

Zeta Charter School - Bronx 1

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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on:

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By Kate Machan

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Kate Machan, Legal Counsel, prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school’s board of trustees:

Trustee’s Name	Board Position
Jenny Sedlis	Board Chairperson
Keri Hoyt	Board Treasurer
Shannon Kete	Board Vice Chairperson
Nicole Brisbane	Boardmember
Michele Caracappa	Boardmember
Samara Penn Savary	Board Secretary

Tamika Tretu has served as the school leader since 2019.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The mission of Zeta Charter Schools (“Zeta”) is to ensure that every child in America has access to the highest-quality free education from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Zeta Charter School - Bronx 1 (“Zeta South Bronx” or “Zeta Bronx 1”) is a public charter school located in the South Bronx and is operated by Zeta Charter Schools, a charter management organization. Zeta Bronx 1 launched in 2018 with kindergarten and first grade, and adds one grade every year until it will eventually serve pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. Currently, Zeta Bronx 1 offers pre-kindergarten through fourth grade.

Zeta implements a rigorous school model that combines progressive and effective instructional practices with cutting-edge technology, hands-on learning opportunities, and innovative programming to equip students with the critical thinking skills, habits, and practice needed to achieve their highest potential.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Zeta launched a completely remote school design that incorporated Zeta’s key design elements, seeking to ensure our students continued to receive the high-quality education and support Zeta has always provided to its students even in a remote schooling environment. During the 2020-21 school year Zeta operated fully in-person pod schools as well as fully remote schools. Over the course of the year, Zeta eventually served over 50% of its student population in person. Despite the challenges of COVID, remote education, and operating a dual model (in-person and remote), Zeta has been committed to maintaining our high standards for academic outcomes across our network of schools, not lowering any of our academic goals. We have relied on our internal assessments, as well as our study of student work, to ensure that we are sufficiently progressing toward our rigorous goals.

Note: Although we had four Zeta schools across our network last year—three in the Bronx and one in Upper Manhattan—two of our Bronx schools (Bronx 2 and Bronx 3) were new schools incubating in our Zeta Bronx 1 school building. As mentioned above, during the 2020-2021 school year, we operated both full-time in-person schools and full-time remote schools. We offered in-person seats to Zeta students based on family need and desire for in-person schooling. Given the uneven need and desire for in-person seats across our three Bronx schools, as well as the need to use our Bronx facility as efficiently and creatively as possible due to the overall significant demand for in-person seats at our Bronx facility while contending with COVID capacity limits, we constituted our Bronx classes with Zeta students across all three Zeta Bronx schools. Accordingly, our Bronx data was aggregated across our Bronx schools, which is how the data makes the most sense. We believe aggregated Bronx data presents the most accurate picture of student achievement and growth over the course of the year, which is why we present our Zeta Bronx 1, 2, and 3 data in the aggregate below.

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														
2018-19	119	61												180
2019-20	91	90	57											238
2020-21	70	102	100	66										338

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, comprehending, and speaking the English language.¹

BACKGROUND

Zeta adapts the THINK Literacy curriculum because of its track record of promoting literacy growth with our target population. THINK Literacy is a framework that teaches students to become avid readers, elegant writers, and critical thinkers. Zeta draws on the THINK Literacy framework, using it as a basis to build out a comprehensive scope and sequence and lesson plans for ELA instruction at Zeta. The THINK framework is heavily relied upon in curricular development for Zeta as it focuses on building students' critical thinking skills, building independence as readers and writers, and teaching students to apply knowledge to real-life situations and across content components. At the heart of THINK Literacy is a deep belief that students become voracious readers and writers by reading and writing voluminously, and develop the ability to express their ideas clearly and articulately through many daily opportunities to think and talk about great books, their experiences, and the world around them. Every day at Zeta, students see excellent teacher models of reading and writing, read and write with teacher guidance and coaching, and put the pieces together during extended blocks of independent reading and writing.

Because THINK Literacy does not specifically address phonics instruction, Zeta supplements THINK Literacy with Success For All ("SFA"), a research-based and proven-effective program that provides children with phonemic knowledge that prepares them to excel as early readers. In Kindergarten and First Grade, students learn through components of SFA that focus on developing

¹ Because the specific ELA goals articulated in Zeta's Accountability Plans relate to the New York State ELA Exams, the results of which are not yet available, those goals are not specifically included herein at this time. Zeta understands that it may choose to revise this report with those goals and the New York State Exam results once they become available.

strong oral language skills, a love of reading, phonemic awareness, phonics, listening comprehension, and writing. These elements create a solid foundation for reading and learning. Zeta's remote school model incorporated both synchronous instruction and learning platforms to ensure that remote students were learning at the same high level as in-person students. These learning platforms supported the school's vision of balanced literacy instruction. Students accessed adaptive literacy content that met the needs of individual students, regardless of where they were as learners. Zeta also ensured all students had access to online libraries, ensuring they could continue to read quality books at school and at home. In an effort to replicate the efficacy of in-person schooling, remote students were given access to platforms enabling them to receive feedback from their teachers and to revise and resubmit their work. This approach is closely aligned to methods used in Zeta's regular curriculum. Priority was also placed on programs in which teachers could upload recordings of themselves teaching new information and modeling. Ultimately, for literacy, Zeta utilized programs including Raz for Kids, Lexia for adaptive phonics and comprehension development, EPIC Books for its extensive, high-quality reading library, Amplify for further developing literacy skills in more advanced readers, and Seesaw for teacher-created assignments that can be completed by small groups or by an entire class.

Zeta believes that accurate data about student mastery and growth is essential to creating a school program that meets the academic needs of our students. We are committed to leading with data, using data to drive decisions about curriculum and instruction. Zeta measures student growth and achievement over the course of the year through a portfolio of rigorous in-house English Language Arts Interim Assessments (ELA IAs) aligned to Common Core standards, which the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards are based on for our older grades, as well as the nationally recognized Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) reading assessment. We primarily focus on these assessments when holistically reviewing the growth students make over the year.

Additionally, in order to achieve great outcomes for students, Zeta believes that adults must be focused on their own continuous improvement. Zeta's professional learning program is designed to hone skills, provide content area knowledge, and improve pedagogical techniques so that the school team is prepared to mine the potential of every student and deliver excellent academic outcomes.

METHOD: ZETA'S ELA INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Our ELA IA is our primary literacy assessment used to determine whether students in grades 2 and above are writing and comprehending text on or above grade level (OAGL), based on Zeta's internal rigorous standards. The ELA IA is aligned to Common Core standards, is cumulative, and gets progressively more difficult as the year goes on. The beginning-of-year ELA IA is administered in October, and the end-of-year assessment in June. The passages used in these assessments are aligned to where students should be on their grade level at the time of administration, based on Zeta's internal rigorous standards, so our assessments accordingly increase in content difficulty over the course of the year. This means that for students to continue to perform on or above grade level, they must continue to grow and incorporate content taught throughout the year.

Because Zeta's internal standards are rigorous, our internal assessments exceed the rigors of the New York state tests, meaning a significant percentage of students who are not passing our

internal assessments are likely to pass the New York state tests. Accordingly, it is not possible or appropriate to extrapolate the below data to predict or foreshadow New York state test outcomes.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION, SUMMARY, AND ACTION: ZETA'S ELA INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

In the tables that follow, we present our ELA IA data for the 2020-21 school year broken down by school and grade level to show:

1. Absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year;
2. Absolute achievement and growth of students with low absolute achievement at the beginning of the year;
3. A comparison of absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year between our English Language Learner ("ELL") and non-ELL students; and
4. A comparison of absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year between our new and returning students.

Our results in the data that follows reflect the following:

- Even during this unprecedented and challenging year, 80% of Zeta students met or exceeded our rigorous passing standards for ELA by the end of the year, demonstrating growth of nearly 40 points over the course of the year.
- Of students with low initial absolute achievement on the ELA IA, as indicated by below-grade-level achievement on the October assessment, 72% met or exceeded grade-level standards by the end of the year.
- The absolute achievement and growth of ELL students was comparable to that of non-ELL students, with 73% meeting or exceeding grade-level standards at the end of the year—58 points of growth over the year.
- Students new to Zeta (and thus commonly entering significantly behind where returning Zeta students are achieving) also experienced considerable growth, with 72% meeting or exceeding grade level standards at the end of the year—45 points of growth.

Students Exhibited Strong Achievement on the ELA IA and Grew Substantially over the Year

The table below shows the percentage of students meeting or exceeding Zeta's rigorous passing standards for our ELA IAs administered at the beginning and end of the year, as well as percentage point growth in students meeting or exceeding Zeta's passing standards from beginning to end of year.

As reflected below, across the network, Zeta was able to grow the percentage of students meeting or exceeding Zeta's passing standards by 39.4 points over the year, with 80.3% of our students finishing the year meeting or exceeding the rigorous passing standards for our ELA assessment. Of particular note, our Inwood second grade students went from just 38.2% meeting or exceeding Zeta's passing standards at the beginning of the year to 92.2% at the end of the year, a 54 point increase.

ELA IA Performance by Grade				
School	Grade	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	% OAGL Growth
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall	41.1%	77.2%	36.1%
	2nd	36.3%	82.5%	46.2%
	3rd	49.2%	68.8%	19.6%
INWD	Overall	40.7%	83.7%	43.0%
	2nd	38.2%	92.2%	54.0%
	3rd	44.6%	70.2%	25.6%
Network		40.9%	80.3%	39.4%

- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, based on Zeta’s rigorous grade-level standards; students must score 80% or higher on the ELA IA to meet our passing standards
- **BOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first ELA IA, administered in October 2020
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final ELA IA, administered in June 2021
- **% OAGL Growth** = % of students performing OAGL at BOY compared to the % of students performing OAGL at EOY

Students with Low Initial Absolute Achievement on the ELA IA Grew Remarkably over the Year

The table below looks at students with low absolute achievement at the beginning of the year (i.e., those who did not perform OAGL on the beginning-of-year ELA IA), demonstrating that 72% of these students met or exceeded Zeta’s passing standards on the ELA IA by the end of the year—which represents significant growth over the year.

Even when considering our lowest growth subgroup (Inwood 3rd graders), 51.6% of students who didn’t pass the ELA IA at the beginning of the year passed by the end of the year, and in our highest growth subgroup (Inwood 2nd graders), 87.3% of students who didn’t pass the ELA IA at the beginning of the year passed by the end of the year.

ELA IA Performance by Students Not Performing OAGL at BOY		
School	Grade	EOY % OAGL
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall	69.8%
	2nd	76.9%
	3rd	54.8%
INWD	Overall	74.4%
	2nd	87.3%
	3rd	51.6%
Network		72.0%

- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, based on Zeta’s rigorous grade-level standards; students must score 80% or higher on the ELA IA to meet our passing standards
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final ELA IA, administered in June 2021

English Language Learner Growth Was Notably on Par with or Exceeded Non-English Language Learners on the ELA IA

The below data shows how our ELL students performed on the ELA IA as compared to their non-ELL peers, and demonstrates that literacy gains were even greater among our ELL students than our non-ELL students.

As reflected below, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding Zeta’s passing standards grew across the network by 39.6 points, while the percentage of our ELL students meeting or exceeding Zeta’s passing standards grew by 57.1 points. The growth of our 2nd grade ELL population is particularly notable. Across Zeta Bronx schools, 2nd grade students went from 14.3% of ELLs meeting or exceeding Zeta’s passing standards to 57.1% by the end of the year—42.8 points of growth—and Inwood went from 16.7% of ELLs meeting or exceeding Zeta’s passing standards to 87.5%—70.8 points of growth.

ELA IA Performance by ELL Status					
School	Grade	ELL Status	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	% OAGL Growth
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		41.1%	77.2%	36.1%
	Overall	Y	16.7%	58.3%	41.6%
		N	43.0%	78.7%	35.7%
	2nd	Y	14.3%	57.1%	42.8%
		N	37.9%	84.4%	46.5%
	3rd	Y	20.0%	60.0%	40.0%
		N	51.8%	69.5%	17.7%
INWD	Overall		40.7%	83.7%	43.0%
	Overall	Y	14.8%	78.6%	63.8%
		N	46.6%	84.9%	38.3%
	2nd	Y	16.7%	87.5%	70.8%
		N	46.2%	93.9%	47.7%
	3rd	Y	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
		N	47.2%	73.6%	26.4%
Network	Overall		40.9%	80.3%	39.4%
	Y		15.4%	72.5%	57.1%
	N		44.6%	81.4%	36.8%

- **ELL Status** = is the student identified as an English Language Learner (Y) or not (N)
- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, *based on Zeta’s rigorous grade-level standards*; students must score 80% or higher on the ELA IA to meet our passing standards
- **BOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first ELA IA, administered in October 2020
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final ELA IA, administered in June 2021
- **% OAGL Growth** = % of students performing OAGL at BOY compared to the % of students performing OAGL at EOY

New Students Notably Matched Their Returning Peers in Growth on the ELA IA

Students new to Zeta commonly enter Zeta significantly below grade level. The table below compares the growth of students new to Zeta to that of returning students on the ELA IA, reflecting that new students experienced extraordinary growth over the course of the year.

As reflected below, across the network, new students went from 27.8% meeting or exceeding Zeta’s passing standards at the beginning of the year to 72.0% by the end of the year—44.2 points of growth. Of particular note, in 2nd grade across Bronx and Inwood, our new students were able to close the gap with our returning students. Our new 3rd graders grew by approximately 35 points.

ELA IA Performance by Return Status					
School	Grade	Return Status	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	% OAGL Growth
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		41.1%	77.2%	36.1%
	Overall	New	28.9%	70.0%	41.1%
		Returner	44.8%	79.5%	34.7%
	2nd	New	33.3%	83.3%	50.0%
		Returner	37.2%	82.3%	45.1%
	3rd	New	21.4%	50.0%	28.6%
		Returner	57.4%	75.0%	17.6%
INWD	Overall		40.7%	83.7%	43.0%
	Overall	New	26.5%	74.3%	47.8%
		Returner	45.0%	86.6%	41.6%
	2nd	New	35.3%	94.1%	58.8%
		Returner	38.9%	91.8%	52.9%
	3rd	New	17.6%	55.6%	38.0%
		Returner	56.4%	76.9%	20.5%
Network		Overall	40.9%	80.3%	39.4%
		New	27.8%	72.0%	44.2%
		Returner	44.9%	82.8%	37.9%

- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, based on Zeta’s rigorous passing standards; students must score 80% or higher on the ELA IA to meet our standards
- **BOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first ELA IA, administered in October 2020
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final ELA IA, administered in June 2021
- **% OAGL Growth** = the % of students performing OAGL at BOY compared to the % of students performing OAGL at EOY

METHOD: FOUNTAS & PINNELL

The F&P assessment serves as our primary reading assessment used to determine whether a student is reading on or above grade level, based on Zeta’s rigorous standards. All students in kindergarten and above participate in the F&P, which is first administered in October for first grade and up (normally September, but adjusted this past year due to COVID-19), and in December for kindergarten. The final F&P assessment of the year is administered in June.

Zeta has highly rigorous standards for what is considered passing on the F&P, benchmarking our results to the more rigorous Teachers College Reading & Writing Project Scale, one that is adopted by high-performing schools across the nation. Students must also make considerable growth over the course of the year to remain at or above grade level. In kindergarten, 2nd, and 3rd grades, we expect students to grow three reading levels (*i.e.*, A to D), and in 1st grade we expect students to grow 6 levels. Because the target increases over the course of the year, a student must continue to grow at the appropriate pace to remain on or above grade level.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION, SUMMARY, AND ACTION: FOUNTAS & PINNELL

In the tables that follow, we present our F&P data for the 2020-21 school year broken down by school and grade level to show:

1. Absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year;
2. Absolute achievement and growth of students with low absolute achievement at the beginning of the year;
3. A comparison of absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year between our English Language Learner (“ELL”) and non-ELL students; and
4. A comparison of absolute achievement and growth over the course of the year between our new and returning students.

Our results in the data that follows reflect the following:

- Even during this unprecedented and challenging year, Zeta was still able to develop a strong literacy foundation for students and achieve meaningful literacy growth in students. On average, Zeta students achieved one year of reading growth last year.
- Students with low absolute achievement on the F&P at the beginning of the school year averaged over one year of growth in reading.
- The absolute achievement and growth of ELL students was on par with that of non-ELL students, with ELL students averaging 0.9 years of reading growth.
- Students new to Zeta also experienced considerable growth, also averaging over one year of reading growth.

Across the Network, Students Advanced One Year in Reading and Ended the Year Strong

The table below shows the percentage of students performing on or above grade level on the F&P administered at the beginning and end of the year, as well as the average number of years students grew in reading over the year (for example, a 3rd grader is expected to grow three levels over the course of the year; if a 3rd grader grew 4 levels in that year then the student would have made $4/3 = 1.33$ years of growth). Across the network, during this unprecedented time of disruptions and challenging learning conditions due to COVID, our students made, on average, one year of growth.

The percentage of students reading on or above grade level grew by 10 points by the end of the year. Of particular note, across Zeta Bronx 3rd grade, students grew over one year on average, and 89% ended the year reading on or above grade level.

F&P Performance by Grade				
School	Grade	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	Avg Years Grown
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall	68.8%	73.7%	1.0
	K-2	66.2%	71.0%	1.0
	3rd	83.9%	89.2%	1.1
INWD	Overall	63.1%	78.4%	0.9
	K-2	60.9%	77.7%	0.9
	3rd	76.4%	82.8%	1.0
Network		66.1%	76.0%	1.0

- OAGL = on or above grade level, set to the more rigorous and nationally adopted Teachers College F&P grading scale
- BOY % OAGL = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first F&P, administered in October 2020
- EOY % OAGL = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final F&P, administered in June 2021
- Avg Years Grown = average number of years students grew in reading over the year based on the rigorous Teachers College F&P grading scale

Students with Low Initial Absolute Achievement Advanced Over One Year in Reading

The below data looks at the growth of students with low initial absolute achievement—those not reading on grade level at the beginning of the year, based on the Teachers College F&P scale—and reflects the strong growth of Zeta’s struggling readers over the course of the year.

As reflected below, across the network, 49% of students who were not reading on grade level at the beginning of the year were reading on or above grade level by the end of the year, averaging a full year of growth. Notably, 3rd grade students with low initial absolute achievement across the network grew nearly one year and a half on average.

F&P Performance by Students Not Performing OAGL at BOY			
School	Grade	EOY % OAGL	Avg Years Grown
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall	44.8%	1.0
	K-2	41.5%	1.0
	3rd	76.9%	1.4
INWD	Overall	52.8%	1.1
	K-2	53.8%	1.1
	3rd	43.8%	1.4
Network		49.0%	1.1

- OAGL = on or above grade level, set to the more rigorous and nationally adopted Teachers College F&P grading scale
- EOY % OAGL = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final F&P, administered in June 2021
- Avg Years Grown = average number of years students grew in reading over the year based on the rigorous Teachers College F&P Grading Scale

English Language Learner Growth Was Notably on Par with or Exceeded Non-English Language Learners on the F&P

The F&P data below looks at the achievement and growth of our ELL students compared to our non-ELL students on the F&P, demonstrating that our ELL students performed nearly on par with our non-ELL students, with our ELL students experiencing on average 0.9 years of growth.

As reflected below, we were able to grow the percentage of ELL students reading on or above grade level across the network by 15 points—even more growth than we saw in our non-ELL population. These results represent the strong additional support we provide to our ELL population to ensure that they progress at the same rate as their non-ELL peers.

F&P Performance by ELL Status					
School	Grade	ELL Status	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	Avg Years Grown
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		68.8%	73.7%	1.0
	Overall	Y	60.3%	69.1%	1.0
		N	70.4%	74.6%	1.0
	K-2	Y	57.1%	68.3%	1.0
		N	68.1%	71.6%	1.0
	3rd	Y	100.0%	80.0%	1.1
N		82.5%	90.0%	1.1	
INWD	Overall		63.1%	78.4%	0.9
	Overall	Y	53.3%	72.7%	0.9
		N	66.7%	80.5%	0.9
	K-2	Y	53.4%	74.5%	0.9
		N	64.3%	79.0%	0.9
	3rd	Y	50.0%	25.0%	1.0
N		77.4%	87.0%	1.0	
Network		Overall	66.1%	76.0%	1.0
		Y	56.1%	71.3%	0.9
		N	68.7%	77.2%	1.0

- **ELL Status** = Is the student identified as an English Language Learner (Y) or not (N)
- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, set to the more rigorous and nationally adopted Teachers College F&P grading scale
- **BOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first F&P, administered in October 2020
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final F&P, administered in June 2021
- **Avg Years Grown** = average number of years students grew in reading over the year based on the rigorous Teachers College F&P Grading Scale

A Significant Majority of New-to-Zeta Students Ended the Year On or Above Grade Level on the F&P

Below, we break out our F&P data by new-to-Zeta versus returning-to-Zeta students. Across all subgroups, new students grew as readers by at least one year on average, and across Zeta Bronx 3rd grade, new students grew by an average of 1.5 years.

Across the network, the percentage of new students reading on or above grade level after just one year with Zeta was 72%, only 8 points behind that of returners.

F&P Performance by Return Status					
School	Grade	Return Status	BOY % OAGL	EOY % OAGL	Avg Years Grown
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		68.8%	73.7%	1.0
	Overall	New	59.5%	70.9%	1.1
		Returner	79.6%	77.2%	0.9
	K-2	New	60.7%	70.1%	1.0
		Returner	74.1%	72.3%	0.8
	3rd	New	38.5%	81.3%	1.5
		Returner	95.9%	91.8%	1.0
	INWD	Overall		63.1%	78.4%
Overall		New	56.2%	73.9%	1.0
		Returner	70.3%	83.2%	0.9
K-2		New	64.1%	80.1%	1.0
		Returner	58.4%	75.6%	0.8
3rd		New	31.3%	55.6%	1.3
		Returner	94.9%	95.0%	0.8
Network		Overall	66.1%	76.0%	1.0
		New	57.9%	72.3%	1.1
		Returner	75.0%	80.2%	0.8

- **ELL Status** = Is the student identified as an English Language Learner (Y) or not (N)
- **OAGL** = on or above grade level, set to the more rigorous and nationally adopted Teachers College F&P grading scale
- **BOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their first F&P, administered in October 2020
- **EOY % OAGL** = % of students performing on or above grade level on their final F&P, administered in June 2021
- **Avg Years Grown** = average number of years students grew in reading over the year based on the rigorous Teachers College F&P Grading Scale

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE: ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

N/A

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics: Students will show competency in their understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.²

BACKGROUND: MATHEMATICS INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Zeta’s foundation of math learning stems from the belief that students conceptually learn math most effectively through various inquiries, activities, and problem-solving opportunities. Zeta’s mathematics curriculum is internally created and based on a combination of the following:

² Because the specific Mathematics goals articulated in Zeta’s Accountability Plans relate to the New York State Math Exams, the results of which are not yet available, those goals are not specifically included herein at this time. Zeta understands that it may choose to revise this report with New York State Exam results once they become available.

- **TERC Investigations in Number, Data, and Space** is a Kindergarten to fifth grade mathematics curriculum aligned to New York State Next Generation Learning Standards that is designed to support children as they make sense of mathematical ideas. TERC Investigations employs a hands-on approach that guides students to develop their own mathematical understandings through a series of investigations, games, and activities. This conceptual approach allows students to understand math through collaborative learning. Investigations materials are drawn upon in Zeta's curricular design to teach both number sense as well as mathematical content such as geometry and data analysis.
- **Contexts for Learning (CFL):** Zeta relies on CFL units to complement the Investigations materials. Like TERC, CFL units are conceptually based on and aligned with the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards. These units foster deep understanding of mathematics by creating contexts familiar to students' lives. Like Investigations, CFL units expose students to a series of mathematical inquiries that are collaboratively solved. The teacher training mirrors the work done in preparing to launch Investigations.
- **Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI)** is another foundational aspect of Zeta's math content, building students' ability to solve mathematical problems and deepen their understanding of number sense and operations. Students are presented with daily problems that allow them to solve with both invented algorithms or by working with concrete representations of numbers, such as manipulatives and drawings, as well as more traditional number sentences. In this approach, younger students first use concrete materials to solve problems and look for patterns and generalizations. As students need to record their work, they do so first by sketching pictures (representations) of the manipulative models and then finally move to using abstract (and more formal) mathematical notations for their work. This mathematical approach gives teachers an understanding of the importance of student-led problem solving, as it requires students to solve problems using their own mathematical understandings and strategies. Student strategies are then shared with the entire class in order to advance all students' mathematical understanding. Zeta uses CGI in part because of its successful use at other high-performing charter school networks, where the use of CGI teacher and leader training as well as student instruction have led to excellent outcomes in populations similar to that of Zeta Bronx 1.

These three curricular components were chosen for their alignment to Zeta's deeply held belief that students should learn math conceptually and collaboratively. Zeta's professional learning for teachers in math focuses on the following: (a) the development of students' mathematical thinking; (b) instruction that influences that development; (c) teachers' knowledge and beliefs that influence their instructional practices; and (d) the way that teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices are influenced by their understanding of students' mathematical thinking.

Since Zeta Bronx 1 moved to a fully remote model in March 2020, Zeta has incorporated programs that could collectively match the school's vision of conceptual mathematics and student-focused learning, prioritizing platforms enabling students to receive feedback from their teachers and to revise and resubmit their work, as this approach is closely aligned to methods used in Zeta's regular curriculum. Zeta utilized the program DreamBox before transitioning to using teacher-made materials on Seesaw as our primary mode of math instruction. All math components were taught synchronously this year, allowing for student discussion on mathematical thinking. Zeta's Director of Math created assignments each week on Seesaw aligned to Zeta's problem-solving curriculum and new content assignments aligned to the original math scope and sequence for the year.

Zeta believes that accurate data about student mastery and growth is essential to creating a school program that meets the academic needs of our students. Zeta is committed to leading with data, using data to drive decisions about curriculum and instruction. To that end, we regularly assess students on all areas of the mathematics curriculum, gaining an accurate view into where students are strong and where they need additional support to master comments.

METHOD: MATHEMATICS INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Our Math Interim Assessment (IA) is our primary means of assessing whether students in Kindergarten and above are performing math on or above grade level, based on Zeta's internal rigorous standards. The Math IA is aligned to NYS Next Generation standards, is cumulative, and the assessment gets progressively *more difficult* as the year goes on. This means that for students to continue to perform on or above grade level, they must grow throughout the year and master all content taught over the course of the year.

Our Math IAs are highly rigorous, including questions that ask students to go beyond siloed mastery of each standard and develop a holistic understanding of grade-level content. The Math IAs include three types of questions:

- **Foundational:** These questions assess whether students have mastered foundational skills tied to grade-level standards.
- **Basic Application:** These questions require students to apply their foundational knowledge to a more rigorous problem, assessing grade-level mastery.
- **Complex Application:** These complex questions are rigorous and ask students to bring together several concepts they have learned over the course of the year to solve a single question, deepening grade-level mastery.

The above range of question types enables us to assess students' grade-level mastery, based on Zeta's internal rigorous standards, and understand where any gaps exist, while also informing future instructional decisions.

Because Zeta's internal standards are rigorous, our internal assessments exceed the rigors of the New York state tests, meaning a significant percentage of students who are not passing our internal assessments are likely to pass the New York state tests. Accordingly, it is not possible or appropriate to extrapolate the below data to predict or foreshadow New York state test outcomes.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION, SUMMARY, AND ACTION: MATHEMATICS INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

In the tables that follow, we present our Math IA Assessment Data for the 2020-21 school year broken down by school and grade level and by question type. Unlike the ELA IA and F&P, this year we did not administer a baseline Math IA. Instead, we administered shorter math quizzes that were more conducive to remote instruction and allowed us to identify targeted areas where students needed additional support. As a result, our Math IA data this year is focused on students' absolute achievement at the end of the year, broken down by various subgroups:

1. Absolute achievement at the end of the year across the network;

2. A comparison of absolute achievement at the end of the year between our ELL and non-ELL students; and
3. A comparison of absolute achievement at the end of the year between our new and returning students.

A Majority of Students Passed Our Rigorous Math IA, and Almost All Mastered Foundational Skills

The data below shows how students across the network performed on the Math IA at the end of the year, and also how they performed broken down by question type. Across the network, a significant majority of students passed our Math IA at the end of the year. When broken down by question type, we see even more encouraging results.

As reflected below, students exhibited an impressive mastery of Foundational math—the average score on Foundational questions was roughly 87%, Foundational plus Basic Application was 85%, and on all questions, the average score was 81%. These results are particularly encouraging considering the teaching and learning challenges teachers and students faced this year, and reflect that our students have a strong understanding of the basic skills needed to master grade-level standards and are prepared for their next grade level.

Math IA Performance by Grade					
School	Grade	EOY % Passing	Foundational %	Basic Application %	Complex Application %
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall	64.7%	86.0%	83.0%	79.6%
	K-2	68.0%	87.7%	84.2%	81.1%
	3rd	45.3%	76.4%	76.2%	71.0%
INWD	Overall	73.4%	88.8%	86.3%	83.3%
	K-2	76.8%	90.7%	88.4%	85.2%
	3rd	53.4%	77.4%	74.1%	71.6%
Network		68.9%	87.4%	84.6%	81.3%

- **EOY % Passing** = % of students passing Zeta’s rigorous Math IA at the end of the year
- **Foundational %** = average student score on Foundational math questions
- **Basic App %** = average student score on Basic Application and Foundational questions combined
- **Complex App %** = average student score across all question types on the Math IA

English Language Learners’ Math IA Achievement Matched that of Non-English Language Learners

The following table, which shows the achievement of our ELL students as compared to non-ELL students on the Math IA, demonstrates that our ELL students at least matched the achievement of our non-ELL students in all areas.

As reflected below, the percent of ELL students who passed our Math IA at the end of the year was within 0.7% of the non-ELL population pass rate. This data again confirms the effectiveness of the strong support Zeta provides to our ELL students.

Math IA Performance by ELL Status						
School	Grade	ELL Status	EOY % Passing	Foundational %	Basic Application %	Complex Application %
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		64.7%	86.0%	83.0%	79.6%
	Overall	Y	64.2%	88.0%	85.0%	80.5%
		N	64.7%	85.7%	82.6%	79.4%
	K-2	Y	67.7%	88.4%	85.3%	80.9%
		N	68.1%	87.6%	84.0%	81.1%
	3rd	Y	20.0%	82.5%	81.5%	76.0%
		N	47.5%	75.8%	75.7%	70.6%
INWD	Overall		73.4%	88.8%	86.3%	83.3%
	Overall	Y	70.9%	88.5%	86.2%	82.3%
		N	74.4%	88.9%	86.4%	83.6%
	K-2	Y	72.6%	89.2%	87.1%	83.2%
		N	78.7%	91.3%	88.9%	86.1%
	3rd	Y	25.0%	68.8%	61.5%	58.8%
		N	55.6%	78.0%	75.1%	72.5%
Network	Overall		68.9%	87.4%	84.6%	81.3%
	Y		68.4%	88.3%	85.7%	81.6%
	N		69.1%	87.1%	84.3%	81.3%

- **EOY % Passing** = % of students passing Zeta’s Rigorous Math IA at the end of the year
- **Foundational %** = average student score on Foundational math questions
- **Basic App %** = average student score on Basic Application and Foundational questions combined
- **Complex App %** = average student score across all question types on the Math IA

New Students’ Math IA Achievement Matched or Exceeded that of Returning Students

The below data compares the achievement of new-to-Zeta and returning-to-Zeta students on the Math IA, reflecting that in K-2 across the Network, the percent of new students passing our Math IA at the end of the year was nearly identical to our returning students.

Notably, our new students were able to make significant growth this year, and we saw comparable achievement on Foundational questions by our new and returning students.

Math IA Performance by Return Status						
School	Grade	Return Status	EOY % Passing	Foundational %	Basic Application %	Complex Application %
BX 1, 2, & 3	Overall		64.7%	86.0%	83.0%	79.6%
	Overall	New	67.9%	88.3%	85.3%	81.5%
		Returner	60.7%	83.3%	80.3%	77.3%
	K-2	New	70.3%	89.8%	86.5%	82.8%
		Returner	64.6%	84.6%	80.7%	78.4%
	3rd	New	33.3%	66.7%	67.2%	62.0%
		Returner	49.0%	79.3%	79.0%	73.8%
INWD	Overall		73.4%	88.8%	86.3%	83.3%
	Overall	New	69.2%	89.1%	85.6%	81.5%
		Returner	77.9%	88.4%	87.1%	85.1%
	K-2	New	72.6%	91.2%	87.8%	83.6%
		Returner	81.9%	90.0%	89.1%	87.2%
	3rd	New	33.3%	66.7%	62.8%	59.4%
		Returner	62.5%	82.2%	79.2%	77.0%
Network	Overall		68.9%	87.4%	84.6%	81.3%
	New		68.6%	88.7%	85.4%	81.5%
	Returner		69.3%	85.8%	83.7%	81.2%

- **EOY % Passing** = % of students passing Zeta’s rigorous Math IA at the end of the year
- **Foundational %** = average student score on Foundational math questions
- **Basic App %** = average student score on Basic Application and Foundational questions combined
- **Complex App %** = average student score across all question types on the Math IA

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

N/A

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

Zeta achieved a status of “Good Standing” for 2019-20 and therefore also for 2020-21.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

2019-20 was the first year for which Zeta received an ESSA status.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	N/A
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing