared to the statewide median of 50.0. Thus, Central Brooklyn Ascend did not the measure. Again, we expect our growth percentile to increase in SY 2018-19 given the strong growth of Central Brooklyn Ascend students over the previous year.

2017-18 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	33.3	50.0
All	33.3	50.0

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

SY 2017-18 was the first year that Central Brooklyn Ascend had a growth percentile score.

⁸ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

⁹ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s business portal: portal.nysed.gov.

SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

While the school did not meet the Accountability Plan’s first absolute measure of 75 percent proficiency, Central Brooklyn Ascend students remain on a path toward continued progress in math.

We are deeply encouraged by this year’s strong results following what proved to be Central Brooklyn Ascend’s challenging first two years with tested grades. Following targeted intervention and intense focus from the network team, the school has shown significant progress this year. Overall and grade-level proficiency increased significantly, and grade 3 students surpassed the 75 percent threshold. Brooklyn Ascend’s first middle school cohort performed well in grade 5, making significant gains over its previous year’s performance. Central Brooklyn Ascend students for the first time outperformed CSD 22 students overall and in each tested grade, and students performed better than expected to a meaningful degree when compared to similarly economically disadvantaged students statewide. Though we did not meet the growth percentile target for SY 2017-18, we are eager to exceed the target in SY 2018-19 given our growth this year.

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 meet
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate PI on the state’s English language arts exam will meet that year’s state MIP as set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.	Met
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 school district of comparison.	Met
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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2017-18 results.)	Met
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 target of 50. (Using the 2017-18 results.)	Did not meet

ACTION PLAN

Through the next accountability period, Central Brooklyn Ascend will continue to build on its most successful practices and results in math, while improving on areas of weakness with targeted adjustments and interventions.

Central Brooklyn Ascend will effect Ascend’s network-wide initiatives in SY 2019-20: Strengthening Foundations in Reading in grades K-2, Closing the Gap in grades 5-8, the Continuous Monitoring of Student Work in K-8, and Launching Strong and Refining the Ascend Culture in K-8. These initiatives represent the continuation and refinement of initiatives begun in previous school years at Ascend.

The Continuous Monitoring of Student Work Initiative begun in SY 2015-16 will again be implemented to support accurate teacher diagnosis of misconceptions, allow strategic instructional

adjustments, and ensure effective feedback in order to improve student understanding. Continuous Monitoring will continue to inform the Teacher Planning and Development (TPD) program, as well as teacher evaluations and coaching.

In grades 5-8, in the effort to close the gap and ensure all students are learning and achieving, we will create, train, and implement a modifications manual to ensure all students have access to tier 1 curriculum at the middle school level, adjust scheduling guidelines to for additional student interventions, and implement year-round after-school math intensives three times per week for at least students in grade 5, in an effort to remedy the general trend of declines in achievement from grade 4 to grade 5.

The network's initiative related to strong school launches and refining Ascend's distinctive culture will establish the Ascend vision for school culture. Schools' managing directors will explicitly define excellence in Ascend student culture through a new student culture rubric and will consistently observe school routines and deans of students' referrals. School directors were trained throughout Summer Institute on whole school routines and procedures, and will continue to train on and practice these procedures through the first few weeks of schools. These cultural refinements will contribute meaningfully to increased academic performance across all grades.

As Central Brooklyn Ascend Middle School continues to grow to maturity, we will continue to support the school at the network level through the line structure—namely, a capable managing director of middle schools—and through the network's curriculum and instruction team.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School Students will meet grade level expectations in science.

BACKGROUND

Central Brooklyn Ascend implements the Ascend Common Core curriculum. In SY 2018-19, science curriculum and instruction was structured as follows:

- In the lower school, Ascend's original inquiry-based science program derives from the MacMillan/McGraw-Hill's *A Closer Look* science program, which was selected for its strong Common Core alignment, integration of rich content with well-conceived inquiry experiments, and vibrant, engaging textbooks. The program's goal is to provide all students with a solid foundation in science literacy. Students develop their ability to observe, describe, compare, inquire, and evaluate while studying the "big ideas" and essential core concepts of science. The program was developed to meet the requirements and expectations established in both the National Science Education Standards and in the Benchmarks for Science Literacy.

Each year students begin with an introduction to the work of scientists currently studying real world concerns. Every unit reflects the broad science content standard, beginning with the "big idea" question and where each lesson supports a particular aspect of that question. Each grade level contains two complete units on Life Science, Earth Science, and Physical Science.

- In the middle school, students learn standards-based science in the context of intriguing personal and societal issues through the *Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP)*, developed at the University of California at Berkeley and composed of courses in *Issues and Earth Science*, *Issues and Life Science*, and *Issues and Physical Science*.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State science examination.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in fourth grade in spring 2019. 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 AND EVALUATION

Seventy-two-point-six percent of Central Brooklyn Ascend students in grade 4 were found proficient on the New York State science exam in SY 2018-19; therefore, the school fell short of meeting the measure by 2.4 percentage points.

Charter School Performance on 2018-19 State Science Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency of Students in At Least 2 nd Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	72.6%	62
All	72.6%	62

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend’s science proficiency decreased from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19 by approximately 15 percentage points, which does not meet our standards or aspirations for our students. We attribute the drop to staffing challenges in science, which we feel have been adequately addressed in SY 2019-20 to ensure stronger performance this year. The significant majority of students were still found to be proficient in SY 2018-19.

Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	n/a	n/a	89.5%	57	72.6%	62
All	n/a	n/a	89.5%	57	72.6%	62

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 school district of comparison.

METHOD

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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 school district of comparison. Given the timing of the state's release of district science data, the 2018-19 comparative data may not yet be available. If not, schools should report comparison to the district's **2017-18** data.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Compared to the most recent district science exam data available (from SY 2017-18), Central Brooklyn Ascend students' proficiency rate did not surpass that of their district peers; therefore, the school did not meet the measure.

2018-19 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 ¹⁰	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	72.6%	62	91.1%	2,649
All	72.6%	62	91.1%	2,649

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Central Brooklyn Ascend did not surpass its host district's fourth grade science proficiency rate in SY 2017-18.

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					
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
4	n/a	n/a	89.5%	91.1%	72.6%	n/a

¹⁰ This table uses the prior year's results as 2018-19 district science scores are not yet available.

All	n/a	n/a	89.5%	91.1%	72.6%	n/a
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SUMMARY OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

Though we did not meet the 75 percent proficiency threshold nor exceed the performance of the host district, we are confident in the strength of the Ascend science curriculum for putting students on the path to college. Though we are optimistic that staffing adjustments at Central Brooklyn Ascend will lead to increased science performance next year, we will continue to closely monitor science instruction to ensure students are succeeding and achieving at levels comparable to their peers across the Ascend network.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State examination.	Did not meet
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 school district of comparison.	Did not meet

ACTION PLAN

Central Brooklyn Ascend will increase its current levels of proficiency in science in grade 4 by building upon successful systems already in place and effecting targeted interventions by leveraging the network's strategic initiatives, particularly the continuous monitoring initiative, described above.

In the middle school grades, the network's curriculum and instruction team will in school year 2018-19 provide science teachers with scripted lesson plans aligned to the standards-based Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP). These lesson plans will lead to consistent, high-quality science lessons in the middle school grades across all Ascend schools.

GOAL 4: ESSA

Goal 4: ESSA

Central Brooklyn Ascend will remain in good standing.

Goal 4: Absolute Measure

Under the state's ESSA accountability system, the school is in good standing: the state has not identified the school for comprehensive or targeted improvement.

METHOD

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's performance standards, the federal statute stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results.

As New York State, like all states, is required to establish a specific system for making these determinations for its public schools, charter schools do not have latitude in establishing their own performance levels or criteria of success for meeting the ESSA accountability requirements. Each year, the state issues School Report Cards that indicate a school's status under the state accountability system.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Central Brooklyn Ascend remained in good standing in SY 2018-19.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

No ESSA judgment was released for Central Brooklyn Ascend in SY 2017-18. Prior to ESSA's implementation, Central Brooklyn Ascend was in good standing under previous regulations.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2016-17	Good Standing
2017-18	--
2018-19	Good Standing