



Buffalo United Charter School

**2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 15, 2020

By: Buffalo United Charter School

Board of Trustees

325 Manhattan Avenue

Buffalo, NY 14214

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2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

National Heritage Academies (NHA) prepared this 2019-20 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Andrew Freedman	Office: President Committees: Complaint, Personnel, Planning Task Force, Management Contract Review, Education
Kim DeJesus	Office: Vice President Committees: Complaint, Personnel, Planning Task Force, Scholarship, Education
Michael Ford	Office: Secretary Committees: Education
Kathy Wood	Office: Trustee Committees: Personnel, Education
Robert Lowery	Office: Treasurer Committees: Wrap-Around Services, Management Contract Review, Education

Teresa Gerchman has served as the principal since May 2019.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Buffalo United Charter School (Buffalo United or BUCS) opened in the fall of 2003. We started by serving 234 students in grades K-4. We currently serve 634 students in grades K-8, of whom 94 percent qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.

Our mission is to offer families and students a public charter school that focuses on high academic achievement and instills a sense of family, community, and leadership in all our students.

Since 2003 our mission has never wavered, and we remain faithful to our key design elements:

- *Academic Excellence.* We believe a high-quality K-8 education sets the critical foundation for a student's success in high school, college, and beyond. Achievement may look different for each individual student, but our goal is to prepare every child for college. In order to fulfill this goal, we know that academic improvement is needed. In 2019-20, BUCS has been implementing many initiatives to create needed school improvement.
- *Strong Parent Relationships.* We are committed to fostering strong partnerships with parents. Parents are encouraged to make a voluntary commitment at the beginning of each school year to a parent-student-teacher compact that affirms support for Buffalo United's mission, vision, policies, and activities. We actively engage parents in their children's learning and have an "open door" policy where parents are welcome in the school at any time.
- *Accountability.* Buffalo United staff, students, and parents are responsible for their actions and results. We understand that it is essential for all three groups to work together to ensure students' educational success.
 - *Staff:* Our staff understands that student learning is an adult responsibility, and leadership and staff are committed to creating a scholarly environment by setting high expectations for instruction to ensure that our students are college-ready. Multiple data points are collected and analyzed to monitor the quality of the educational program at the school level, grade level, and student level. This enables us, to hold teachers accountable for student learning results.
 - *Students:* A critical component of the parent-teacher-child partnership is the role the child plays in his or her academic success. From kindergarten through the 8th grade, Buffalo United students are taught to act responsibly and take accountability for their actions, both positive and negative.
 - *Parents:* We encourage parents and families to be involved in their child's education because we recognize that parental involvement is a key indicator of student success. We work purposely to involve parents in their child's education because it is crucial to maintaining the school culture we desire.

SCHOOL-WIDE IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

In subsequent sections of this accountability plan progress report, there are, under each specific subject area, action plans that detail efforts to help BUCS improve its performance. These actions are part of a larger school-wide improvement effort that BUCS and NHA have begun with the active collaboration of the Board. As outlined in detail in BUCS' recent renewal application, significant improvements were made at the school in 2019-20. Many of these improvements will continue in 2020-21, both because data from spring i-Ready indicate these efforts are proving to be effective and because our observations suggest that ongoing changes will generate continuing improvement. BUCS' improvement efforts continue to focus on increasing achievement in English language arts (ELA), math and science. This goal is being supported in a number of ways. Some examples include: implementation of a new curriculum tailored for New York State standards; professional development to support the successful implementation of the new curricular tools; a renewed focus on data analysis; supports for struggling students; new efforts to support teachers, school leaders, students, and parents in ongoing changes to instruction necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic; and various new professional supports for staff and leadership, including new professional development (PD) initiatives created specifically to address needs created by pandemic-driven remote learning.

Here are highlights of these school-wide improvement efforts:

School leadership support: In 2019-20, NHA intensified its support for school leaders and their school improvement efforts by assigning three experienced professionals to complementary coaching and mentoring roles in the schools. Each of these professionals provided distinctive kinds of support to the school's educators:

- *Irwin Kurz*, in his role as director of school quality dedicated entirely to BUCS, worked with the entire administrative team on structures and systems and provided counsel and coaching on how to optimize them. For example, he helped school leaders set up classroom observations and protocols. In these efforts, he brought to bear his experience as a school leader in both charter schools and conventional district schools. Mr. Kurz will continue in his director of school quality role in the 2020-21 school year.
- *Dr. Rick Hangge*, an NHA senior curriculum specialist, worked full-time at BUCS in 2019-20, providing coaching, mentoring, and modeling of professional practices directly to deans and teachers. Dr. Hangge will continue to support BUCS in the 2020-21 school year.
- *Janelle Magyar*, an NHA leadership development specialist, worked on leadership development with Ms. Gerchman and the deans, helping them understand and take full advantage of NHA's resources and practices. In particular, she helped school leaders implement a defined data-driven coaching cycle (introduced by Mr. Kurz) to bring

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consistency across the building. The coaching cycle consists of a pre-conference, classroom observation, and a post-observation conference to review data and plan next steps based on that data.

Data-driven instruction: BUCS has improved its use of assessment data in evaluating student and educator performance, supporting student needs, driving professional development for leaders and teachers, and helping teachers adjust instruction in real time.

Curriculum and tools: For 2020-21, the school plans to transition to curricular tools that align well with New York's NextGen standards. BUCS has identified opportunities to improve material alignment and continues to promptly make refinements as needed.

Professional development: BUCS and NHA's C&I team have worked on a plan for the ongoing coaching and PD that C&I will offer to support instructional execution at BUCS. The plan's priorities are helping the school implement and sustain its systems, scheduling and time structures, management structures, instructional structures, and its new curriculum, especially in ELA and math.

PD will be offered during summer and through ongoing initiatives throughout the school year through both in-person visits and video-based remote interactions. This support will be provided in a continuous cycle of four elements:

- *Develop teachers and deans:* This support will focus on structures, systems, unit "unpacking," lesson preparation, and teaching.
- *Enact and observe:* Teachers will implement what they learn in their classrooms. Deans and C&I specialists will observe.
- *Plan coaching conversations:* Deans and C&I professionals will plan coaching conversations around key levers and bite-sized action steps. Coaching conversations will include emphasis on an identified teacher strength followed by an identified area of improvement opportunity.
- *Debrief and coach:* Each Dean and participating C&I consultant(s) will debrief on their observations and renew the coaching cycle around specific action steps for the teacher.

Five different C&I specialists (Dr. Rick Hangge, Dr. Gloria Hall, Keisha Wade, Alex Kuhlman Cook, and Lyn Marullo) have been designated to provide this support in ELA, ELA intervention, math, and school culture.

Assessments: In 2019-20, BUCS teachers used aligned NHA-provided assessments and created other formative assessments and homework aligned to the state's standards and expectations of rigor as

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needed. Teacher-created formative assessments and homework for math and ELA reflected the breadth and depth of state test questions. Beginning in 2020-21, the provided curriculum materials will include more assessments that meet expectations of alignment. NHA and BUCS also worked together to redesign the school's assessments and change how the school uses the data to drive school improvement.

Supports for struggling students: As described in the renewal application, in the 2020-21 school year, BUCS plans to change a response-to-intervention (RTI) approach to an intervention model based on a multi-tier system of supports (MTSS). This model is rooted in RTI concept, but it is more proactive, emphasizes early intervention, addresses both behavioral and academic concerns, and worked to overcome systemic barriers that both students and teachers face in pursuit of learning. BUCS will screen *all* students under this system, and MTSS will improve remediation and intervention both in traditional in-school learning and in remote learning. BUCS will use this approach to support students who needed help both before the school was forced to adopt remote learning along with students whose needs became apparent during remote learning.

Behavior management: In 2019-20, BUCS adopted a new approach to behavior management rooted in restorative discipline, a proactive and preventive approach to behavior management. BUCS will continue this approach in 2020-21. This approach reduces emphasis on punishment; instead, it prioritizes strengthening relationships for individuals at the center of behavior issues. In-school professional development sessions helped us launch this effort. A core value of this initiative is strengthening the connection between our responses to disciplinary issues and students' social and emotional well-being.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year														
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2015-16	74	78	81	101	79	78	74	76	77	-	-	-	-	718
2016-17	67	73	79	82	98	85	70	78	70	-	-	-	-	702
2017-18	59	68	76	81	96	76	64	75	65	-	-	-	-	660
2018-19	62	56	73	79	81	81	80	62	72	-	-	-	-	646
2019-20	65	64	58	80	78	76	83	76	54	-	-	-	-	634

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Here is a summary of changes to the Elementary ELA Goal due to the Covid-19 school closure:

- Schools will be unable to report state test proficiency rates, PIs, district comparisons, effect sizes, or mean growth scores.
- However, in the absence of state test results, schools should report relevant results from internally developed assessments, national norm-referenced tests, and/or any other evaluation method below. When possible, schools report tabular data aligned to the narrative.

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will be proficient in English Language Arts.

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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Growth Measure: 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.

BACKGROUND

In mid-March 2020, due to the COVID pandemic, BUCS began a transition to remote learning that started almost overnight and that forced NHA and BUCS to create a whole new setting for instruction. BUCS' goal for remote learning was reinforcing and introducing standards and skills that

are critical to academic success and that can be delivered effectively via remote learning in structured, guided, and accessible learning opportunities for all students.

Even as BUCS' doors were closed and innovations in teaching and learning took root, efforts to improve academic outcomes lost no momentum. We continued to focus on our improvement efforts and evaluated ways to effectively provide instruction to students remotely.

Our remote learning plan included opportunities to connect with students and families, provide physical and digital resources, and create and implement essential new professional development programs for staff. To connect with families, teachers conducted Google LIVE meetings, offered daily office hours, and made weekly contact via phone or email with students and families. Students were physically mailed printed academic packets, and a weekly learning plan was shared by teachers via Class Dojo or Google Classroom that included live links for instructional videos and instructional programs to support learning. Lesson videos were also provided for students and families to provide deeper understanding. Staff was provided access to a Home Learning site which houses resources to support remote learning as well as professional development on recording and posting a video and creating and leading a live video. In addition, deans held weekly one-on-one meetings with their teachers to review expectations, ensure student participation, review weekly learning plans, and provide feedback.

Although state assessment data is not available for the 2019-20 school year, internal assessment data show signs of academic improvement.

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

Due to the COVID-19 school closure, the New York State Testing Program English language arts (ELA) assessment was not administered to students. In absence of the state test, Buffalo United's predicted proficiency rate based on National Heritage Academies' (NHA) model is reported to measure progress toward meeting the goal.

Internal Predicted Proficiency: Each year, NHA creates a state test proficiency model to predict the probability of a student being proficient in ELA and/or math. The model uses the prior year state test results, if available, and fall NWEA results. At the student level, this model has an 86% accuracy rate in ELA and an 89% accuracy rate in math. Because the model has a high accuracy rate and incorporates multiple sources of data, Buffalo United believes this serves as a valuable tool for

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predicting proficiency. The table below summarizes total number of students included in the prediction, by grade level.

Grade	Total Included in Prediction (All Students)	Total Included in Prediction (2+ Yr Students)	Total Enrolled
3	38	32	80
4	64	38	78
5	61	39	76
6	65	38	83
7	58	38	76
8	48	41	54
All	334	226	447

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Internal Predicted Proficiency: Overall, Buffalo United’s proficiency rate was predicted to increase by five percentage points in ELA. For students enrolled in at least their second year, the proficiency rate was predicted to increase by six percentage points in ELA. While progress was made toward this goal in 2019-20, Buffalo United’s predicted proficiency rate is less than 75 percent, and therefore, the school was not expected to meet this goal in 2019-20.

2019-20 Predicted Proficiency of All Students			
Subject	2018-19 Proficiency	2019-20 Predicted Proficiency	(+/-)
ELA	24%	29%	+5%

2019-20 Predicted Proficiency of 2+ Year Students			
Subject	2018-19 Proficiency	2019-20 Predicted Proficiency	(+/-)
ELA	24%	30%	+6%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Since 2016-17, Buffalo United has remained stable in the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year achieving proficiency.

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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	29.3%	65	28%	58	44%	52
4	31.1%	74	30%	57	23%	56
5	24.6%	57	29%	65	9%	55
6	8.1%	49	31%	52	27%	44
7	17.5%	63	30%	40	24%	45
8	26.1%	46	26%	58	15%	48
All	23.4%	354	29%	330	24%	300

Goal 2: 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 the absence of the state test, the i-Ready diagnostic was used to measure progress toward meeting the Performance Index (PI) goal.

The i-Ready Diagnostic was administered to all students at Buffalo United in the 2019-20 fall, winter, and spring to measure student achievement and growth. i-Ready provides achievement data, and growth measures that are differentiated based on each student’s grade and initial placement on the i-Ready Diagnostic. At each diagnostic, students are placed into one of three tiers: two or more grade levels below, one grade level below, or on or above grade level.

i-Ready Percent of Students Assessed at each Reading Diagnostic			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
K	97%	95%	82%
1	100%	98%	85%
2	95%	95%	91%
3	100%	99%	97%
4	100%	94%	85%
5	100%	98%	92%

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6	100%	87%	91%
7	100%	100%	85%
8	100%	92%	84%
All	99%	95%	88%

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In the fall of 2019-20, 3% of students were on or above grade level in reading. In the spring of 2019-20, the percent of students on or above grade level increased by 35 percentage points in reading. From fall to spring, 72% of students at Buffalo United improved tier placement in reading. Buffalo United believes the improvement in tier placement by students, as shown by i-Ready, would have been reflected on the state test in 2019-20 had it been administered.

2019-20 i-Ready Reading Student Placement

Reading	Fall			Winter			Spring		
	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level
K	-	100%	-	-	91%	9%	-	23%	77%
1	20%	78%	2%	13%	85%	2%	2%	30%	68%
2	33%	65%	2%	10%	87%	4%	-	45%	55%
3	42%	52%	6%	6%	77%	17%	16%	33%	51%
4	45%	46%	8%	3%	72%	25%	23%	53%	23%
5	85%	15%	-	5%	53%	42%	51%	38%	11%
6	73%	26%	1%	1%	64%	35%	52%	27%	22%
7	62%	34%	4%	10%	49%	41%	29%	41%	29%
8	73%	24%	2%	15%	56%	29%	51%	34%	15%
All	49%	48%	3%	36%	55%	10%	26%	36%	38%

Spring i-Ready Results – % Improved Reading Tier Placement	
Grade	Reading
K	86%
1	89%
2	88%
3	72%

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4	63%
5	66%
6	52%
7	69%
8	73%
All	72%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In the past four years, Buffalo United has not met absolute measure two in ELA. In 2018-19, Buffalo United’s Performance Index (PI) on the New York State ELA exam was 87.7, falling below the state’s Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) of 105 by 17.3 points. Therefore, this goal was not met.

Year	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level on NYS ELA Exam				PI	State MIP/AMO	School MIP
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4			
2015-16	36%	42%	19%	3%	86	104	NA
2016-17	39%	40%	16%	5%	82	111	84.2
2017-18	36%	37%	21%	6%	94	101	NA
2018-19	39%	37%	19%	5%	88	105	93.4

Goal 3: 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

Buffalo United’s predicted proficiency rate based on an NHA model and Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) alignment study is reported to measure progress toward meeting the comparative measure goal. Buffalo United’s predicted 2019-20 proficiency rate can be compared to the local district’s proficiency rate of all students in 2018-19 to determine if the school was on track to meet this goal.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The percent of students enrolled at Buffalo United in at least their second year predicted to achieve

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proficiency on the NYS ELA exam exceeded the local district’s 2018-19 ELA proficiency rate. Therefore, Buffalo United was on track to meet this goal in 2019-20.

2019-20 BUCS Predicted ELA Proficiency of 2+ Year Students	2018-19 Local District ELA Proficiency
30%	25%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

From 2016-17 to 2017-18 the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the New York State ELA exam has exceeded the local district. In 2018-19, Buffalo United fell short of this goal by one percentage point.

Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Achieving Proficiency on the NYS ELA Exam Compared to the Local District								
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
Subject	BUCS	District	BUCS	District	BUCS	District	BUCS	District
ELA	22%	21%	23%	18%	29%	23%	24%	25%

Goal 4: 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 (CSI) conducts a comparative performance analysis, which compares the school’s performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. CSI uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. CSI 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.

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Due to the lack of 2019-20 assessment data, 2018-19 results will be reported, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In 2018-19, Buffalo United’s effect size on the state ELA exam was -0.22, which is lower than expected. Therefore, this goal was not met. The strongest performance was shown in third grade, where the goal was met.

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Mean Scale Score		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	93.0%	66	597.0	594.1	2.9	0.34
4	96.1%	66	590.0	591.9	-1.9	-0.23
5	93.8%	72	586.0	592.6	-6.6	-0.80
6	90.7%	62	590.0	590.8	-0.8	-0.09
7	94.4%	55	592.0	592.9	-0.9	-0.10
8	97.1%	55	590.0	593.5	-3.5	-0.39
All	94.1%	376	590.0	592.6	-1.9	-0.22

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Lower than expected</i>

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the past three years, Buffalo United has not met this measure in ELA.

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2015-16	3-8	94.0	442	22.2%	22.0%	0.02
2016-17	3-8	95.0	428	21.2%	23.4%	-0.17
2017-18	3-8	92.5	393	27%	31.3%	-0.24
2018-19	3-8	94.1	376	590.0	592.6	-0.22

Goal 1: Growth Measure¹

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

2018-19 NYSTP Mean Student Growth Percentile: 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 2018-19 and also have a state exam score from 2017-18, including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2017-18 score are ranked by their 2018-19 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. To perform above the target for this measure, a school 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 was not available in the prior year's report and will be reported here. This report contains 2018-19 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.²

2019-20 i-Ready Growth: To measure progress toward the goal in 2019-20, i-Ready Diagnostic results were reviewed. The i-Ready Diagnostic was administered to all students at Buffalo United in the 2019-20 fall, winter, and spring to measure achievement and growth. After students complete their first Diagnostic in the fall, i-Ready generates a Typical Growth measure and Stretch Growth measure for each student. Typical Growth is the average growth of students at each grade and placement level (50th percentile of growth). Stretch Growth is the growth recommended to put below-grade students on a path to proficiency and on-grade students on a path to advanced proficiency levels (55th to 80th percentile of growth).

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

2018-19 NYSTP Mean Student Growth Percentile: In 2018-19, the mean student growth percentile on the ELA state exam was 45.0. This was less than the target of 50.0, therefore the goal was not met. The goal was met in fourth grade.

¹ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

² Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

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Grade	NYS ELA Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	51.0	50.0
5	38.3	50.0
6	49.6	50.0
7	48.2	50.0
8	37.0	50.0
All	45.0	50.0

2019-20 i-Ready Growth: In 2019-20, as measured by i-Ready, the median progress towards Typical Growth was 216% in reading, which means, on average, students significantly exceeded their typical growth goal. Seventy-one percent of students met their typical growth goal in reading. With this growth, Buffalo United believes the school was on track to meet the growth goal in 2019-20.

For Stretch Growth, which is even more rigorous, more than half of students at Buffalo United achieved growth in reading to be on the path to proficiency and/or advanced performance levels, or growth above the 55th percentile. Fifty-three percent of students met their stretch growth goal in reading. This data suggests Buffalo United would have met or exceeded this goal in 2019-20.

2019-20 Fall-Spring i-Ready ELA Results				
	Typical Growth		Stretch Growth	
Grade	% Met Typical Growth	% Progress (Median)	% Met Stretch Growth	% Progress (Median)
K	78%	311%	74%	222%
1	87%	265%	77%	183%
2	82%	220%	74%	145%
3	71%	197%	52%	114%
4	63%	179%	50%	98%
5	64%	200%	44%	89%
6	55%	105%	30%	39%
7	79%	268%	45%	91%
8	71%	217%	37%	74%
All	71%	216%	53%	NA

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In 2017-18, Buffalo United’s mean student growth percentile in ELA was above the target of 50.0.

Grade	NYS ELA Mean Growth Percentile				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Target
4	42.0	66.0	46.1	51.0	50.0
5	47.5	76.0	50.7	38.3	50.0
6	54.0	49.5	62.8	49.6	50.0
7	51.5	71.5	54.5	48.2	50.0
8	53.0	68.5	49.0	37.0	50.0
All	49.5	66.5	52.4	45.0	50.0

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

As noted throughout this document, state assessments were not administered, and alternate assessments were used to estimate progress towards goals. In 2019-20, Buffalo United was on track to meet two of the five measures listed below, and significant progress was made in performance level movement and risk-adjusted proficiency. After falling one percentage short of meeting the comparative goal in 2018-19, Buffalo United’s predicted percentage of students that would achieve proficiency on the NYS ELA exam was expected to exceed the local district proficiency rate this year. In addition, i-Ready data suggests the school would have met or exceeded its Growth Goal.

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 English Language Arts examination for grades 3-8.	Not Expected to 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.	On Track to Meet
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.	On Track to Meet
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 2018-19 results.)	Not Met in 2018-19

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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 2018-19 results.)	Not Met in 2018-19
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ACTION PLAN

As previously mentioned, BUCS has implemented a significant number of improvements in the 2019-20 school year that will continue in the 2020-21 school year. Earlier in this document, and again in the renewal application, examples of new efforts that BUCS will undertake in 2020-21 are provided, so the same level of detail will not be provided here.

One of the biggest improvement efforts that will begin in 2020-21 is BUCS' implementation of its new curricular plan and tools. The plan and tools were developed by professionals on NHA's Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) team and reviewed in detail with school leaders before being finalized.

BUCS' ELA curriculum will be an NHA-developed balanced literacy approach that relies on reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, and writing (grades K-5) and writing and literature seminar (grades 6-8). This curriculum is aligned to state standards, reflects Next Generation Learning Standards, and incorporates evidence-based instructional strategies to ensure high-quality literacy instruction and student learning in all classrooms. Professional development will be provided to staff to ensure the program's successful implementation.

As part of its ongoing improvement effort, NHA and BUCS worked to redesign the school's assessments and how the school uses the data from these assessments to drive school improvement. An extensive description of our updated assessment strategy was included in BUCS renewal application. A few examples of these assessments are also mentioned below.

In 2019-20, BUCS set specific literacy goals that were targeted towards improving student achievement and accelerating student growth. In 2020-21, BUCS will continue to set literacy goals to help achieve the ELA goals outlined in the school's Accountability Plan. Specific goals will also continue to beset for students in the school's intervention program. As outlined in BUCS' revised 2018-19 Accountability Plan Progress Report (included with the school's renewal application), the initiatives below will continue as the school works to achieve its ELA goals. Below are details on the initiatives the school has implemented to reach these goals.

- *Aimsweb* will be used to identify struggling students in grades K-3 who will then receive additional interventions. We will also use this tool to measure the progress of students who are in the bottom quartile. The program will support school efforts in screening, progress monitoring, and data management.

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- *Corrective Reading* and *Reading Mastery* will be utilized as an intervention tool to help students below grade level in all grades become more skillful at decoding, comprehending, and thinking while improving their background knowledge. *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading* use direct instruction to help students master vital decoding and comprehension skills.
- *R.A.D.D.* is a writing acronym that stands for *Restate, Answer, Detail, and Detail*. This acronym will be used school-wide to help students write proper short responses to assessment questions in ELA, science, and social studies. Teachers will use ELA Reading Responses in homework assignments with question stems that align to the appropriate common core standard.
- Achieve3000® has been implemented. This program is a cloud-based solution that delivers daily differentiated instruction for nonfiction reading and writing. The instruction is precisely tailored to each student's Lexile® reading level.
- i-Ready will be utilized in all grades as a diagnostic tool. The diagnostic tool pinpoints students' strengths and knowledge gaps at the sub-skill level. i-Ready Instruction delivers personalized learning paths for each student. i-Ready data will be used to group students for workshop.
- Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, teachers will conduct data meetings with students, so they understand progress they are making towards their achievement goal. Teachers will be trained on how to conduct these meetings. A parent meeting will also be conducted so parents understand their students' reading goal and how they can support their student in reaching that goal.
- Students will have a personal data binder/folder to track their progress towards mastering each standard being taught.
- As noted briefly above, BUCS educators are receiving daily support from Dr. Rick Hangge, a senior curriculum specialist in ELA.
- Teacher lesson plans are reviewed to ensure that lesson plans reflect New York State learning standards, as well as the appropriate scope and sequence. These plans will identify the resource to be used to teach each standard.
- Weekly skill quizzes are given to students. Data from these weekly quizzes are used to determine skills that need to be retaught and strategies to reteach this skill. In addition, teachers give exit tickets to students after each class that reflect the rigor of New York State assessments and mastery of standards.
- Twice-monthly staff professional development sessions are planned to improve teachers' skills in the areas of rigor, differentiation, checks for understanding (CFU), engagement strategies, standards, and data review.
- BUCS has added additional paid professional development sessions for teachers on Saturdays and after-school to address specific instructional needs that are noted during

classroom observations.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS

Here is a summary of changes to the Elementary Mathematics Goal due to the Covid-19 school closure:

- Schools will be unable to report state test proficiency rates, PIs, district comparisons, effect sizes, or mean growth scores.
- However, in the absence of state test results, schools should report results from internally developed assessments, national norm-referenced tests, and/or any other evaluation method below. When possible, schools report tabular data aligned to the narrative.

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will be proficient in mathematics.

1. Absolute Measure: Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics examination for grades 3-8.
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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Growth Measure: 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.

BACKGROUND

In mid-March 2020, due to the COVID pandemic, BUCS began a transition to remote learning that started almost overnight and that forced NHA and BUCS to create a whole new setting for instruction. BUCS' goal for remote learning was reinforcing and introducing standards and skills that

are critical to academic success and that can be delivered effectively via remote learning in structured, guided, and accessible learning opportunities for all students.

Even as BUCS' doors were closed and innovations in teaching and learning took root, efforts to improve academic outcomes lost no momentum. We continued to focus on our improvement efforts and evaluated ways to effectively provide instruction to students remotely.

Our remote learning plan included opportunities to connect with students and families, provide physical and digital resources, and create and implement essential new professional development programs for staff. To connect with families, teachers conducted Google LIVE meetings, offered daily office hours, and made weekly contact via phone or email with students and families. Students were physically mailed printed academic packets, and a weekly learning plan was shared by teachers via Class Dojo or Google Classroom that included live links for instructional videos and instructional programs to support learning. Lesson videos were also provided for students and families to provide deeper understanding. Staff was provided access to a Home Learning site which houses resources to support remote learning as well as professional development on recording and posting a video and creating and leading a live video. In addition, deans held weekly one-on-one meetings with their teachers to review expectations, ensure student participation, review weekly learning plans, and provide feedback.

Although state assessment data is not available for the 2019-20 school year, internal assessment data show signs of academic improvement.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics examination for grades 3-8.

METHOD

Due to the COVID-19 school closure, the New York State Testing Program math assessment was not administered to students. In absence of the state test, Buffalo United's predicted proficiency rate based on an NHA model is reported to measure progress toward meeting the goal.

Internal Predicted Proficiency: Each year, National Heritage Academies (NHA) creates a state test proficiency model to predict the probability of a student being proficient in ELA and/or math. The model uses the prior year state test results, if available, and fall NWEA results. At the student level, this model has an 86 percent accuracy rate in ELA and an 89 percent accuracy rate in math. Because the model has a high accuracy rate and incorporates multiple sources of data, Buffalo United

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believes this serves as a valuable tool for predicting proficiency. The table below summarizes total number of students included in the prediction, by grade level.

Grade	Total Included in Prediction (All Students)	Total Included in Prediction (2+ Yr Students)	Total Enrolled
3	32	32	80
4	67	38	78
5	62	39	76
6	64	38	83
7	64	38	76
8	47	41	54
All	336	226	447

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Internal Predicted Proficiency: Overall, Buffalo United’s proficiency rate was predicted to increase by four percentage points in math. For students enrolled in at least their second year, the proficiency rate was predicted to increase by two percentage points in math. While progress was made toward this goal in 2019-20, Buffalo United’s predicted proficiency rate is less than 75 percent, and therefore, the school was not expected to meet this goal in 2019-20.

2019-20 Predicted Proficiency of All Students			
Subject	2018-19 Proficiency	2019-20 Predicted Proficiency	(+/-)
Math	26%	30%	+4%

2019-20 Predicted Proficiency of 2+ Year Students			
Subject	2018-19 Proficiency	2019-20 Predicted Proficiency	(+/-)
Math	30%	32%	+2%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the past three years, the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year achieving proficiency has increased. This shows Buffalo United is making progress towards meeting this goal.

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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	46.0%	75	46%	57	47%	53
4	29.3%	90	40%	57	24%	55
5	23.6%	71	27%	66	12%	52
6	21.3%	60	8%	50	34%	44
7	11.3%	69	18%	44	18%	44
8	0.0%	27	0%	32	26%	53
All	25.0%	392	26%	306	30%	301

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 absence of the state test, the i-Ready diagnostic was used to measure progress toward meeting the Performance Index (PI) goal. The i-Ready Diagnostic was administered to all students at Buffalo United in fall, winter, and spring of 2019-20 to measure student achievement and growth. i-Ready provides achievement data, and growth measures that are differentiated based on each student’s grade and initial placement on the i-Ready Diagnostic. At each diagnostic, students are placed into one of three tiers: two or more grade levels below, one grade level below, or on or above grade level.

The table below summarizes total number of students tested on each diagnostic in the fall, winter, and spring.

i-Ready Percent of Students Assessed at each Math Diagnostic			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
K	92%	89%	82%
1	96%	96%	85%
2	95%	95%	91%
3	100%	100%	97%
4	100%	96%	85%

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5	100%	100%	92%
6	100%	99%	91%
7	100%	100%	85%
8	100%	98%	84%
All	98%	97%	88%

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In the fall of 2019-20, one percent of students were on or above grade level in math. In the spring of 2019-20, the percent of students on or above grade level increased by 35 percentage points in math. From fall to spring, 73 percent of students at Buffalo United improved tier placement in math. Buffalo United believes the improvement in tier placement by students, as shown by i-Ready, would have been reflected on the state test in 2019-20 if it were to have been administered.

2019-20 i-Ready Math Student Placement

Math	Fall			Winter			Spring		
	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level	Two or More Grade Levels Below	One Grade Level Below	On or Above Grade Level
K	-	100%	-	-	91%	9%	-	20%	80%
1	28%	72%	-	2%	85%	13%	5%	19%	76%
2	38%	60%	2%	4%	87%	10%	9%	41%	50%
3	55%	44%	1%	6%	77%	17%	15%	44%	41%
4	55%	42%	3%	3%	72%	25%	21%	66%	13%
5	64%	36%	-	5%	53%	42%	27%	52%	21%
6	54%	46%	-	1%	64%	35%	24%	58%	18%
7	49%	47%	4%	10%	49%	41%	21%	54%	25%
8	53%	47%	-	15%	56%	29%	33%	40%	27%
All	45%	53%	1%	25%	70%	6%	19%	46%	36%

Spring i-Ready Results – % Improved Math Tier Placement	
Grade	Math
K	86%
1	80%
2	73%

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3	76%
4	64%
5	70%
6	73%
7	70%
8	73%
All	73%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In the past four years, Buffalo United has not met absolute measure two in math. However, Buffalo United has made progress towards meeting the measure in math. From 2017-18 to 2018-19, Buffalo United’s PI increased by 11 points, meeting the School Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) in math for the first time over the charter term.

Year	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level on NYS Math Exam				PI	State MIP/AMO	School MIP
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4			
2015-16	41%	37%	13%	9%	82	101	NA
2016-17	47%	30%	15%	8%	76	109	82
2017-18	46%	30%	17%	8%	84	103	NA
2018-19	37%	36%	19%	7%	92	107	91.4

Goal 3: 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 math exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

Buffalo United’s internal predicted proficiency and NWEA predicted proficiency rate of students enrolled in at least their second year is reported to measure progress toward meeting the goal. Buffalo United’s predicted 2019-20 proficiency rate can be compared to the local district’s proficiency rate of all students in 2018-19 to determine if the school was on track to meet this goal.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The percent of students enrolled at Buffalo United in at least their second year predicted to achieve proficiency on the NYS math exam exceeded the local district’s 2018-19 math proficiency rate. Therefore, Buffalo United was on track to meet this goal in 2019-20.

2019-20 BUCS Predicted Math Proficiency of 2+ Year Students	2018-19 Local District Math Proficiency
32%	21%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Over the past three years, the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the state math test exceeded the local district’s proficiency rate, therefore meeting the goal.

Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Achieving Proficiency on the NYS Math Exam Compared to the Local District								
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
Subject	BUCS	District	BUCS	District	BUCS	District	BUCS	District
Math	22%	17%	25%	17%	26%	21%	30%	21%

Goal 4: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state math 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

CSI conducts a comparative performance analysis, which compares the school’s performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. CSI uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. CSI 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

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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.

Due to the COVID-19 school closure, 2018-19 results will be reported, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In 2018-19, Buffalo United’s effect size was 0.06 in math, which is less than the effect size goal of 0.3 or above, and therefore, the goal was not met. Buffalo United has made progress toward meeting this measure. In 2018-19, BUCS increased their effect size in math by 0.34. In 2018-19, the measure was met in third grade for ELA, and third, sixth, and eighth grade for math.

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Mean Scale Score		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	93.0%	68	597.0	594.0	3.0	0.32
4	96.1%	67	589.0	592.3	-3.3	-0.35
5	93.8%	70	587.0	592.8	-5.8	-0.59
6	90.7%	63	599.0	593.1	5.9	0.63
7	94.4%	53	591.0	592.6	-1.6	-0.18
8	97.1%	59	601.0	593.5	7.5	0.58
All	94.1%	380	593.9	593.1	0.8	0.06

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Slightly higher than expected</i>

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Buffalo United has made progress toward meeting this measure in math.

School Year	Grades	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2015-16	3-8	94.0%	441	22.6%	20.9%	0.09
2016-17	3-8	95.0%	392	23.0%	22.1%	0.02
2017-18	3-8	93.7%	380	24.4%	28.8%	-0.28
2018-19	3-8	94.1%	380	593.9	593.1	0.06

Goal 5: Growth Measure³

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in math for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50.

METHOD

2018-19 NYSTP Mean Student Growth Percentile: 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 2018-19 and also have a state exam score from 2017-18 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2017-18 score are ranked by their 2018-19 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 was not available in the prior year's report and will be reported here. This report contains 2018-19 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁴

2019-20 i-Ready Growth: To measure progress toward the goal in 2019-20, i-Ready Diagnostic results were reviewed. The i-Ready Diagnostic was administered to all students at Buffalo United in the 2019-20 fall, winter, and spring to measure achievement and growth. After students complete their first Diagnostic in the fall, i-Ready generates a Typical Growth measure and Stretch Growth measure for each student. Typical Growth is the average growth of students at each grade and placement level (50th percentile of growth). Stretch Growth is the growth recommended to put below-grade students on a path to proficiency and on-grade students on a path to advanced proficiency levels (55th to 80th percentile of growth).

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

2018-19 NYSTP Mean Student Growth Percentile: In 2018-19, the mean student growth percentile on the math state exam was 48.5. This was less than the target of 50.0, therefore the goal was not met. At the grade level, this goal was met in sixth and eighth grade.

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

⁴ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

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Grade	NYST Math Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	46.3	50.0
5	44.3	50.0
6	52.4	50.0
7	41.8	50.0
8	65.3	50.0
All	48.5	50.0

2019-20 i-Ready Growth: In 2019-20, as measured by i-Ready, the median progress towards Typical Growth was 176 percent in math, which means on average, students significantly exceeded their typical growth goal. Seventy percent of students met their typical growth goal in math. With this growth, Buffalo United believed the school was on track to meet the growth goal in 2019-20.

For Stretch Growth, which is even more rigorous, almost half of students at Buffalo United achieved growth in math to be on the path to proficiency and/or advanced performance levels, or growth above the 55th percentile. Forty-nine percent of students met their stretch growth goal in math.

2019-20 Fall-Spring i-Ready Math Results				
Grade	Typical Growth		Stretch Growth	
	% Met Typical Growth	% Progress (Median)	% Met Stretch Growth	% Progress (Median)
K	84%	364%	84%	299%
1	84%	290%	84%	217%
2	78%	158%	55%	114%
3	65%	135%	44%	86%
4	41%	87%	23%	51%
5	65%	167%	44%	88%
6	73%	157%	38%	74%
7	75%	185%	42%	80%
8	73%	225%	47%	91%
All	70%	176%	49%	NA

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In 2018-19, BUCS mean student growth percentile was 48.5.

Grade	NYS Math Mean Growth Percentile				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Target
4	48	74	48.5	46.3	50.0
5	46	78	45.7	44.3	50.0
6	53	39.5	54.0	52.4	50.0
7	39.5	48.5	43.0	41.8	50.0
8	60.5	76.5	65.0	65.3	50.0
All	49.5	63	50.0	48.5	50.0

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS GOAL

Due to COVID-19, state assessments were not administered, and alternate assessments were used to estimate progress towards goals. In 2019-20, Buffalo United was on track to meet two of the five measures listed below. The percentage of students at or above grade level in math went from 1% in the fall to 35% in the spring, and 73% of students improved their tier placement. While Buffalo has not been able to meet absolute measure two in math over the past few years, it is believed that the improvement in tier placement would have been reflected on the state test if it had been administered.

Additionally, though the school did not meet its 2018-19 growth goal, in 2019-20, 70 percent of students met their typical growth in math based on i-Ready results, showing the progress that was made.

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.	Not Expected to 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.	On Track to Meet
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.	On Track to Meet

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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 2018-19 results.)	Not Met in 2018-19
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.	Not Met in 2018-19

ACTION PLAN

As previously mentioned, BUCS has implemented a significant number of improvements in the 2019-20 school year that will continue in the 2020-21 school year. Earlier in this document, and again in the renewal application, examples of new efforts that BUCS will undertake in 2020-21 are provided, so the same level of detail will not be provided here.

In 2020-21, BUCS' math curriculum will rely on Bridges in Mathematics and Math Stories (K-5), Number Corner (grades K-2), and Illustrative Math (grades 6-8). The math curriculum is aligned to state standards, reflects the Next Generation Learning Standards, and incorporates evidence-based instructional strategies.

As mentioned in the description of ELA actions, NHA and BUCS worked to redesign the school's assessments and how it uses the data to drive school improvement. An extensive description of our updated assessment strategy was included in BUCS renewal application. A few examples of these assessments are also mentioned below.

As it did for its literacy education efforts, in 2019-20, BUCS set goals for math learning targeted towards improving student achievement and accelerating student growth. In 2020-21, BUCS will continue to set goals for math learning goals to help achieve the math goals outlined in the school's Accountability Plan. Specific goals were also set for students in the school's intervention program. As outlined in BUCS' revised 2018-19 Accountability Plan Progress Report (included with the school's renewal application), the initiatives below will continue as the school works to achieve its math goals. Below are details on the initiatives the school has implemented to reach these goals.

- Our instructional professionals will use i-Ready instruction materials in conjunction with Bridges in Mathematics and Illustrative Math to provide additional instructional opportunities for priority material emphasized in New York State standards.
- i-Ready will be utilized in all grades as a diagnostic tool. The diagnostic tool pinpoints students' strengths and knowledge gaps at the sub-skill level. i-Ready Instruction delivers personalized learning paths for each student.

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- As is the case with ELA, beginning with the 2020-21 school year, teachers conduct data meetings with students, so they understand progress they are making towards their achievement goal. Teachers are being trained on how to conduct these meetings. A parent meeting will help parents understand their students' math goal and how they can support their student in reaching that goal.
- Students will have a personal data binder/folder to track their progress towards mastering each standard being taught.
- As mentioned above, teachers are receiving daily support from a senior curriculum specialist in both ELA and math from NHA's Service Center, Dr. Rick Hangge. Dr. Hangge provides direct coaching, mentoring, and modeling for deans and teachers. In addition, curriculum specialists, Gloria Hall and Steve Deur, came in to serve as model math instructors for teachers. They reinforced lessons and worked with small groups of students.
- Teachers' math lesson plans are reviewed, as ELA lesson plans are, to ensure that they reflect New York State learning standards, as well as the appropriate scope and sequence. These plans identify the resource to be used to teach that standard.
- Quizzes targeting math skills are given to students. Data from these weekly quizzes are used to determine skills that need to be retaught and strategies to reteach this skill. In addition, teachers give exit tickets to students after each class that reflect the rigor of New York State assessments and mastery of standards.
- After-school tutoring and Saturday school are offered to students to provide additional learning time to students to help close math achievement gaps. Tutoring is also provided to students during school breaks.
- Twice-monthly staff professional development sessions are planned to improve teachers' math instruction skills in the areas of rigor, differentiation, CFU, engagement strategies, standards, and data review.
- BUCS has added paid professional developments for teachers on Saturdays and after school to address specific instructional needs that are noted during classroom observations.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE

Summary of changes to the Elementary Science Goal due to the Covid-19 school closure:

- Schools will be unable to report state test proficiency rates or a district comparison.
- However, in the absence of state test results, schools should report results from internally developed assessments, national norm-referenced tests, and/or any other evaluation method below. When possible, schools report tabular data aligned to the narrative.

Goal 3: Science

Students will be proficient in Science.

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 science examination.
2. 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.

BACKGROUND

In mid-March 2020, due to the COVID pandemic, BUCS began a transition to remote learning that started almost overnight and that forced NHA and BUCS to create a whole new setting for instruction. BUCS' goal for remote learning was reinforcing and introducing standards and skills that are critical to academic success and that can be delivered effectively via remote learning in structured, guided, and accessible learning opportunities for all students.

Even as BUCS' doors were closed and innovations in teaching and learning took root, efforts to improve academic outcomes lost no momentum. We continued to focus on our improvement efforts and evaluated ways to effectively provide instruction to students remotely.

Our remote learning plan included opportunities to connect with students and families, provide physical and digital resources, and create and implement essential new professional development programs for staff. To connect with families, teachers conducted Google LIVE meetings, offered daily office hours, and made weekly contact via phone or email with students and families. Students were physically mailed printed academic packets, and a weekly learning plan was shared by teachers via Class Dojo or Google Classroom that included live links for instructional videos and instructional programs to support learning. Lesson videos were also provided for students and families to provide deeper understanding. Staff was provided access to a Home Learning site which

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houses resources to support remote learning as well as professional development on recording and posting a video and creating and leading a live video. In addition, deans held weekly one-on-one meetings with their teachers to review expectations, ensure student participation, review weekly learning plans, and provide feedback.

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 science examination.

METHOD

Due to COVID-19 closures, the New York State science exam was not administered. In the spring of 2019-20, a science mock interim was administered to eighth grade students at Buffalo United. Due to COVID-10 closures, it was not feasible to administer the science mock interim to fourth grade students. A scaled score of 3.0 is considered to be proficient.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In 2019-20, 54 percent of eighth grade students at Buffalo United scored at/above 3.0 on the science mock interim taken in the spring. Buffalo United believes this shows significant progress towards meeting this goal. In 2018-19, only 35 percent of eighth grade students enrolled in at least their second year achieved proficiency.

2019-20 Spring Science Interim Scaled Score Distribution				
Scaled Score	1	2	3	4
Grade 8	33%	12%	40%	14%

	2018-19 % Proficient on NYS Science Exam	2019-20 % Scoring at/above 3.0 on Mock Science Interim
Grade 8	35%	54%

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Since 2016-17, Buffalo United has seen a decrease in the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the New York State science exam. At the grade level, fourth grade has met this goal the last three years the state test was administered.

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	80%	72	90%	61	75%	55
8	30%	50	38%	56	35%	55
All	60%	122	65%	117	55%	110

Goal 2: 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

Due to COVID-19 closures, the New York State Exam was not administered. Internal assessments during closures were only administered in math and reading, and therefore, data is not available to measure progress toward this goal in 2019-20. Buffalo United has met this goal the past three years the state test was administered.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Buffalo United met this goal in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19. Performance toward this goal in 2019-20 is unable to be measured.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Buffalo United has met this goal the past three years the state test was administered. Additionally, this goal was met at each grade level.

2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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	
	BUCS	District	BUCS	District	BUCS	District
4	80%	64%	90%	69%	75%	65%
8	30%	24%	38%	24%	35%	27%
All	60%	46%	65%	50%	55%	49%

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY SCIENCE GOAL

While the school has met its Comparative goal the last three years, unfortunately, it is unable to be measured this year due to COVID-19.

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.	Potential to Meet Target
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.	Unable to be measured

ACTION PLAN

- We implemented a new curricular tool, STEMscopes, to improve our science proficiency in grades 3-5. Measuring Up will be used to supplement STEMscopes in grades 4, 7, and 8.
- BUCS is reviewing lesson plans to ensure that teachers are providing instruction on priority science standards in all grades.
- Several of the initiatives that have been implemented for ELA and math will also help to increase science proficiency – professional development and after-school tutoring.
- Twice during the upcoming 2020-21 school year, the school will administer a mock assessment that covers the NYS science Grade 5-8 standards. The assessment will be given to 8th graders and reflect the length, format, and rigor of the NYS test.

GOAL 4: ESSA

The 2019-20 ESSA Goal remains unchanged due to the COVID-19 school closure. The 2019-20 accountability status based on 2018-19 results and can be found by navigating to the school report card available [here](#).

2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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

In 2019-20, Buffalo United was in Good Standing and, therefore, met their ESSA goal.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Since 2017-18, Buffalo United has been in Good Standing.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2017-18	Good Standing
2018-19	Good Standing
2019-20	Good Standing

APPENDIX A: OPTIONAL GOALS

Goal 5:

The school will be organizationally viable and financially sound.

Goal 5: Measure 1

Each year, the school will average a student attendance rate at or above 93%.

METHOD

The student attendance rate is determined using the school’s Average Daily Attendance during the 2019-20 school year.

RESULTS

For 2019-20, the student attendance rate for Buffalo United Charter School was 91.4 percent.

2019-20 Attendance

Grade	Average Daily Attendance Rate
K	91.09%
1	91.27%
2	91.57%
3	91.95%
4	92.13%
5	90.27%
6	92.14%
7	92.19%
8	88.88%
Overall	91.40%

EVALUATION

With an attendance rate of 91.4 percent, Buffalo United Charter School did not meet the stated measure. The reason BUCS did not meet this goal is difficult to assess due to the possible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on attendance rates.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Year	Average Daily Attendance Rate
2016-17	90.8%
2017-18	91.5%
2018-19	90.2%
2019-20	91.4%

Goal 5: Measure 2

Each year, the school will receive an unqualified audit from an independent certified public accounting firm hired by the Board of Trustees.

METHOD

Buffalo United Charter School will retain an independent certified accounting firm to review the school’s financial transactions during the 2019-20 school year.

RESULTS

Buffalo United has contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm to complete an audit of the 2019-20 school year. This audit is in process and will be submitted to CSI on or before the deadline.

EVALUATION

Buffalo United has contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm to complete an audit of the 2019-20 school year. This audit is in process and will be submitted to CSI on or before the deadline.

Goal 5: Measure 3

Each year, the school’s Board of Trustees will assess the performance of its education management partner. The review will be used to identify the management partner’s successes and opportunities to improve its future performance, as well as ensure the Board and management partner’s relationship is effectively serving the school.

METHOD

The Buffalo United Charter School Board of Trustees will assess the performance of its education management partner.

RESULTS

The Board of Trustees completed an evaluation of NHA during the 2019-20 school year.

EVALUATION

The Board successfully met this measure in 2019-20.

Goal 5: Measure 4

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

METHOD

Throughout the school year, the Board of Trustees is presented with a number of issues which require legal review. Policies, documents, and issues are shared with the Board's independent legal counsel for analysis and recommendations.

RESULTS

The Board appointed Kristen Barclay of Bond, Schoeneck & King as the Special Counsel to the Board on November 6, 2019. The Board has the opportunity to reaffirm and appoint their legal counsel yearly at its Annual Meeting. The Board's legal counsel thoroughly reviewed all issues and provided the Board with timely and thoughtful responses to aid in its decision-making.

EVALUATION

The Board successfully met this measure in 2019-20.

Goal 5: Measure 5

Each year, the school will generally and substantially comply with all applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations, and the provisions of its by-laws, Provisional Charter (certificate of incorporation) and Charter Agreement.

METHOD

In consultation with its legal counsel, Buffalo United Charter School will be in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

RESULTS

In consultation with its legal counsel, Buffalo United Charter School was in full compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

EVALUATION

Buffalo United met this goal by being compliant with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.