

INSTRUCTIONS / NOTES

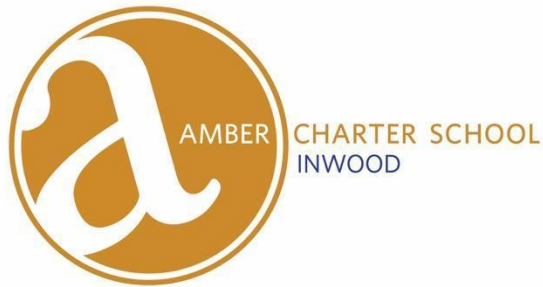
FOR 2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (“APPR”)

1. Schools that do not yet enroll students in state testing grades are still required to complete an APPR. In the absence of state test results, schools may report results from internally developed assessments, nationally norm-referenced tests, and/or any other evaluation method under each goal area. Schools should provide tabulated achievement or growth results if available under the “Results and Evaluation” section of each goal area.
2. The deadline for submission of the APPR is September 16, 2022. Schools with extenuating circumstances may request an extension as necessary. As it does every year, the Institute will validate and post the finalized APPRs onto its website.
3. **Text Highlighted in Grey = explanation or guidance for an entry.** As guidance, schools should remove the existing text entirely and replace it with information to complete the report.
4. Please do not include these instructions or the reference guide below in a submitted report.

REFERENCE GUIDE TO TEMPLATE SECTIONS

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ESSA GOAL	8

The Accountability Plan Progress Report Template Is Below. Delete all information above before submitting.



Amber Charter School, Inwood

2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September, 2022

By Kirsys Gomez and Veronica Almedina

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New York, NY 10040
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2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Sashemani Elliott, Chief Academic Officer, prepared this 2021-22 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)
John Gutierrez	Board Chair	Executive Committee and Ad hoc member of all board committees
Amador Centeno	Vice Chair	Executive and Facilities Committee
Soledad Hiciano	Secretary	Executive and Development Committee
Frank Aldridge	Treasurer	Executive and Finance Committee
Kelly Combs	Trustee (resigned May, 2022)	Facilities Committee
Timothy Day	Trustee	Facilities Committee
Robyn Epps	Trustee	Development Committee
Li'Esha Garcia	Trustee	Finance Committee
Miguelina German	Trustee	Education Committee
Lindsay Marino Long	Trustee	Development Committee
Brad Olsen	Trustee	Finance Committee
Jenna Pantel	Trustee	Development and Education Committee
Brian Quillin	Trustee	Education Committee
Vasthi R. Acosta	Trustee	Ad hoc member of all board committees

Francina Yaw- Costello has served as the school leader since 2022 and was previously the founding Assistant Principal for the campus during the 21-22 school year.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Founded in 2000, Amber Charter Schools network mission statement reads:

Our mission is to provide students with an academically rigorous and well-rounded education, along with strong character development, enabling them to prosper in future endeavors.

Amber IW was founded during the fall of 2021. During its opening year, Amber Inwood served 29 students in grades K-1. Our students were approximately 16% African American, 73% Latino, and 11% White/Asian/Multi-racial and other, with 83% eligible for free and reduced lunch. There were 50% students who identified as male and 50% students who identified as female.

During its opening year, the school was slated to open with a total of 125 students. However, due to the challenges faced at the height of COVID-19, we served a total of 51 students, which were served across three classrooms. The final student count was 51 students in June.

In literacy the curriculum was *Into Reading* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. The curriculum used for math instruction was a pilot, and we partnered with Achievement First which offers a math program called AF Navigator. The science curriculum program used was McGraw Hill Inspire Science - while also leveraging its online learning platform to enrich the learning experiences of our students. The social studies curriculum entitled *New York Social Studies* is published by McGraw-Hill. In addition, Amber continued to offer specialty classes in reading intervention, technology, Spanish, visual arts, music, and physical education.

Amber has always been committed to serving the whole child and as Amber Inwood was founded, this tradition and value remained in place. We continued to serve the whole child by ensuring that the enrichment opportunities offered also included blocks of time dedicated to Social Emotional Learning [SEL]. This support was critical during our return to school and supported the healing process stemming from COVID-19. Amber Inwood, similar to its sister sites, used Sanford-Harmony as the foundational SEL program. We offered ways for our families to become involved by utilizing our online platforms, such as GoGuardian, Clever and ZOOM features to bring the community into the classrooms of our founding class. This ensured that the safety of the community was not compromised while we opened the doors to our school.

Our staff was also impacted by the pandemic. As our staff returned to buildings live and in person full time, it was not without challenge. Many arrived with the heavy burden of managing the disruptions COVID-19 caused to their personal and professional lives. In its founding year, many teachers on an already small staff, had to quickly pivot to accommodate for closures, attendance challenges, vacancies due to immediate resignations, personal challenges and so forth. Given the diverse needs of our staff, we continued gathering insight through surveys, focus groups, check ins, and other means to collect data on which options felt safest and responsive to their needs while also building transparency and communicating the shifting guidelines from the CDC and other authorities. We also provided choices to staff to develop their practice in asynchronous and in person ways. As we grow, we continue to practice the community by hosting focus groups designated by role to inform our decisions for the upcoming year as well. In this last year, we also committed to bringing to the forefront our human rituals

and celebrations, through our committees re-launching at our schools. These address everything from student interventions, to celebrating our staff. Both necessary as we collectively and in community made sense of education during COVID-19. Community is a character trait of the Amber Way, and it is what holds all stakeholders together.

School year 2021-22 left us deeply impacted by the global pandemic and navigating new challenges as we worked to maintain the safety of our community, make up for lost instruction and reestablish trust within the community we have served for years. COVID-19 forced us to re-think many of our practices to account for new knowledge, challenges and opportunities. The communities we serve continue to be disproportionately impacted by this crisis. As an organization, we continued to respond by offering guidance support services to students and by extension, offering recommendations to families. We did so by surveying families and staff members about their challenges and concerns while children/they were in school and/or at home. Fostering and maintaining positive connections between students, families, and staff continues to be our focus.

Considering the many lessons learned from the previous school year, we were unrelenting about offering a robust learning environment which also leveraged technological tools to supplement, support and enhance instruction from the launch of the school year.

During our opening year, we understood the many challenges families had and would face while sending their children to school. Living through the uncertainties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic left the community feeling unsafe, uncertain, and in distress. Many families had challenges providing uniforms for their children and so we created raffles and vouchers for attending events, we scouted ways to reduce the costs associated with after school and leaned on each other to be responsive to the needs as they arose. Additionally, when faced with closures due to surges in the infection rate of COVID-19, we offered office hours for families/children virtually so they could confer with teachers and receive targeted assistance. To support the transition back to school during the pandemic, we also held information sessions and town meetings for the community to inform them of any upcoming changes that would impact the schedule, programming, assessment, and so forth.

Despite the complex challenges our schools, communities, city, and country faced since March 2020, and continue to endure, our leaders and teachers have learned, stretched, and iterated in a variety of ways as we continue to strive to achieve our mission. We did this work daily, collaboratively, and with great intensity, throughout the year. This summer, we continue to leverage what worked and address what did not. This has made Amber all the more prepared to serve more students, more effectively, and truly achieve our mission.

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
2021-22	31	23												54

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at Amber Charter School will be proficient readers and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of English-language reading skills.

BACKGROUND

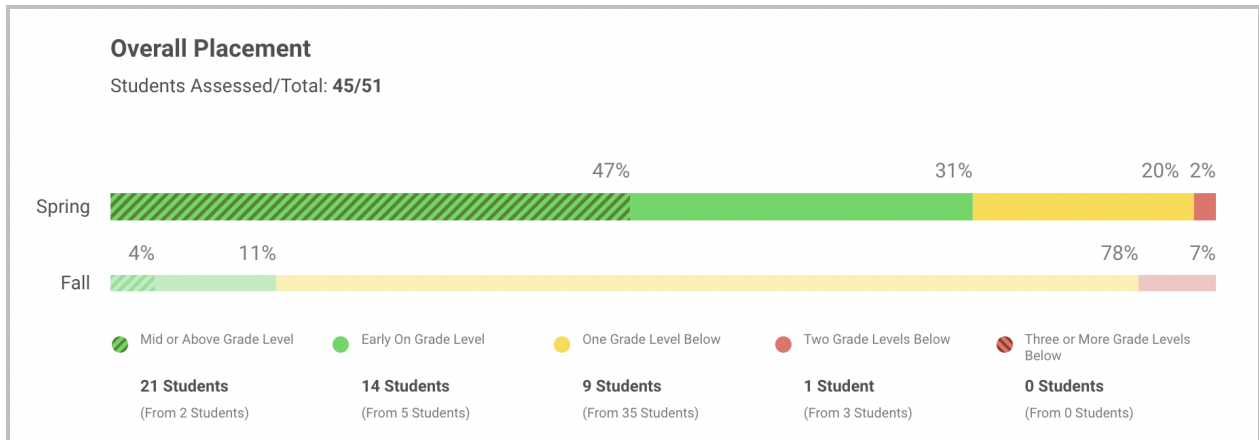
Amber Charter Schools uses Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s [INTO Reading](#) curriculum programs for core English language arts instruction. This program is Common Core State Standards and New York Learning Standards-aligned and received “meets expectations” ratings from EdReports. To supplement our core programs, all students utilize [i-Ready ELA](#) which offer computer-adapted lessons. These lessons are aligned to our iReady diagnostic assessments and can be tailored to enrich each child’s learning experiences. Additionally, [Raz Kids](#) was used as well which further allows for tailored and targeted learning.

METHOD

iReady ELA diagnostics were administered during three points of the school year to gauge impact of instruction provided. Our determination to meet the needs of our students was greater than ever before given the launch of the school in a new community, after attempting to return to a greater sense of normalcy during the pandemic, and given our legacy as a network of schools focused on supporting all learners who attend our schools.

Throughout the year, the data collected from iReady was used to help tier students for learning grade level content, plan for targeted interventions, adequately staff and train personnel for said plans and generate actionable data student reports for teachers. This student performance data was used to tailor instruction for students to work on asynchronously during remote instructional days, as well as during their stations; a key method employed at our schools to provide students with small group instruction, and one on one support. By having the i-Ready performance data from these diagnostics, we were able to create personalized learning paths for each student using the i-Ready computer-based lessons. We conducted three rounds of these assessments, and the final one was administered in May.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION



Grade	Annual Typical Growth ⓘ		Annual Stretch Growth ⓘ		% Students with Improved Placement	Students Assessed/Total
	Progress (Median)	% Met	Progress (Median)	% Met		
Grade K	116%	66%	85%	34%	97%	29/29
Grade 1	80%	45%	63%	23%	59%	22/22

At Amber Inwood elementary, we are proud of the marked growth students made across the board. We saw a significant improvement in the number of students who went from being one grade level behind during the baseline in comparison to the Spring final. Namely, nearly 50% of students ended at ‘mid’ or ‘above’ grade level during a year with many disruptions. Some of the disruptions being low/fluctuating enrollment leading to discharges or changes in class size, construction challenges (fire alarms leading to evacuation, for instance), surges from COVID-19 which led to closures, staff retention issues and so on. The pandemic and the deepened learning curve for staff, students, and families, further complicated and deeply impacted our scores. These results will serve as a baseline for the upcoming school year as we rally to meet the expectations set forth. [Curriculum Associates](#) has recently published reports that reflect nationally what we have seen internally--less than typical results.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

We succeeded in establishing norms, protocols and guidance for testing based on accommodations necessary while facing disruptions due to COVID closures, personnel shortages, student attendance challenges and so forth. Despite our efforts to mitigate these challenges our student data shows that we need to continue to closely monitor and create actionable plans for content.

ACTION PLAN

We will continue to examine students’ academic progress during the 2022-23 school year and work towards clarifying how recovery and growth unfolds and inform our practices given the ongoing

effects of the pandemic. These results are not reflective of what we historically have produced as a network of schools. Thankfully, we know much more about what our students need in comparison to when we first opened our doors as a school.

For the 2022-23 school year, we are eager to respond to the needs of those students who demonstrated the need for additional support. Ending the year with the data points aforementioned and better protocols for maintaining stability as a school, will allow the school to support students with the greatest needs.

Amber will continue to use the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt literacy curriculum in the coming school year, *Into Reading and Writing*. This curriculum has an excellent balance of non-fiction and fiction texts, a balance and diversity of text genres, as well as a text complexity analysis for the main texts. Guided reading books are incorporated that can be used for ELL support/differentiation/small group instruction and they address a range of complexity levels.

Similar to our other sites, we will continue implementing station learning as a model for intervention and support in the classroom. During this time, teachers begin instruction with a quick mini-lesson and then student's transition to stations where the work is tailored to their small groups' needs. Children can apply skills at their level and the teacher can adjust the stations accordingly if a student needs to be challenged or brought up to speed.

Amber will continue to use i-Ready as a diagnostic assessment. Testing will be conducted three times during the school year to measure student progress in all grades, K-2 during the 2022-23 school year. The data from this assessment will be examined by the classroom teachers, instructional leadership, and the governing board. The data will drive instructional practice and academic interventions. Focal points include alignment with curriculum, comparison of in-class performance to the i-Ready assessments, and the monitoring of how i-Ready's curriculum supports the preparation of our students in the coming years as they prepare for New York State assessments.

The design of the school day will have students begin each morning with a predictable routine, and then a teacher-directed ELA mini-lesson, which will include the presentation of a learning standard, modeling, and a "we do." Students will then work independently or in small groups, initially focused on the ELA learning target and then transitioning to targeted ELA station learning, interventions, iReady, and IEP-mandated and ELL services.

As in years past, we will apply a Response to Intervention framework to determine student levels of academic need, based on diagnostics administered. Academic intervention staffing at both schools remains intact, including SETSS, ESL, AIS, Tutoring, and Title I reading teachers, as well as teacher assistants in grades K-2. We will provide additional professional development during our August Summer Institute, this approach will afford classroom teachers and interventionists more opportunities for coordination and collaboration, and an even smaller teacher/interventionist to student ratio than our typical groupings.

Amber will continue to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, as we are legally required to do by Child Find. All enrolled students will be monitored closely by classroom teachers, certified special education, and other interventionists. Our special education coordinators at each school are charged with ensuring students are evaluated and served in alignment with all IEP mandates, and they work closely with our operations staff to determine whether newly enrolled students have been formerly identified with disabilities (through searching the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools system [ATS], following up with former schools, etc.).

Similarly, students who require English as a Second Language [ESL] services, determined by NYSITELL/NYSESLAT levels of proficiency, will receive this instruction during the ELA, math and intervention blocks while in school. Staff developers will work with a Manager of English Language Learner Services, to ensure ESL compliance, refine pacing calendars based on instructional priorities and determine learning sessions per week.

We are thoughtfully considering our students' and families' experiences with COVID-19 and the additional stressors arising out of the broader pandemic experiences, as well as the decreased or complete elimination of typical developmental learning and life experiences. We look forward to working with our families, students and staff to meet the i-Ready goal measures in the coming year.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

All students at Amber Charter School will become proficient in math and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of mathematical skills.

BACKGROUND

[*AF Navigator*](#) is the math curriculum piloted at Amber Inwood Elementary during the 2021-22 school year after partnering with Achievement First. The materials and instructional pacing are focused, they offer a system for close collaboration with their expert coaches, it offers a plethora of professional development which can be offered both live and asynchronously, and provides scope and sequencing for lessons, interventions and promotes coherence and opportunities for both fluency and deeper understanding while increasing instructional time.

The materials are also comprehensive and easy to use. They provide the appropriate level and type of scaffolding, differentiation, intervention and support for a broad range of learners. In addition, response to intervention is embedded in the program to support diverse learners. Another important factor in using this program is its robust coaching associated with the program which allows our teachers and coaches to evaluate practices and adjust given a tighter feedback loop being implemented.

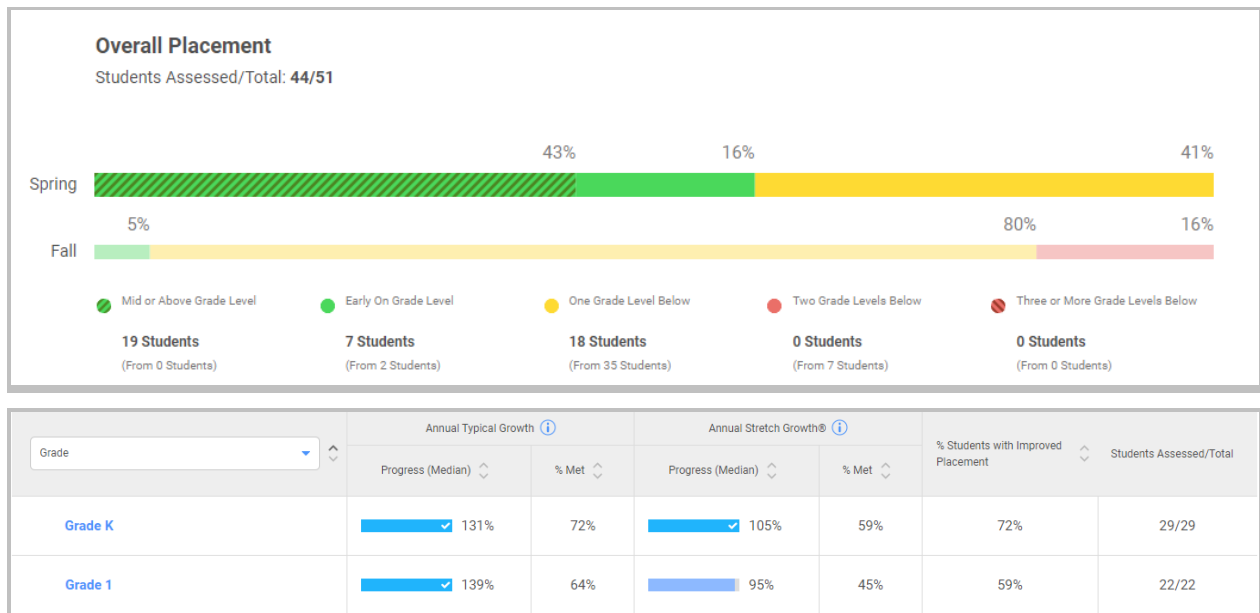
Professional development to the faculty was offered during Summer Institute as well as throughout the school year. A professional development plan is designed every school year to address the individual needs of each faculty member and ensure their professional growth.

METHOD

During 2021-22, Amber Inwood used the i-Ready diagnostic to assess student growth and achievement in mathematics. It was administered three times (Fall, Winter, Spring). Similar to the way in which we referenced using our reading data to gather information about student performance levels and set goals, we followed suit with math.

As a school, we worked diligently to engage our families and students in the evaluative process. This was a direct result of the lessons we learned as a network the year prior. We faced challenges with the invalidation of data given that our families were overly supporting students during individualized assessments. Starting the year with the understanding that our families, staff and students all needed to be involved in the data collection process as well as the outcomes was invaluable as we launched our school and piloted the program. We did this by communicating the assessment windows, the process and the results to our families as well as what the end of year benchmarks would have been during a typical year. This distinction was particularly important because as we grappled with challenges from COVID we wanted families to understand the importance of focusing on the process of growth. Additionally, we wanted our families and students to have a common language when discussing goals and growth which are aligned with our school value of **ACHIEVEMENT** while collaborating closely with our **COMMUNITY**.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION



The growth made in math during a year of founding and piloting a new program was impressive. Although we would like the number of students in the section marked as performing at 'mid' or

'above' to be greater, we were proud that 43% of our students were able to make significant progress during a tumultuous year. We are continuing our partnership with AF Navigator, and coaches so that we can use the program with greater fidelity. One of the setbacks we experienced this year with the outcomes was not having the coaches being able to conduct walkthroughs with us. During the 21-22 school year, we were required to pivot in several ways that were atypical from the original program design. We met remotely with our coaches from AF Navigator, reviewed videos to provide feedback on the execution of the lessons and addressed the way the scopes needed to change given the disruptions caused by COVID. We are hopeful that with a more stabilized year, and implementing the program with greater fidelity, we will continue to see outcomes which truly capture what our Amber Stars, staff and families can do when we all work as one.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Given our commitment to providing students with equitable access given the return to school during the pandemic, we partnered with Achievement First Navigator to help develop our teachers, coaches, leaders and students given their thorough program. It accounted for professional development for leaders and teachers, manipulatives which allowed equitable access to our students as they all required differentiated instruction, tools to supplement interventions, and more. Learn more about the theories and implementation of the program [here](#).

ACTION PLAN

One of the methods we used to monitor academic progress was by creating a data driven plan at the beginning of the year and then updated after each assessment cycle. In this document, our teachers were able to see what the performance level of each student was, their stretch goal, analyze how much further they needed to go to get to the endline goal (May goal) and then create an instructional individualized plan that corresponded to the needs of the students. We aim to continue to use this tool as a means to navigate support, and celebrate growth at our school. Additionally, with the support of the coaches and the model of AF being implemented during the 22-23 school year, we also aim to decrease the gaps that remain and refine based on the lessons we learned from the pilot during the 21-22 school year.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students at Amber Charter School Inwood will become proficient in science and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of scientific skills.

BACKGROUND

For the 2021-22 school year, Amber Charter School Inwood utilized the same core science curriculum program already in use across the network - [McGraw Hill Inspire Science](#). We also used *Science Fusion* which offers students the opportunity to investigate and draw conclusions through

reading, digital lessons, and labs. Units within each book are divided into lessons which were completed weekly. Teachers had the opportunity to use the science materials and other resources identified to enhance the units of study covered by the curriculum. The in-house staff developer provided guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum and supplemental resources.

METHOD

The school did not administer the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students during the 2021-22 school year because it does not yet serve students in the grades assessed in Science. Based on the new guidelines issued by NYS, Amber Inwood will assess students in this content once the founding cohort enters the 4th grade.

GOAL 4: ESSA

Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent changes to the state’s testing, accountability, and federal reporting requirements, the 2021-22 school accountability statuses are the same as those assigned for the 2020-21 school year. Assigned accountability designations and further context can be found [here](#).

Goal 4: ESSA

Amber Inwood will be found in good standing.

Goal 4: Absolute Measure

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

METHOD

Because 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

Amber Inwood is in good standing.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2021-22	Good standing