



## **Explore Excel Charter School**

# **2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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By Explore School Inc.

**Excel Lower School Campus**

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## 2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Explore Schools Inc. prepared this 2018-19 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Morty Ballen	Member, Accountability Committee
Jana Reed	Member, Finance and Accountability Committees
Hank Mannix	President, Accountability Committee
Angie Brice	Member, Accountability Committee
Lindsay Danon	Member, Accountability Committee
Robert Archer	Parent Representative
Lindsay Matovich	Member, Finance Committee

Anna Bear Dallis and Nadia Despenza has served as the Co Principals since April 2019 and July 2018 respectively.

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Explore Excel Charter School is a K–8 public charter school in Canarsie, Brooklyn. Excel opened in 2011 and graduated its first class of 8th graders in 2017 to some of the top college-preparatory high schools in New York City. While Excel’s mission continues to be to provide students with the academic skills and critical-thinking abilities they need to succeed in a college-preparatory high school, we have honed the vision and priorities for how we go about achieving that mission. Our vision for instruction includes:

- We View Excellent Curriculum and Instruction as a Pathway to Equity and a Response to the Opportunity Gap by Providing our Scholars with Access and Opportunities to Succeed
- Our Curriculum is Culturally Responsive, Rigorous, and Standards Aligned
- We Believe Children are Natural Problem Solvers, and so we Value Teaching that Balances Critical Thinking with Learning New Skills and Knowledge
- We Cultivate Student Investment by Nurturing Curiosity, Providing High-Quality Feedback, and Using Data to Drive Our Decision Making

In the 2018-19 school year, Excel served 528 students as of BEDS Day (October 3, 2018).

### School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2014-15	59	60	59	59	61	62	62	-	-	422
2015-16	58	60	62	58	57	60	63	59	-	477
2016-17	54	59	55	58	58	60	58	62	56	511
2017-18	63	62	61	60	63	55	69	56	60	549
2018-19	58	59	59	58	61	57	60	64	52	528

## GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: English Language Arts

Explore Excel Charter School students will meet grade level expectations in English.

#### BACKGROUND

For the 2018-19 school year, Excel Charter School used the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Skills and Listening & Learning Strands for grades K–2 and Expeditionary Learning in cohort with Teachers College Writing curriculum, Words Their Way, and Grammar Works, for grades 3–8. In addition, the school reserved a block for independent reading, and students who are reading below grade level received guided reading or Leveled Literacy Intervention. Excel’s already established partnership with Lavinia Group continued through the 2018-19 school year. The Lavinia group provided dedicated professional development to Excel’s teachers on close reading strategies. The ongoing training ensured that Excel’s students received four intensive periods of Close Reading

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where they read short grade-level texts and dissected the main ideas. Students were taught to closely read a cold text, identify the genre and central idea, and then analyze the text throughout all subject areas.

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>1</sup>				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	56					56
4	59					59
5	57				2	59
6	58				2	61
7	68					68
8	54					54
All	352	0	0	0	4	356

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Students in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Excel fell short of this measure by 25.9pp. Excel did not meet this measure. While we did not achieve this measure, we did roughly keep pace with our results from last year, which was a year of considerable growth. In addition, our 5th graders who have been at Excel for 2+ years, increased their proficiency levels by over 13pp when compared to 2017-18 NYS assessment results.

<sup>1</sup> Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.

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### 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	41.1%	56	50.0%	44
4	52.5%	59	50.0%	52
5	35.1%	57	42.9%	42
6	62.1%	58	66.7%	42
7	33.8%	68	38.3%	60
8	48.1%	54	51.0%	51
All	45.2%	352	49.1%	291

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Although students enrolled in at least their 2nd year at Excel did not meet this absolute measure, they kept roughly with their pace from the 2017-18 school year. Over the charter term, Excel students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year achieved significant growth, increasing proficiency by almost 13pp.

We believe this is a direct result of multiple changes implemented in 2017-18 and beyond, including our partnership with Lavinia Group to implement close reading strategies. With this continued partnership, coupled with a focus on developing students' writing skills by exposing them to different writing styles and ample time to practice writing, we expect to see continued growth in 2019-20. We also credit this growth to the systems and processes we implemented in the 2017-18 school year that we continued to emphasize in the 2018-19 school 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	36.7%	49	59.6%	52	50.0%	44
4	50.0%	46	67.4%	46	50.0%	52
5	33.3%	48	54.1%	37	42.9%	42
6	21.3%	47	52.9%	51	66.7%	42
7	34.6%	52	28.8%	52	38.3%	60
8	51.0%	49	46.4%	56	51.0%	51
<b>All</b>	<b>37.8%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>51.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>49.1%</b>	<b>291</b>

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## 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

Our performance index for the 18-19 academic year in English Language Arts was 132.3. We have surpassed the measure set by the state by 27.3 points. The increased proficiency can be attributed to Excel's focus on independent reading, allowing students to practice comprehension and decoding strategies, as well as small group instruction, which allowed teachers to address students' skill gaps by analyzing data collected during literacy components in the classroom.

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
	19.9	34.9	31.3	13.9

$$\begin{array}{rclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 34.9 & + & 31.3 & + & 13.9 & = & 80.1 \\
 & & & & 31.3 & + & 13.9 & = & 45.2 \\
 & & & & & + & (.5)*13.9 & = & 7.0 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & \mathbf{132.3}
 \end{array}$$

## 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

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the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.<sup>2</sup>

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel met this measure. Students enrolled in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Excel met this measure for ELA and outperformed their local district. This growth can be attributed to many factors, including but not limited to:

- a) More intentional teacher coaching using thoughtful termly benchmarks
- b) Partnership with Lavinia Group to train teachers on close reading strategies
- c) Systematic and cohesive processes for setting benchmarks and responding to data

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 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	50.0%	44	49.2%	1017
4	50.0%	52	41.8%	1066
5	42.9%	42	32.0%	1055
6	66.7%	42	40.0%	1038
7	38.3%	60	31.0%	1054
8	51.0%	51	44.9%	1085
All	49.1%	291	39.8%	6315

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Overall, students in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Excel outperformed local district students in ELA. This trend is demonstrated in every grade at Excel. Excel's Upper School in particular outperformed the district. In every year from 2016-17 to 2018-19, Excel exceeded the district by at least 4pp.

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<sup>2</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

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## 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	36.7%	34.4%	59.6%	34.4%	50.0%	49.2%
4	50.0%	37.4%	67.4%	37.4%	50.0%	41.8%
5	33.3%	27.2%	54.1%	27.2%	42.9%	32.0%
6	21.3%	20.7%	52.9%	20.7%	66.7%	40.0%
7	34.6%	34.9%	28.8%	34.9%	38.3%	31.0%
8	51.0%	44.1%	46.4%	44.1%	51.0%	44.9%
All	37.8%	33.3%	51.0%	33.3%	49.1%	39.8%

### 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

Excel met this measure with an overall performance that was higher than expected to a meaningful degree. Four of the six grades tested exceeded the predicted level of performance by an Effect Size higher than 0.3. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades specifically, performance of economically disadvantaged students led to an Effect Size of 1.03 and 1.12 respectively, more than triple the threshold required to meet this measure.

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### 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	81.4	58	60.3	41.8	18.6	1.03
4	77.4	58	62.1	40.5	21.6	1.12
5	67.3	53	47.2	33.2	14.0	0.85
6	74.6	66	45.5	41.7	3.7	0.22
7	80.4	55	29.1	30.4	-1.3	-0.07
8	75.0	59	47.5	41.0	6.4	0.32
<b>All</b>	<b>76.1</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>0.57</b>

#### School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Higher than expected to a meaningful degree.

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the charter term, Excel has continued to improve upon proficiency of economically disadvantaged students going from a -0.09 overall Effect Size in 2016-17 to a 0.57 overall Effect Size in the 2018-19 school year. Overall, the Effect Size has increased by .66.

### English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2015-16	3-7	79.6	296	26.2	27.2	-0.09
2016-17	3-8	79.2	353	35.4	30.0	0.28
2017-18	3-8	76.1	349	48.7	38.3	0.57

#### Goal 1: Growth Measure<sup>3</sup>

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the 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

<sup>3</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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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.<sup>4</sup>

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel met this measure, surpassing the states mean growth percentile of 50%. Overall, Excel had a mean growth percentile of 59.6% and each grade level also surpassed the mean growth percentile by at least 1.5pp. This represents an increase of 2.5pp when comparing to the previous year's mean growth percentile.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	68	50.0
5	57.5	50.0
6	62	50.0
7	59	50.0
8	51.5	50.0
All	59.6	50.0

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the past three years, Excel has continued to consistently increase the mean growth percentile and met the measure for the past two school years. In the 2016-17 school year, the school saw strong acceleration in that growth fueled by several programmatic changes including adopting close reading with the support of Lavinia Group. Those programmatic changes let to continued improvement on this measure.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Target
4	61.6	58.8	68	50.0
5	51.5	44.2	57.5	50.0
6	50.8	59.6	62	50.0
7	58.2	66.1	59	50.0
8	-	56.6	51.5	50.0
All	42.3	57.1	59.6	50.0

### SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Excel achieved four ELA performance measures during the 2018-19 school year, increasing the number of measures met by one when compared to the previous school year. While Excel did not

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<sup>4</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

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meet the absolute measure of 75% of student scoring proficiently, it did improve upon the measure when compared to the beginning of the current charter term.

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 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.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2017-18 results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50. (Using 2017-18 results.)	Achieved

### ACTION PLAN

#### Curriculum

##### K-2:

Excel's early literacy curriculum focuses on comprehensive instruction. The K-2 literacy program focuses on developing phonological awareness, building content knowledge and vocabulary, and developing comprehension skills. Excel uses the CKLA program in grades K-2 as its core curriculum. CKLA has two program strands: Knowledge and Skills. CKLA's two strand program is research-based and provides extensive support for students as they become critical readers and writers.

According to CKLA, the **Knowledge** Strand emphasizes comprehension skill development in a language- and knowledge-rich context. The primary instructional activity is a read-aloud that exposes students to complex texts, related to a systematically ordered set of topics, or domains. The materials are designed to build knowledge in areas of history, science, literature, and geography. The lesson activities emphasize vocabulary acquisition, build comprehension skills through interactive discussions during and after reading, and use writing to extend and explore the texts and their content.<sup>1</sup> To complement this instruction, the **Skills** strand is a comprehensive, explicit, and systematic phonics program designed to build decoding, fluency, and writing/spelling skills.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the two CKLA strands, Excel also offers students Close Reading and Interactive Read Alouds to ensure students have the opportunity to read and analyze high-quality, complex texts that are both on and above grade level. Excel supplements the writing instruction offered inside of CKLA by using their companion program, Writing Studio. Writing Studio is highly

aligned with the scope and sequence inside of the Knowledge Strand and offers students continued support and practice in writing narrative, opinion, and informational texts.

3–8:

Our literacy program, for these essential periods of development, is methodologically designed and integrated to help our students become successful readers and life-long learners who are prepared to thrive in college-preparatory high school programs and beyond.

Specifically, Excel uses Expeditionary Learning (EL) as the primary resource for teaching literacy in grades 3–8. Expeditionary Learning includes both reading and writing instruction as well as explicitly imbedding the Speaking and Listening Standards. The curriculum is designed to address the three key components of the standards: (1) regular practice with complex text and its academic language, (2) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from both literary and informational text, and (3) building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction. Based on the latest research supporting the power of background knowledge, EL modules are designed around topics that help students build background knowledge. Modules also include a blend of fiction and non-fiction complex texts. In each module, students have the opportunity to dig deeply into a high-interest topic by analyzing complex, grade-level texts and then completing performance tasks and assessments aligned to the standards. In addition, we offer students four periods per week of Close Reading where they read short grade-level texts, dissect the main ideas and craft and structure moves in order to build independence as readers.

Special Populations of Students (ELL, Students with Disabilities):

Excel's Special Populations team worked to improve instruction and support for our special populations. In the coming school year, small group instruction (SGI) will be the key component of Excel's approach to supporting special populations. The primary resource for SGI in grades K–3 will continue to be skills double dose. This intervention provides data-based support for students struggling with decoding and comprehension, aligned to the core Skills curriculum. In 4–8, Leveled Literacy Intervention, (LLI) and Wilson are the primary intervention resources for decoding and comprehension for students who are significantly below grade level in reading. In addition, small group close reading groups will be created based on reading and interim data.

### **Approach to data-driven instruction**

In the 2018-19 school year, we implemented numerous data systems and structures to provide school leaders and teachers with actionable data to accelerate student learning. This year, we've developed a comprehensive data platform through the use of PowerBI providing school leaders earlier access to assessment data that can be analyzed and compared across grades, schools, terms, and years.

We use a set of common benchmarks and measures for student performance in ELA and math. In collaboration with the school's leadership, the network sets End of Year (EOY) measures tied to official assessments. They include:

- the mathematics and English language arts state exams,
- Fountas and Pinnell,
- Core Knowledge Skills assessments, and
- NYSESLAT

Aligned to the EOY measures, the network also sets cycle measures that identify intervals for improvement on internal assessments in order to be on track to meet EOY measures. Teachers use

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these measures to set classroom level goals and track progress toward them throughout the year. Progress toward benchmarks is tightly monitored, through weekly data tracking of student outputs aligned to each measure, and through teacher observations, feedback, and professional development aligned to a focused set of teacher inputs. Almost all network-driven professional development and resource creation is aligned to the benchmarks with student outputs and teacher inputs identified termly. Student outputs are defined as observable student behaviors that indicate progress toward achieving the cycle and EOY measures. Teacher inputs are defined as observable strategies and actions teachers can take that will lead to the student outputs.

### GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

#### Goal 2: Mathematics

Explore Excel Charter School students will meet grade level expectations in Math.

#### BACKGROUND

Excel's approach to math instruction prioritizes the three key elements of the standards: 1) Deep dive into few topics, 2) Coherence: linking topics and thinking across grades, and 3) Rigor: pursuing conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency, and application with equal intensity. Excel implements research-based curricular resources that best support this vision for mathematical instruction. In grades 3–8, Excel uses Achievement First's Math Curriculum, AF Navigator.

#### 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<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>5</sup>				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	56					56
4	59					59
5	56				2	58
6	58				2	60
7	68					68
8	53					53
All	350	0	0	0	4	354

## RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel students in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year did not meet this measure for Math. Excel missed this measure by 17.2pp. However, the school demonstrated significant growth in this area from 2017-18 to 2018-19. Excel's overall proficiency rate increased by approximately 10pp, jumping from 39.4% to 52.3%. The school's 6<sup>th</sup> graders who have been at Excel for 2+ years increased their proficiency by over 20pp from 31.4% to 54.8%.

### 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	64.3%	56	75.0%	44
4	69.5%	59	71.2%	52
5	51.8%	56	61.0%	41
6	46.6%	58	54.8%	42
7	44.1%	68	45.0%	60
8	41.5%	53	44.0%	50
All	52.9%	350	57.8%	289

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

While Excel did not meet this measure in all grades, Excel students enrolled in at least their second year outperformed all students at Excel by 4.9pp and outperformed all students in all grades. Over the charter period, students enrolled in at least their second year have increased overall performance in math by 22.9pp.

<sup>5</sup> Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.

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## 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	53.1%	49	84.6%	52	75.0%	44
4	67.4%	46	65.2%	46	71.2%	52
5	34.8%	46	58.3%	36	61.0%	41
6	17.0%	47	31.4%	51	54.8%	42
7	7.8%	51	33.3%	51	45.0%	60
8	37.5%	48	21.4%	56	44.0%	50
All	35.9%	287	47.9%	292	57.8%	289

### 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

Our performance index for the 18-19 academic year in Math was 140.1, surpassing the measure set by the state by 33.1 points.

#### 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
	26.0%	21.1%	26.6%	26.3%

$$\begin{array}{rclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 21.1 & + & 26.6 & + & 26.3 & = & 74.0 \\
 & & & & 26.6 & + & 26.3 & = & 52.9 \\
 & & & & & + & (.5)*26.3 & = & 13.2 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & \mathbf{140.1}
 \end{array}$$

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### 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.<sup>6</sup>

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel met this measure for the 2018-19 school year. Students in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year at Excel Charter School outperformed all district 17 students on the 2018-19 math exam by over 23pp. In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Excel students did exceptionally well on this measure, outperforming district students by over 31pp.

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 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	75.0%	44	50.1%	1041
4	71.2%	52	39.4%	1081
5	61.0%	41	33.0%	1057
6	54.8%	42	27.3%	1053
7	45.0%	60	27.3%	1063
8	44.0%	50	26.3%	955
All	57.8%	289	34.0%	6250

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Students enrolled in at least their second year at Excel outperformed their district overall in math by nearly 20pp. Additionally, all grades with the exception of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade saw growth in math from 2017-18 of at least 3 percentage points, most by significantly more. From 2017-18 to 2018-19 Excel continued to pull ahead of the district, moving from 17.6% ahead to 23.8% ahead.

<sup>6</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

# 2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

## 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	53.1%	37.5%	84.6%	43.7%	75.0%	50.1%
4	67.4%	26.9%	65.2%	33.8%	71.2%	39.4%
5	34.8%	25.3%	58.3%	27.3%	61.0%	33.0%
6	17.0%	20.5%	31.4%	23.7%	54.8%	27.3%
7	7.8%	22.6%	33.3%	24.5%	45.0%	27.3%
8	37.5%	15.5%	21.4%	28.8%	44.0%	26.3%
All	35.9%	25.0%	47.9%	30.3%	57.8%	34.0%

### 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

Excel met this measure, outperforming the 0.3 Effect Size threshold with an effect size of 0.62. The school's economically disadvantaged students performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree by 12.8pp. In addition, the school did improve upon this measure by 0.4 when compared to the previous academic year.

## 2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

### 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	81.4	59	86.4	44.7	41.8	2.02
4	77.4	58	69.0	39.9	29.1	1.28
5	67.3	52	50.0	39.7	10.3	0.58
6	74.6	66	28.8	36.1	-7.3	-0.40
7	80.4	54	35.2	29.2	6.0	0.27
8	75.0	59	22.0	23.7	-1.7	-0.07
<b>All</b>	<b>76.1</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>0.62</b>
<b>School's Overall Comparative Performance:</b>						
Higher than expected to a meaningful degree.						

### Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2015-16	3-7	79.6	295	36.3	29.2	0.36
2016-17	3-8	79.2	350	32.4	28.4	0.22
2017-18	3-8	76.1	348	48.3	35.5	0.62

### Goal 2: Growth Measure<sup>7</sup>

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the 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.

<sup>7</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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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.<sup>8</sup>

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Students at Excel charter school met the mean growth percentile measure with a mean growth percentile of 57.5, exceeding the threshold by 7.5pp. Students in all grades, with the exception of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, exceeded the measure. Student in grades 4 and 7 did particularly well, exceeding the measure by at least 20pp. These data demonstrate that Excel students continue to grow in proficiency at a faster rate than students who had similar scores in the previous school year.

#### 2017-18 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	72	50.0
5	41	50.0
6	42	50.0
7	71.5	50.0
8	61	50.0
All	57.5	50.0

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the past three years, students at Excel have consistently exceeded the mean growth percentile of 50.0, demonstrating over the charter term that students at Excel grew academically at a rate faster than other students with similar scores on the NYS math assessment. In the 2017-18 school year, that growth was particularly strong when compared to the previous 2 years. These data demonstrate that the changes to Excel's academic program are yielding demonstrable results.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Target
4	61.7	57.4	72	50.0
5	27.5	29.4	41	50.0
6	46.5	43.2	42	50.0
7	71.7	64.3	71.5	50.0
8	-	60.3	61	50.0
All	51.8	51.0	57.5	50.0

### SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

In the 2018-19 school year, Excel met 4 of its 5 accountability measures. While the school did not meet the absolute measure of 75 percent of students in their second year demonstrating proficiency on the NYS math exam, the students at Excel continued to improve their performance when compared to the previous school year, improving proficiency by 9.9pp. Although the school

<sup>8</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's business portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

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did not meet all of its measures, it improved upon all math measures when compared to the 2017-18 school year, demonstrating the effectiveness of the math academic program being implemented by the school.

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 PI on the state's mathematics exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2017-18 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 target of 50. (Using the 2017-18 results.)	Achieved

### ACTION PLAN

With the adoption of the AF Navigator curriculum, Excel elevated the level of rigor in math instruction for its students. Below, we outline the additional steps Excel took by grade band to continue to improve the quality of math instruction this past year:

- Grades K–2:** This past school year (2018-19) Excel implemented Achievement First's Math Stories curriculum in grades K–2. Math Stories is a curriculum that uses strategically designed routines, to help students develop a deep number sense and flexibility with numbers in order to support complex problem solving. Math Stories also provides students with an access point into basic math operations by using real life topics familiar to students. Overall, the implementation of Math Stories has shown promising signs, with K–2 Excel students improving proficiency in accuracy and representation by 38 and 42pp respectively by the end of the 2018-19 school year.
- Grades 3–8:** In partnership with Achievement First, Excel's 3–8 grade math teachers participated in robust training for AF Navigator, designed to deepen their understanding of the math content and the critical-thinking work students must engage with to show mastery of the standards. In addition, Excel started to offer additional math intervention blocks to allow teachers to further assess student needs and employ timely and effective interventions in the 2018-19 school year. Interventions ensure students struggling with grade-level standards continue to get exposure to grade-level content while still remediating lagging skills. Finally, another change Excel made last year to effectively assess student progress with the AF Navigator curriculum, was to adopt the AF Navigator interim exams in grades 3–8. These exams are externally validated and provide benchmark data for how students at Excel, and across the Explore Schools network, did in comparison to other schools.

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- **Special Populations:** Excel’s Special Populations team worked to revamp the approach to small group instruction (SGI) in math during the 2018-19 school year. The goal was to ensure small group instruction and SETSS were aligned to the current classroom curriculum. To support in remediating any lagging skills, Excel will be using Goal Book which uses vertical progression, allowing teachers to scaffold to reach the priority skills while also providing additional practice for students.

### Approach to data-driven instruction

In the 2018-19 school year, we implemented numerous data systems and structures to provide school leaders and teachers with actionable data to accelerate student learning. This year, we’ve developed a comprehensive data platform through the use of PowerBI providing school leaders earlier access to assessment data that can be analyzed and compared across grades, schools, terms, and years. We use a set of common benchmarks and measures for student performance in ELA and math. In collaboration with the school’s leadership, the network sets End of Year (EOY) measures tied to official assessments. They include:

- the mathematics and English language arts state exams,
- Fountas and Pinnell,
- Core Knowledge Skills assessments, and
- NYSESLAT

Aligned to the EOY measures, the network also sets cycle measures that identify intervals for improvement on internal assessments in order to be on track to meet EOY measures. Teachers use these measures to set classroom level goals and track progress toward them throughout the year. Progress toward benchmarks is tightly monitored, through weekly data tracking of student outputs aligned to each measure, and through teacher observations, feedback, and professional development aligned to a focused set of teacher inputs. Almost all network-driven professional development and resource creation is aligned to the benchmarks with student outputs and teacher inputs identified termly. Student outputs are defined as observable student behaviors that indicate progress toward achieving the cycle and EOY measures. Teacher inputs are defined as observable strategies and actions teachers can take that will lead to the student outputs.

## GOAL 3: SCIENCE

### Goal 3: Science

Explore Excel Charter School students will meet grade level expectations in Science.

### BACKGROUND

In 2018-19, Excel Charter School employed a full-time K–4 science teacher, and a full-time 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher. Excel’s science curriculum is designed to promote inquiry, problem solving skills, and exposure to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and skills. Science teachers develop their own lessons based on best practices in the field, and they partner with school leaders to ensure the lessons are rigorous and aligned to NYS standards. In the 2018-19 school year, the school continued to work with Dr. Purvis, a veteran science instructor and consultant recommended to us by Success Academy to work with our network’s science teachers to examine their lesson plans and curriculum to ensure alignment

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with the NY Science Standards. Dr. Purvis has decades of experience working in science education, and he worked with Success Academy to design their science curriculum. He provides group professional development to all network science teachers, and he also provides one-on-one coaching and lesson plan feedback to individual teachers.

### 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 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 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

Excel did not meet this measure. Excel 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year achieved 65.7% proficiency falling short of the measure by 9.3pp. While not meeting the measure, Excel did improve upon its performance on the New York State science exam when compared to the previous academic year by over 8.8pp. In particular, students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade improved significantly, raising proficiency on the exam by 12.9pp when compared to 2018.

#### 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 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	76.9%	52
8	54.0%	50
All	65.7%	102

#### 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	84.8%	46	76.1%	46	76.9%	52
8	17.0%	47	41.1%	56	54.0%	50
All	50.5%	93	56.9%	102	65.7%	102

## 2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

### 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

At this time, we have not received access to district science performance data and therefore cannot determine comparative performance.

#### 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 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students <sup>9</sup>	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	76.9%	52	--	--
8	54.0%	50	--	--
All	65.7%	102	--	--

#### 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	84.8%	--	76.1%	--	76.9%	--
8	17.0%	--	41.1%	--	54.0%	--
All	50.5%	--	56.9%	--	65.7%	--

<sup>9</sup> This table uses the prior year's results as 2018-19 district science scores are not yet available.

## SUMMARY OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

Excel did not meet the absolute measure for 75% of students in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency. However, the school did increase overall proficiency by over 8pp when compared with the previous year's scores. At this time, we have not received access to district science performance data and therefore cannot determine comparative performance.

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 Achieve
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.	N/A

## ACTION PLAN

Excel is continuing to build a robust, high-quality science program that gives students a 21<sup>st</sup> century science experience. In the 2019-20 school year, Excel Upper will be introducing Amplify Science. The new high-quality curriculum blends hands on investigations with literacy rich tools to support students. Also rated highly by ED Reports, we expect that Amplify Science will help support Excel's teachers in providing high-quality instruction in science. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at Excel will have the opportunity to prepare and take the Living Environment Regents. Excel's 4<sup>th</sup> grade students will continue to partner with Dr. Purvis through the school year. We will continue to host network-wide professional development sessions for science teachers during our staff in-service days.

## GOAL 4: ESSA

### Goal 4: ESSA

Explore Excel will make adequate yearly progress.

#### 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.

# 2018-19 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

## RESULTS AND EVALUATION

We have met this measure; Excel Charter School has been in good standing with ESSA since the 2017-18 school year.

Accountability Status by Year

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