



**FORTE PREPARATORY ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Graham Browne, Executive Director prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position	
	Office (e.g. chair, treasurer, secretary)	committees (e.g. finance, executive)
Lisa Friscia	Chair	Fund Development, Governance
Alexie Rothman	Secretary	Academic Achievement
Fiona Lin	Vice Chair	Governance
Daniel Moskowitz	Treasurer	Finance
Ellen Winn	Member	Fund Development
Wai Lin Yip	Member	Fund Development
Laura Rodriguez	Member	Academic Achievement
Veronica Escobar	Member	Academic Achievement
Name	Office	Committees
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Name	Office	Committees

Graham Browne has served as the executive director since 2017.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Forte Preparatory Academy, a public charter school in Elmhurst, NY, educating students from grades 5 through 8, has developed a reopening plan using best practices, research and guidance from a wide range of sources to prepare for the 2020-21 school year.

The 2020-21 the hardest in our school's short lifespan. COVID-19 has wrought incalculable loss on our country, with Queens as early epicenter of the virus in the spring. While our team did everything in its power to restore some sense of normalcy in those early months, the virus and our subsequent displacement from school had severe impacts on our academic performance and devastated the fabric of our beloved school community. During this time, we banded together and focused on creating equitable systems that allowed our students to continue to learn to the last day of the 2019-20 school year. We are proud of that, and we knew that our role was to make our school even stronger in the upcoming months in order to best support our students and families.

We set new goals that allow us to have a successful beginning to the 20-21 school year. Our goals for the 2020-21 school year were to 1) prioritize the health and safety of our students, families, and staff; 2) to maximize meaningful and rigorous instructional time both inside and outside of the classroom; and 3) to create systems and procedures that are responsive to the most up-to-date public health guidance and dynamic to the ever-changing landscape in our city and our country.

It was imperative that we reopen thoughtfully, carefully, and on the shoulders of experts and data-driven researchers so that we are consistently improving the academic, social, and emotional experience for our students.

In broad strokes, our reopening operations include the following major interventions:

- Reduction of in-person student enrollment on any given day to 50%, splitting our school into 5th & 8th grade and 6th & 7th grade cohorts of approximately 13-15 students with classrooms operating at 50% of their traditional capacity;
- Modification of our academic calendar, staff professional development and student orientation to allow for more time to implement our programs;
- Creation and improvement of learning systems that support students inside and outside of the building, including students with disabilities, ELL students, and other vulnerable populations;
- Creation of social distancing protocol that expand the distance between students and staff alike while in the building;
- Development of robust PPE and hygiene plans only possible to execute in our new, 30,000 sq ft facility in Elmhurst;
- Increase in the frequency and depth of cleaning of our facility, access to hygiene supplies like hand sanitizer, and tools to increase air quality and circulation;
- Human resource policies and procedures that create support for staff who require accommodations or other covid-related support;
- A clear, CDC-informed screening, containment and monitoring plan for any individuals who enter our building, which includes a daily temperature check, symptom reporting system, and decrease in visitor access to our building.

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At the end of the day, our job was to tackle the problem directly in front of us first, and that is what we intended to do, and did. We are proud to have had high levels of in-person participation (~70% of student population) and overall attendance (89%) over the course of a challenging year. We build robust systems with our families and student supports teams to track down struggling students and provide them the support they needed to be successful in school this year. We look forward to accelerating this work in the upcoming year.

Our mission is the following: “Through rigorous academics, quality instruction, and a positive culture of individual and collective responsibility, Forte Preparatory Academy Charter School equips all students in grades 5 through 8 to excel in college preparatory high schools and to use their leadership and voice to change the world.” This mission is even more important today than it has ever been.

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
2016-17														
2017-18						87								
2018-19						85	86							
2019-20						89	91	87						
2020-21						89	91	93	83					

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will be proficient in English language arts.

BACKGROUND

In middle school, the reading curriculum begins in the fifth grade with a concentration on fluency, comprehension, and, if necessary, phonics and with an introduction to sophisticated pieces of literature for study and analysis. Instruction and skill development focus on identifying perspective, drawing supporting details, increasing vocabulary, and identifying literary elements such as tone and mood. Students are taught to identify theme, and to provide evidence for their textual analysis; students are taught to develop theme across multiple texts, fiction and non-fiction, in alignment with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and in alignment with our ambitious mission. Our reading instruction is centered around whole-class novels and Writing instruction is focused on building a consistent structure for Forte Prep classrooms will maintain robust leveled libraries to

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provide students with a wide exposure to grade-level appropriate texts. In 2020-21, we grew our program to 8th grade ELA class for the first time.

METHOD

In addition to our internally normed trimester exams, we used the nationally normed NWEA MAP assessment to determine student progress and learning loss during the pandemic.

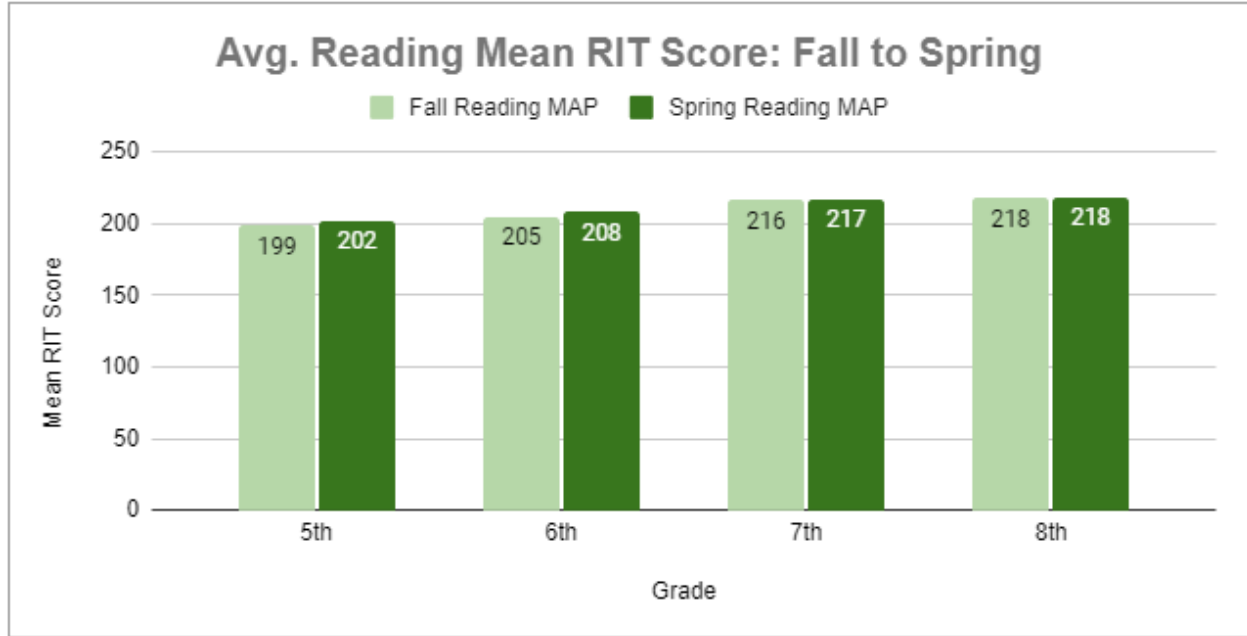
During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in ELA: NWEA MAP

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

We had 169 students take the fall and spring MAP this year, approximately 47% of our student population. To maximize assessment security, we did not administer the MAP test to fully remote students, and could not offer make up testing for students who were out sick or quarantined. The data is very difficult to draw conclusions from, because the sample is not representative or comprehensive as it has been in prior years. However we are grateful to have some picture of student performance to create directives for next year's acceleration initiatives.

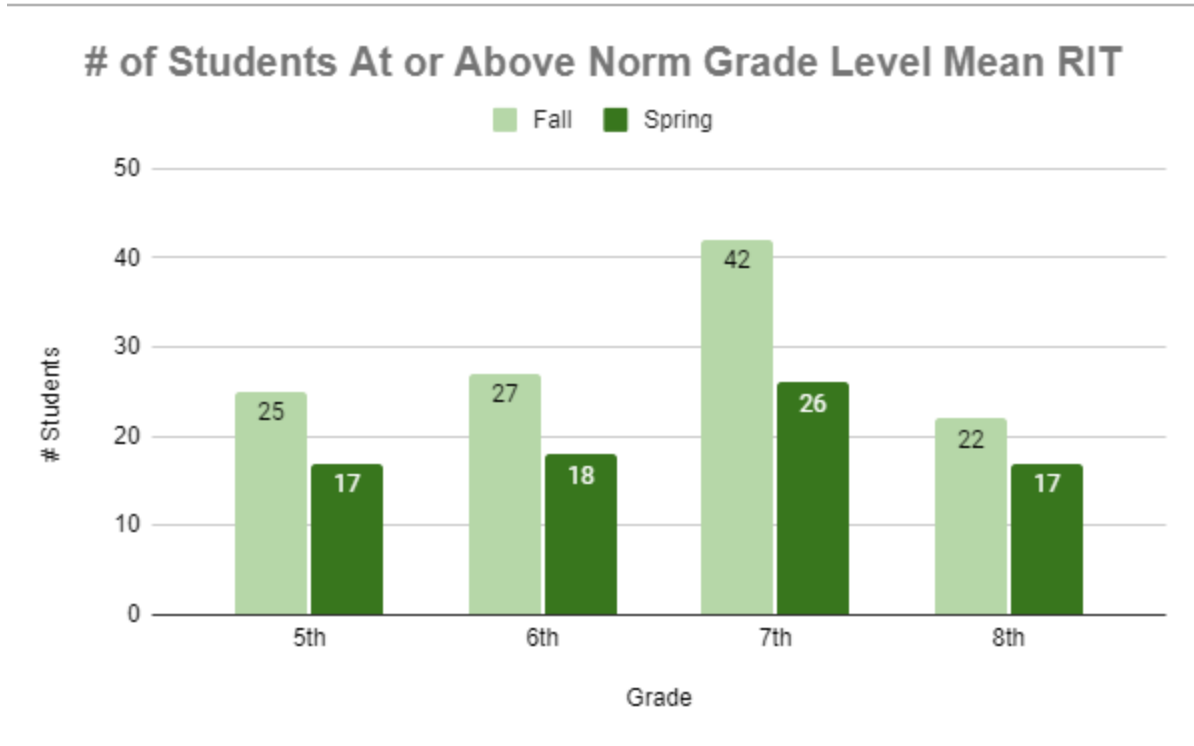
Reading MAP Assessment Summary						
Mean RIT Analysis						
Average Mean RIT score						
Grade	# Students	Fall Reading MAP	Winter Reading MAP	Spring Reading MAP	Growth Fall - Winter	Growth Fall - Spring
5th	89	199	--	202	--	4
6th	91	205	--	208	--	4
7th	93	216	--	217	--	1
8th	83	218	--	218	--	0
Total	356	209	0	211		2
% of students that took exam						
5th		74%	0%	58%		
6th		80%	0%	53%		
7th		78%	0%	55%		
8th		63%	0%	43%		

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Achievement Norms Analysis								
Grade	# Students	Fall Reading MAP		Winter Reading MAP		Spring Reading MAP		Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
		Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	
5th	89	204	25	209	0	211	17	
6th	91	210	27	214	0	215	18	
7th	93	214	42	217	0	218	26	
8th	83	218	22	221	0	222	17	
Total	356		116		0		78	

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Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	169	35	NO
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	121	40	NO
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities ¹	35	49	40	YES

¹ Schools may elect to report the aggregated data for a different subpopulation of students if the total tested number of students with disabilities is 5 or fewer, or if the school's mission aligns to serving a different specific subpopulation. For schools that choose a different subpopulation (e.g. English language learners, students experiencing housing insecurity, etc.), please explain the rationale in the narrative section

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Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards. ²	2+ students	75%	136	27	NO
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End of Year Performance on 2020-21 NWEA MAP [ELA] Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

ELA	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient[1]	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3				
4				
5	19%	48	0%	3
6	29%	45	24%	45
7	28%	46	31%	52
8	27%	30	28%	36
All	25%	169	27%	136

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 NWEA MAP [ELA] Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3		
4		
5	34.5	48
6	39	45
7	41	46
8	25	30
All	35	169

² <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf>.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

In an effort to maximize testing integrity, we did not allow students to participate in MAP testing from home. Given this, and the conflicting quarantine and other auxiliary attendance policies in place that may have prevented in-person participation in the test, we had a lower than usual participation rate. Typically, we have 98-100% of students take the MAP Growth test and we use it to directly inform instruction. However, we did use year over year comparisons of our trimester exam data (with the exception of 8th grade, because this is our first year with 8th graders) to compare student performance pre- and amid-pandemic. These results confirmed what we were seeing anecdotally in our classrooms: while students were making steady progress over the course of the year, their starting levels and overall growth rates were reduce relative to the '18 and '19 school years.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Forte Prep is incredibly proud of its academic progress in ELA over the first four years of operation. We believe that our progress and rates of growth, relative to other comparable schools, is strong and worthy of recognition. Our academic team worked tirelessly to develop alternate instruction modes over the last two years, and will continue to address gaps in student mastery and growth in the coming school year.

ACTION PLAN

With in person instruction resuming in full force this year, we can expect student performance to return to previously observed levels. However, in order to close gaps from prior years, we will need to employ additional levels of small group tutoring and support to build a stronger literacy foundation in our students.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

BACKGROUND

Mathematics is aligned to New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for fifth through eighth grades. Students have two periods of mathematics (100 minutes per day) to ensure a solid foundation of skills and concepts and to prepare for an accelerated high school mathematics curriculum. The mathematics courses have a dual focus: procedures (skills) and problem solving (application). Initially fifth grade students will focus on mastering arithmetic operations, fractions, percentages, basic geometric concepts, simple variable use, and probability. Over time, students will progress through linear equations and symbolic algebra, planar geometry, theoretical probability and statistical analysis. The problem solving class complements the skills class; the same concepts are taught using word problems, scenarios, and real world context to ensure that students are able to apply their mathematical skills and develop their critical thinking skills and conceptual understanding through logical reasoning. This focus on mathematics allows for accelerated remediation of students who lack basic skills and preparation for a college preparatory focus in high school while simultaneously ensuring that students develop and are able to express their conceptual understanding and use a variety of schema to solve complex problems. According to PARCC, “the standards treat mathematics as a coherent subject to promote the sense-making that fuels mastery. The principles of focus and coherence are the twin engines that must be carried forward in implementation efforts and substantiated in curricula and assessments.”¹ By the end of eighth grade, we aim to have the majority of our students complete Algebra I, setting them up to begin high school in Geometry or Algebra II and on track to take Calculus, AP Calculus AB or BC, or AP Statistics by senior year. Students will be unable to access advanced math in high school without this foundation. This year, we had over 50% of students taking Algebra 1.

METHOD

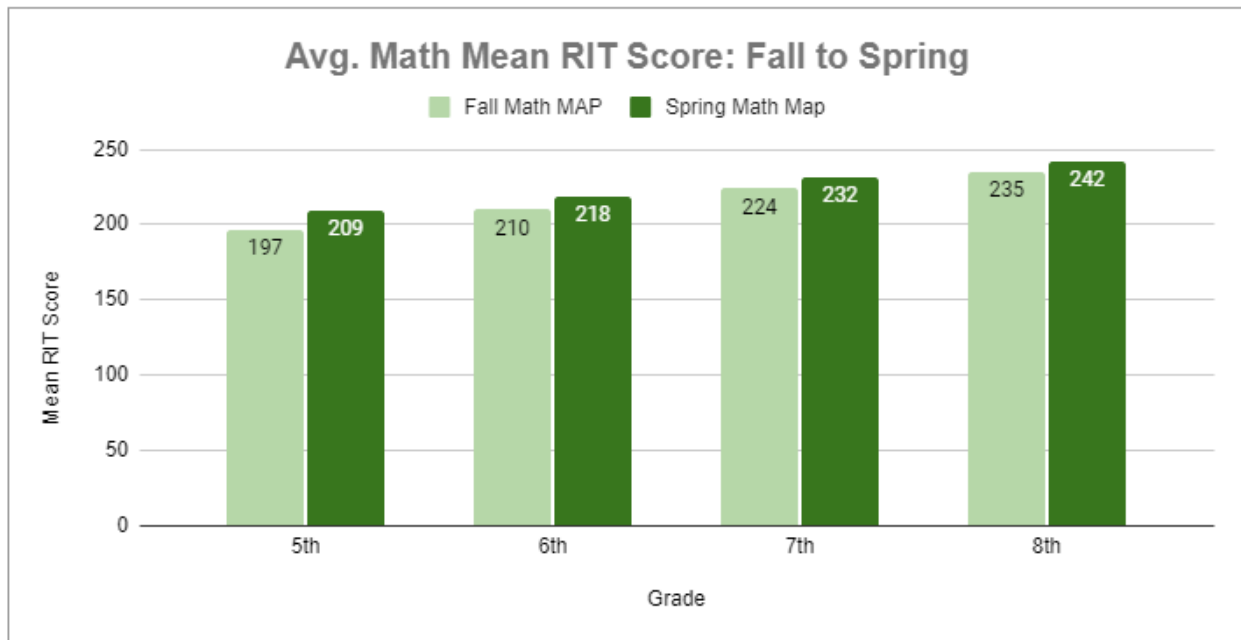
We used end-of-trimester exams, Zearn assessments and IXL performance tracking to measure student’s math mastery. Additionally, 43 8th graders took Algebra 1 Regents exams as an additional measure of math mastery.

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in mathematics: **NWEA MAP**

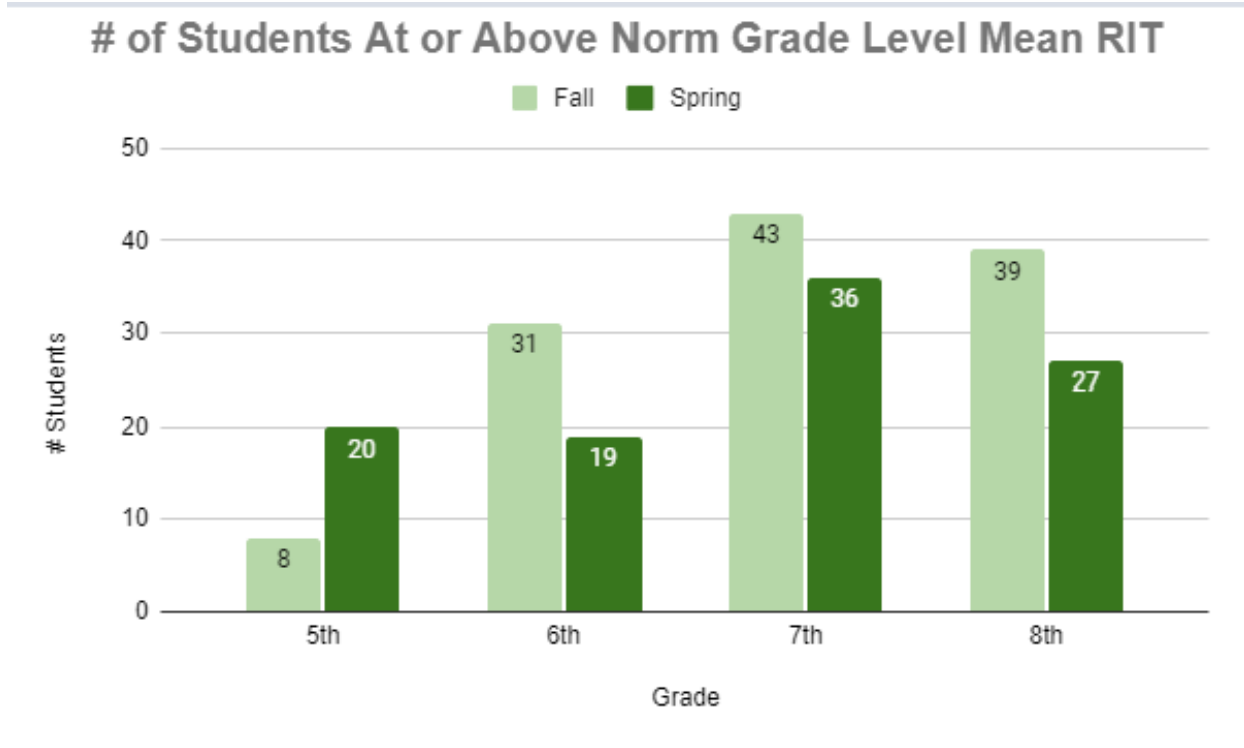
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RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Math MAP Assessment Summary						
Mean RIT Analysis						
Average Mean RIT score						
Grade	# Students	Fall Math MAP	Winter Math MAP	Spring Math Map	Growth Fall - Winter	Growth Fall - Spring
5th	89	197	--	209	--	12
6th	91	210	--	218	--	9
7th	93	224	--	232	--	8
8th	83	235	--	242	--	7
Total	356	216	0	225		9
% of students that took exam						
5th		58%	0%	60%		
6th		80%	0%	54%		
7th		70%	0%	58%		
8th		55%	0%	43%		



Achievement Norms Analysis							
Grade	# Students	Fall Math MAP		Winter Math MAP		Spring Math MAP	
		Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	Students At or Above Norm Grade Level Mean RIT
5th	89	209	8	215	0	219	20
6th	91	215	31	220	0	223	19
7th	93	220	43	224	0	227	36
8th	83	225	39	228	0	230	27
Total	356		121		0		102



Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	154	56	YES
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	101	48	NO
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities ³	56	53	47.5	NO

³ Schools may elect to report the aggregated data for a different subpopulation of students if the total tested number of students with disabilities is 5 or fewer, or if the school's mission aligns to serving a different specific subpopulation. For schools that choose a different subpopulation (e.g. English language learners, students experiencing housing insecurity, etc.), please explain the rationale in the narrative section

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Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards. ⁴	2+ students	75%	139	45%	NO
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End of Year Performance on 2020-21 NWEA MAP [Mathematics] Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Math	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient[1]	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3				
4				
5	12%	57	25%	4
6	33%	52	33%	45
7	50%	54	50%	54
8	54%	37	56%	36
All	36%	200	45%	139

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 NWEA MAP [ELA/Mathematics] Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3		
4		
5	54	42
6	53	44
7	58	45
8	76	23
All	154	56

⁴ <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf>.

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Students at Forte Prep who were able to participate in the NWEA MAP assessment in the fall and the spring had mixed results. With lower participation rates, it is difficult to ascertain trends given our lack of widely available assessment results for the whole student population. However, for the students who did participate, we saw lower than usual mastery and growth rates than we have in years' past.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

In an effort to maximize testing integrity, we did not allow students to participate in MAP testing from home. Given this, and the conflicting quarantine and other auxiliary attendance policies in place that may have prevented in-person participation in the test, we had a lower than usual participation rate. Typically, we have 98-100% of students take the MAP Growth test and we use it to directly inform instruction. However, we did use year over year comparisons of our trimester exam data (with the exception of 8th grade, because this is our first year with 8th graders) to compare student performance pre- and amid-pandemic. These results confirmed what we were seeing anecdotally in our classrooms: while students were making steady progress over the course of the year, their starting levels and overall growth rates were reduce relative to the '18 and '19 school years.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

Forte Prep is incredibly proud of its academic progress in Math over the first four years of operation. We believe that our progress and rates of growth, relative to other comparable schools, is strong and worthy of recognition. Our academic team worked tirelessly to develop alternate instruction modes over the last two years, and will continue to address gaps in student mastery and growth in the coming school year.

ACTION PLAN

With in person instruction resuming in full force this year, we can expect student performance to return to previously observed levels. However, in order to close gaps from prior years, we will need to employ additional levels of small group tutoring and support to build a stronger mathematics foundation in our students.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will be proficient in science.

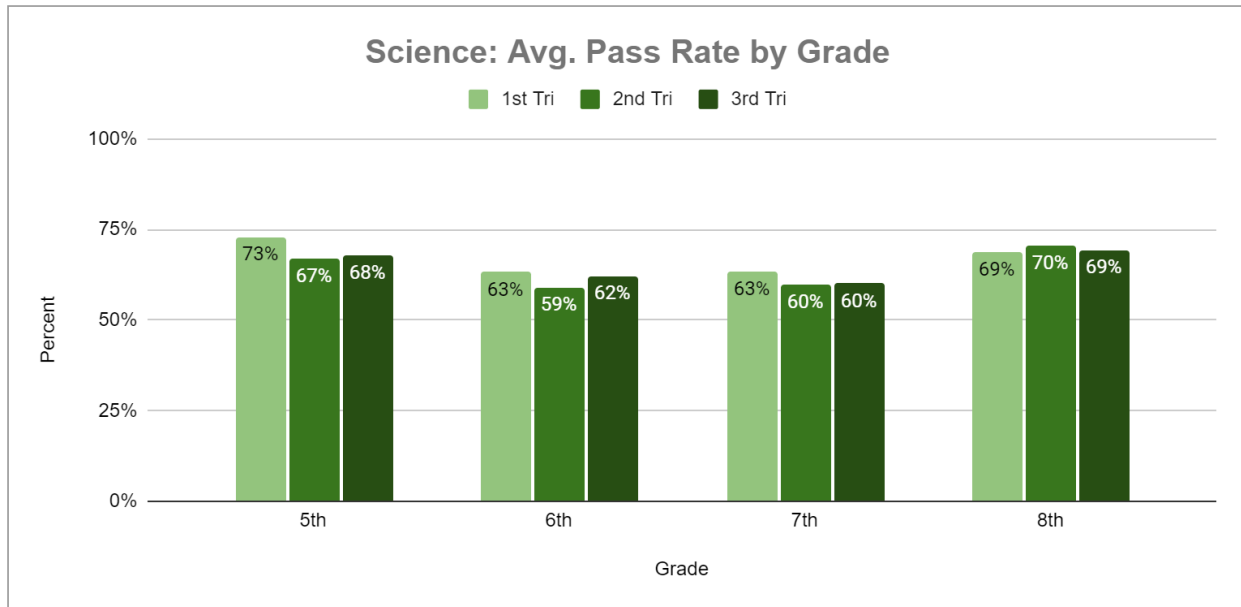
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BACKGROUND

Forte Prep’s science curriculum is informed directly by and aligned to the New York State Education Department’s Intermediate Level Science Core Curriculum for grades 5-8,² as well as the Standards for Literacy in Science in the New York Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts. 5th and 6th grade students take Science for 50 minutes three days per week and 7th and 8th grade students will take Science for four days a week. Students also take Digital Literacy (computer science) 1-2 times per week. Science instruction in grades 5-8 will begin with building skills related to scientific reasoning, investigative reading, and writing through coursework in Physical Science, Life Science, and Earth & Space Science. Science classes will focus heavily on the mathematics in the application of science, as well as reinforcing critical writing and analysis from English Language Arts curriculum in each grade. In middle school, for example, students are required to cite text from scientific sources, distinguish between facts, findings and speculation, and analyze an author’s purpose in organizing a text and discussing experiments, all of which rely on literacy practice.³ Science curriculum will emphasize the process of discovery and application of principles and scientific concepts. We administered the 8th grade Science Exam for the first time this year to in-person 8th graders.

METHOD

Students were evaluated on science mastery based on quizzes, tests, in-class assignments and trimester exams in each grade. The final result is an overall pass rate, seen below, by grade.



Additionally, in-person 8th grade students, 43 in total, took the 8th grade science state exam. 61% of students scored a 3 or above on this assessment:

ATS - New York City Public Schools (Mon 06/21/21 18:38:29)													
Science Exam Document Summary Report (SCDS)													
Exam: SCI School Year: 20202021 School: 84Q380													
Generated	UnScanned	Partial Scan	Scanned	Warning	Absent	Number Students	Performance Level 1	Number Students	Performance Level 2	Number Students	Performance Level 3	Number Students	Performance Level 4
176	95		81	38		1	2%	16	37%	21	49%	5	12%

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ACTION PLAN

We will continue to build out our Science curriculum and academic program, now that we will have the luxury of in-person labs and hands-on instruction.

GOAL 4: ESSA

Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent changes to the state's testing, accountability, and federal reporting requirements, the 2020-21 school accountability statuses are the same as those assigned for the 2019-20 school year. The 2019-20 accountability statuses were based on 2018-19 exam results. Assigned accountability designations and further context can be found [here](#).

Goal 7: 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

We have in Good Standing, based on the carryover of our 2018-19 Status in the 2020-21 school year.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

We have remained in Good Standing for the entirety of our charter term.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	Good Standing
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing