

**ELM COMMUNITY
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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Elm Community
— CHARTER SCHOOL —



2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Priscilla Walton (Principal), Kayla Cobb (Assistant Principal), and Ali Epstein (Director of Humanities), prepared this 2021-22 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the charter school’s board of trustees:

Trustee’s Name	Board Position	
	Office (e.g. chair, treasurer, secretary)	Committees (e.g. finance, executive)
Chris Kong	Board Chair	Executive, Finance
Debbie Thomas	Vice Chair	Executive
Michael Dorcelly	Secretary	Executive, Academic
Anupa Jacob	Treasurer, Finance Chair	Executive, Finance
Prijo Thomas	Member	Finance
Zaineب Hussain	Academic Chair	Academic
Grace Yun	Member	Academic

Priscilla Walton has served as the Founder & Principal since 2017.



SCHOOL OVERVIEW

As a school seeking to invest in Queens, our vision is to see every child in the central Queens area discover their passions, talents, and power to enrich their community. We believe that in order to truly invest in this community's growth and development, we must aim high, committing to reaching every child that walks through our doors.

Thus, our mission is to cultivate student leaders with the character and capacity to form their own identity, seize any opportunity, and shape the world around them through integrated studies and collaborative learning. Our goal is to provide a rigorous and holistic academic program that will enable our students to choose a middle-school program of their choice.

In the 2021-22 school year, Elm served Kindergarten through Fourth Grade. In full capacity, Elm will serve Kindergarten through Fifth Grade.

Elm is founded upon 5 key design elements that drive our academic program and school culture:

Collaborative Learning: Elm believes that students learn best when they are challenged to discuss, debate, and form conclusions and opinions with others similar to and different from themselves. Collaborative learning ultimately develops students' ability to think critically and creatively, while also building their social skills, confidence, and capability to articulate their ideas clearly. At Elm, our academic program highlights collaborative group work, with rubrics that hold teachers and students accountable to focusing on a group's collaborative learning process rather than solely the product.

Student-Led Integrated Studies: At Elm, we believe that students learn best when they are engaged in interdisciplinary studies and pushed to use higher order thinking skills, adapting their knowledge and understanding to conflicting perspectives and real-world scenarios. Our essential learning periods are our Integrated Studies blocks: Humanities and STEM. During these blocks, students design and conduct their own experiments and projects, explore divergent solutions and conclusions, and show their understanding of content through the development of their own evidence-based conclusions. When students take ownership over their education, it can yield a greater love for learning and academic success.

Data-Driven Small Group Learning: At Elm, we believe students learn best when instruction is tailored to their specific needs. Teachers will receive weekly training on data collection and analysis using standard-based grading and reading leveled assessments. Our schedule also creatively and strategically creates space for smaller class sizes including, splitting classes in half up to 2 hours a day and providing small group instruction up to 3 hours a day. Our staffing plan allows for a lead and associate teachers in every classroom, giving teachers the flexibility to implement a myriad of teaching options including parallel teaching, and co-teaching.

A Focus on Self-Exploration and Self-Awareness: We believe students learn best when they are self-aware, knowing what frustrates and motivates them in order to do their best throughout the day. At the foundation of successful collaborative learning must be social and emotional intelligence. Our schedule devotes considerable time guiding students through their emotions around failure, disagreements, and conflicts. The goal is to cultivate students' self-awareness so that they are able



to articulate their feelings, preferences, and ideas with one another. The development of students' emotional intelligence will be nurtured through Yale's RULER program on Emotional Intelligence.

Creative Courses (Doing and Making to Think Differently): At Elm, we believe students learn best when they can make things with their hands and voices, experiencing topics through the arts. We aim to provide students with a well-rounded education through our Creative Courses, which consist of fine arts, chorus/vocal and music theory, woodwork/shop class, blocks, physical education and organized sports, and Spanish. Our schedule ensures that specials teachers are able to join collaborative planning meetings, as well as facilitate small groups of students who choose to present their knowledge through an arts project rather than an academic performance task.

During the 2021-22 school year, Elm started the school year with the whole school back in in-person instruction. Strict social distancing requirements impeded us from carrying out our key design elements, particularly small group instruction. Small group instruction was held virtually, which presented significant obstacles and difficulties. In May 2022, Elm excitedly returned back to in-person small group instruction after social distancing requirements were lifted.

Throughout the school year, Elm's leadership team continued to hold bi-weekly meetings with Elm families to provide updates and receive feedback. Elm continued to conduct quarterly parent workshops virtually through our counseling team, who focused on topics such as family communication, family bonding, anxiety and the pandemic, and testing anxiety.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

In the table below, provide the school's BEDS Day enrollment for each school year.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year														
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2017-18														
2018-19	53	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	101
2019-20	78	55	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	189
2020-21	48	78	56	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	237
2021-22	45	51	74	53	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	275

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts



All students will be proficient readers and writers in English Language Arts.

BACKGROUND

The balanced literacy approach was chosen for Elm because of the structured workshops and explicit lessons providing all students a model of excellence, an opportunity to practice independently or in collaborative groups, and the dedicated time for teachers to provide 1:1 or small group support to meet the individual needs of students. This approach is foundational in gradually building our own literacy curriculum tailored for our students' specific needs and ultimately is aligned to our educational philosophy that emphasizes a balance of mastery and inquiry-based learning..

Starting in kindergarten, all students will receive at least two hours of literacy instruction each day and engage in the following literacy components: Writing Workshop, Phonics (K-2), Guided Reading, Close Reading (3-5), and Humanities.

Elm has created its own curriculum based off of Teachers College Writing Project (TCRWP) to support all students in becoming proficient writers. TCRWP employs a balanced literacy approach, is aligned to New York Common Core Learning Standards, and provides students with multiple opportunities throughout the day to strengthen their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in various forums. This is especially beneficial for our ELLs, whom we call our Emergent Bilingual Learners (EBLs), as they expand their receptive and expressive language skills.

Elm also builds in-house Humanities curriculum for K-5. The program is adapted from Lavania's Insight Humanities program which teaches inquiry-based literacy through an in-depth study of content, followed by opportunities for students to use that content knowledge in support of mastering a life skill - such as debating skills, presentation skills, research skills, and storytelling skills. Our end goal with our humanities program is to cultivate student leaders with the capacity to express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts. Furthermore, our program highlights multiple modes of expression, valuing both written and spoken forms of expression.

During the 2022-23 school year, all learners will participate in live instruction, with no option for remote or hybrid learning. The Elm leadership team provides weekly professional development around our reading curriculum, data analysis, and inquiry-based learning. All Elm teachers will analyze their ELA data from either Phonics (K-2) or Close Reading (3-5) on a weekly basis.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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



METHOD

During the 2021-22 school year, Elm used the annual 2021-22 State English Language Arts Exam (Grades 3-4) along with the quarterly Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) Benchmark Assessment System to assess student growth and achievement in ELA.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year’s test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year).

2021-22 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ¹				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Other reason	
3	51	-	-	-	2	53
4	53	-	-	-	-	53
All	104	-	-	-	2	106

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Our goal for the ELA State English Language Arts Exam was 75% mastery in both Third and Fourth grade. Overall, while we did not reach our goal, we did achieve higher overall scores than District 24 (47%) in the 2018-19 School Year, which was the last year that District 24 was widely assessed before the COVID-19 Pandemic. We know we have more work to do as we continue closing the gaps that were partially caused by remote learning during the pandemic. We still believe it is a testament to our mastery-based small group guided reading and close reading program throughout the pandemic that, by and large, we did not see a drop in reading scores from pre-pandemic mastery.

Performance on 2021-22 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	53%	51	46%	43
4	58%	53	62%	45
All	55.5%	104	54%	88

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

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In Fourth Grade, students enrolled in at least their Second Year performed slightly better than the average for the whole grade. In Third Grade, students enrolled in at least their Second Year did slightly worse than the average for the whole grade. Our Third Grade students last year had to manage several teacher changes due to the teacher shortages that were experienced throughout NYC. As a result, many students did not receive the consistency of instruction they needed to close gaps in reading. In Fourth Grade, by comparison, both classes had the same teachers throughout the entire year. With consistency and with teachers who were deeply invested in the data of their students across the entire school year, students in Fourth Grade were able to see a greater amount of growth.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index ("PI") on the State English language arts exam will meet that year's state Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.

The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.²

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

At the time of submission (Friday, 9/16/22), district data was not available. As such, we are unable to make the comparison. However, for the purpose of comparison and growth, Elm leadership have made general comparisons to the data from the 2018-19 School District 24.

In the 2021-22 school year, 104 Elm learners in Grades 3 and 4 took the NYS English Language Arts Exam for the first time. In Grade 3, 44 were General Education learners, 18 were Emergent Bilingual

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



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Learners, and 7 received Special Education services. In Grade 4, 49 were General Education learners, 14 were Emergent Bilingual Learners, and 4 received Special Education services.

In Grade 3, 53% of all learners in at least their second year at Elm received a proficient score on the Mathematics Exam. Amongst the learners in at least their second year at Elm, 18 were Emergent Bilingual Learners and 6 received Special Education services.

In Grade 4, 58% of learners in at least their second year at Elm received a proficient score on the English Language Arts Exam. Amongst the learners in at least their second year at Elm, 12 were Emergent Bilingual Learners and 3 received Special Education services.

Based on these results, Elm did not meet the accountability goal of 75% of learners in their second year achieving proficiency. In Grade 3, we fell short of the goal by 22%. In Grade 4, we fell short of the goal by 17%.

We believe that these scores do not reflect the high quality and rigor of Elm’s academic program, but instead reveal the limitations that existed during the 2021-22 school year. At Elm, we are always working diligently to reflect on the reasons why we don’t reach our goals. In the 2021-22 school year, New York City was struggling with a teacher shortage. This teacher shortage impacted Elm as well, with several teachers leaving and starting throughout the school year. Many of our classrooms had only one teacher. Because of this, we were unable to pull small groups as much as our program requires. Also because of the teacher shortage, we were rushed to fill vacancies with novice staff, and found ourselves having to repeat basic professional development sessions rather than building on knowledge throughout the year.

Additionally, we at Elm believe that great learning happens through discourse and students working actively together to increase the rigor and intellectual capacity of a classroom. During the 2020-21 School Year, because of COVID, we had students sitting 6 ft apart from one another, and without moving around the classroom, which made it more difficult to raise the level of inquiry in the classroom. Additionally, because students were not able to gather in close proximity, teachers had to take on the task of doing guided reading instruction virtually. This raises many challenges, both technological, and behavioral, which makes it more difficult for students to engage in high levels of discourse, thus improving their capacity for critical thinking.

In the 2021-22 school year, we are thrilled that almost every classroom has two teachers. Additionally, all students are already working in small groups for reading, phonics, and close reading daily, with several more teachers available to make groups even smaller and more targeted. What’s more, we have hired an interventionist, who will be pulling small groups of IEP and EBL students to practice additional targeted reading skills. We believe these changes, along with excellent professional development, will help to close the gaps we are seeing on the ELA State Test.

2021-22 State English Language Arts Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency	
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year	All District Students



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	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	46%	43		
4	62%	45		
All	62%	45	N/A	N/A

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

At the time of submission (Friday, 9/16/22), district data was not available.

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

The Institute conducts a comparative performance analysis which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. Given the timing of the state's release of data necessary to produce this analysis, the 2021-22 results are not yet available.

As such, The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

Goal 1: Growth Measure

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

The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2021-22, in addition to the New York State 3rd- 8th grade exams, the school(s) primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in ELA: The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System.

By the end of each grade level, 80% of learners should be at or above grade level benchmarks determined by the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. The table below shows this end of year data.

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient ³	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
K	84%	45	N/A	N/A
1	64%	51	65%	35
2	58%	74	66%	53

³ Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.



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3	58%	53	62%	40
4	71%	52	74%	34
All	67%	275	67%	162

Overall, while not achieving our 80% goal in all grades, Elm continues to grow in reading levels. An additional focus on explicit phonics instruction combined with rigorous data analysis protocols raised achievement at the K-2 level. In Fourth Grade, increased professional development and coaching in the area of close reading contributed to the growth of that class of students. While our Third Grade class was more affected by teacher shortages, that class's 3% growth from 55% proficiency when they were in Second Grade assures us that we can continue to close reading gaps, ideally at a more rapid rate. We plan to address many of our reading gaps in the 2022-2023 school year through continued attention to data analysis, while also relying on Elm's key design of small group instruction - something that was limited during the pandemic.

Overall, our end of year assessments showed:

- By the end of Kindergarten, 80% of learners should be reading at or above a Level D according to the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. At the end of the Year 4, 84% of Kindergarteners met this goal.
- By the end of First Grade, 80% of learners should be reading at or above a Level J according to the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. At the end of Year 4, 64% of First Graders met this goal.
- By the end of Second Grade, 80% of learners should be reading at or above a Level M according to the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. At the end of Year 4, 58% of Second Graders met this goal.
- By the end of Third Grade, 80% of learners should be reading at or above a Level P according to the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. At the end of Year 4, 58% of Third Graders met this goal.
- By the end of Fourth Grade, 80% of learners should be reading at or above a Level S according to the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. At the end of Year 4, 71% of Fourth Graders met this goal.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Within the 2021-22 School Year, there was the added challenge of reopening the school for all learners despite that we were still in a pandemic. Due to the pandemic, Elm Community Charter School did not start the year working in physical small groups - rather, students were participating in guided reading from their desk, virtually. This brought up many concerns, including making it hard for teachers to physically monitor students while reading, and the additional challenge of students reading off a computer. Throughout the year, we were able to transition slowly to physical small groups, so that all teachers were pulling physical small groups by March. This upcoming year, we plan on starting physical small groups at the start of the year.

Additionally, across New York City, Public Schools suffered from a teacher shortage. At Elm, though we typically have a two teacher model which contributes to the effectiveness of our small group instruction, many classrooms only had one teacher. While we believe in and have evidence of the



effectiveness of our instructional program regardless of how many teachers we have in the classroom, we remain aware that fewer teachers impacts our key design elements, specifically small group instruction. The biggest impact that these challenges had on reading scores was in Third Grade, on the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessment, where there was a slight decline in reading scores from 2020-2021 School Year.

SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts exam for grades 3-8.	55.5% (-19.5%)
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's English language arts exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	N/A
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	N/A
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.	N/A
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50.	N/A

ACTION PLAN

Elm is committed to continuing to close the gaps in ELA that exist due to a variety of reasons; whether there be a language barrier, as with many of our Emergent Bilingual Learners, or whether it be because of COVID-19. Over the last two years, fulfilling the vision of our academic program has seen many challenges, such as maintaining in-person small group instruction to meet the specific needs of students, as well as managing a teacher shortage. This school year, Elm plans on improving our data in several ways, aligned to our key design elements:

- **Small Group Instruction:** This school year, we will begin in-person small group instruction within the first three weeks of school. During this time, in contrast with previous years, all students will be traveling across the school to find the reading group that is most targeting their needs. The abundance of targeted reading groups we are able to have between all five grades ensures that students are learning skills and reading books that are specific to their data and their reading level.
- **Co-Taught Classrooms:** While co-taught classrooms has always been an essential component of our vision, within the last two years, due to the teacher shortage around New York City, we have been unable to maintain co-taught classrooms in many classrooms. This year, we are starting our school year with nearly all classrooms having two teachers, and with this opportunity comes more time for small-group instruction, targeted feedback, and a lower



student-teacher ratio. We are confident the impact of two teachers in a classroom will be felt when we see the 2022-23 SY data.

- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** During the 2020-21 and the 2021-22 School Year, Elm placed a heavy emphasis on mastery-based instruction as a means of closing gaps caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Moving forward, we are going back to our key design element of interdisciplinary learning, by placing additional emphasis on Humanities. Through the Elm created Humanities curriculum, students will increase their critical thinking skills as they participate in research activities, presentations, debates, etc. We trust that these inquiry-based blocks will improve overall reading comprehension skills.
- **High-Quality Professional Development:** During the 2020-21 school year, we had many new teachers coming in throughout the school year due to a city-wide teacher shortage. Because of this, leadership found themselves having to reteach basic teaching skills to many novice teachers. This caused our professional development to lack the targeted rigor that we've envisioned. This year, leaders are owning different grades, and we have created a revamped professional development calendar that builds off one another, ensuring that our professional development is targeted, data-driven, rigorous, and differentiated when applicable.
- **Staff Culture:** We are placing more of an emphasis on staff culture by creating more opportunities for staff to come together for celebrations and with the creation of a sunshine committee. While not directly related to ELA, we do foresee this emphasis on staff culture supporting our teacher retention numbers, which in turn will increase data through teacher consistency.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

Elm will utilize two main components for Math: Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) and Math Workshop. During the 2021-22 school year, learners in each grade will have approximately 90 minutes of math instruction three days a week.

CGI is an inquiry-based math program that will operate in direct alignment with New York State's Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics, which are based on the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Practice.

Math Workshop is a mastery-based academic component that will teach learners fundamental math skills. The focus of this curriculum is on learners building a strong conceptual foundation that they can use to solve problems in their everyday experiences. The curriculum will be tailored from TERC Investigations and Context for Learning in Grades K through 2 and EngageNY in Grades 3 and 4 to have a greater emphasis on mastering math skills.



ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

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

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program Mathematics assessment to students in 3rd through 4th grades in spring 2022. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year’s test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year).

2021-22 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁴				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Other reason	
3	51	0	0	0	2	53
4	53	0	0	0	0	53
All	104	-	-	-	2	106

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In the 2021-22 school year, 104 Elm learners in Grades 3 and 4 took the NYS Mathematics Exam for the first time. In Grade 3, 44 were General Education learners, 18 were Emergent Bilingual Learners, and 7 received Special Education services. In Grade 4, 49 were General Education learners, 14 were Emergent Bilingual Learners, and 4 received Special Education services.

In Grade 3, 53% of all learners in at least their second year at Elm received a proficient score on the Mathematics Exam. Amongst the learners in at least their second year at Elm, 18 were Emergent Bilingual Learners and 6 received Special Education services.

In Grade 4, 60% of learners in at least their second year at Elm received a proficient score on the Mathematics Exam. Amongst the learners in at least their second year at Elm, 12 were Emergent Bilingual Learners and 3 received Special Education services.

Based on these results, Elm did not meet the accountability goal of 75% of learners in their second year achieving proficiency. In Grade 3, we fell short of the goal by 22%. In Grade 4, we fell short of the goal by 15%.

⁴ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.



We believe the results of the exam do not reflect the effectiveness of our school’s program, but emphasize the learning gaps created due to the limitations caused by the pandemic. The School was unable to implement key design elements including: collaborative learning and small group instruction. Due to social distancing requirements, learners were unable to participate in heterogeneous group work or be pulled into homogeneous small groups across grade levels. This would have allowed teachers to create lessons based on the specific needs of a small group of learners. In the 2022-23 school year, we are eager to begin both our planned heterogeneous and homogeneous small group instructional blocks again.

The leadership team also identified additional areas of improvement and already have plans in place for the 2022-23 school year. This includes: addressing content gaps amongst learners due the pandemic and teaching skills and knowledge gaps amongst teachers. In the 2021-22 school year, students returned to in-person instruction with major content gaps from the previous year where students attended virtual learning for a majority of the year. Thus, during the 2021-22 school year, teachers spent a majority of the year closing gaps of knowledge from the previous year rather than teaching on-grade level. Despite introducing a new mastery-based curriculum that was aligned to NYS standards, the many gaps in knowledge resulted in less time spent on new material.

Furthermore, across New York City, Public Schools suffered from a teacher shortage. At Elm, we experienced several teacher changes, particularly in the third grade team. This resulted in hiring fairly new teachers to the field and to the Elm curriculum. This also affected Elm’s ability to implement our two teacher model, which ensures small group instruction and high levels of differentiation. In the 2022-23 school year, the Elm leadership team has revamped our teacher development program to be highly interactive with an emphasis on the implementation of teaching.

Performance on 2021-22 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	55%	51	53%	43
4	55%	53	60%	45
All	55%	104	56%	88

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The 2021-22 school year was Elm’s first year taking NYS exams. In lieu of year-to-year comparisons of state test data, Elm used internal math benchmarks to determine proficiency of NYS math standards for all learners. The table below shows learner proficiency for all learners on the end of year math benchmark throughout Elm’s Accountability Period.

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Kindergarten	85%	50%	78%	62%



1st Grade	63%	67%	78%	96%
2nd Grade	-	89%	65%	56%
3rd Grade	-	-	24%	48%
4th Grade	-	-	-	54%

During the 20-21 school year, Elm did not participate in state testing. In lieu of state test, Elm administered an internally developed assessment for 3rd grade learners that reflected previously administered NYS Math tests. The results of the test were well below our expectations, with only 24% of learners demonstrating proficiency. Knowing that our learners could achieve better results, we implemented a new curriculum that put a greater emphasis on the foundational math skills, which attributed to learners’ increased performance when taking the same end of year math benchmark in the 21-22 school year.

While the new curriculum proved effective in closing foundational gaps, there is still room for improvement in the more complex content and skills. By shifting to the new curriculum across all grade levels, we believe that learners will be able to attain the necessary foundational skills at the appropriate times, allowing more time to focus on more abstract concepts.

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (“PI”) on the state mathematics exam will meet that year’s state Measure of Interim Progress (“MIP”) set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.

The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.⁵

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Brief narrative highlighting results in the data table that directly addresses the measure, e.g. the aggregate charter school performance compared to the aggregate district performance in the same tested grades. Narrative explicitly stating whether or not the school met the measure, i.e., whether

⁵ Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).



the charter school fell short of, equaled or exceed the aggregate district performance and by how much. In addition the evaluation may also include a discussion of specific grade levels' comparative performance.

At the time of submission (Friday, 9/16/22), district data for the 21-22 state test was not available.

Overall, while we did not reach our goal, we did achieve higher overall scores than District 24 in the 2018-19 School Year, which was the last year that District 24 was widely assessed before the COVID-19 Pandemic. We know we have more work to go as we continue closing the gaps that were partially caused by remote learning during the pandemic, but we believe it is a testament to our mastery-based small group guided reading and close reading program throughout the pandemic that, by and large, we did not see a drop in reading scores from pre-pandemic mastery.

2021-22 State Mathematics Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	53%	43		
4	60%	45		
All	56%	88		

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Narrative provides a discussion of the charter school's performance in comparison to the local district in previous years. In addition, the school can use a supplemental table for this section on a comparison of the charter school to selected local schools. Also, additional evidence may include demographic differences between the school and the district as well as compelling reasons for comparing the school to a subset of schools within the district.

At the time of submission (Friday, 9/16/22), district data was not available.

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

The Institute conducts a comparative performance analysis which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. Given the timing of the state's release of data necessary to produce this analysis, the 2021-22 results are not yet available.

As such, The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.



Goal 2: Growth Measure

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

The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2021-22, in addition to the New York State 3rd- 4th grade exams, the school(s) primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in mathematics: Math Benchmark

By the end of each grade level, 85% of learners should demonstrate proficiency on the end of year Math Benchmark Assessment. The table below show this end of year data.

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient ⁶	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
K	62%	45	N/A	N/A
1	96%	50	97%	36
2	56%	73	60%	63
3	48%	53	50%	46
4	54%	52	60%	42
All	62%	273	64%	187

Overall some progress was made toward the end of year goal of 85% proficiency on the Math Benchmark Assessment. In First Grade, we exceeded the goal by 11%. And in 3rd Grade, we made significant progress from the end of year performance from the previous school year by 24%.

Although we did not meet the end of year proficiency goal across all grade levels, we made growth in first through 4th grades from our beginning of year proficiency. The table below shows the proficiency levels attained during each cycle of the school year.

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
K	67%	52%	50%	62%
1	23%	37%	84%	96%
2	19%	24%	53%	56%
3	43%	8%	20%	48%
4	50%	9%	33%	54%

First grade learners made 73 percentage points of growth. Second grade learners made 37 percentage points of growth. Third grade learners made 5 percentage points of growth. Fourth grade learners made 4 percentage points of growth.

⁶ Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.



While the growth in third and fourth grade is negligible from the beginning of year to the end of year, it is important to note that the rigor of the math benchmarks shifted in Cycle 2, when the assessments covered more content and more closely aligned to the end of year benchmark. As such, the growth of 40% and 45% in Grades 3 and 4 respectively, better signifies the amount of progress learners made throughout the year.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

Present a narrative providing an overview of which measures the school achieved, as well as an overall discussion of its attainment of this Accountability Plan goal.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State Mathematics exam for grades 3-8.	Not Met
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate PI on the state’s mathematics exam will meet that year’s state MIP as set forth in the state’s ESSA accountability system.	N/A
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Data Not Available
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.	N/A
Growth	Each year, under the state’s Growth Model the school’s mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the target of 50.	N/A

ACTION PLAN

Based on the data analysis, we plan to implement the following changes in Year 5:

- **Mastery Based Curriculum:** In the 21-22 school year, Elm enhanced the 3rd Grade Math Workshop curriculum to better align to NYS Standards. The shift in curriculum resulted in a 24% increase in proficiency on the end of year benchmark assessment. Due to the increase in proficiency, we will be implementing the enhanced Math Workshop curriculum across all grade levels in the 22-23 school year.
- **Small Group Instruction:** One of the school’s key design elements is small group instruction. In the 22-23 school year, we have eliminated the COVID restrictions that prevented learners from engaging in small group instruction. We are excited to restart homogeneous small group instruction during math workshop two to three times per week.
- **Math Routines:** For all grade levels, 15-20 minutes of math fluency practice will be implemented three times a week. This math fluency practice will support learners with counting and grade-appropriate math facts.
- **Teacher Development:** To improve the quality of for teacher development at Elm, we hired an additional leader to focus on creating a professional development opportunities that address and effectively target the implementation of instruction amongst teachers with



varying levels of teaching experience. With the addition of the Director of Teacher Development, we were also able to reorganize the structure of how leaders are instructing teams so that leaders can be experts at just two grade levels rather than instructing teams across all grade levels. Knowing that our professional development needs are high, the leadership team will also prioritize excellent professional development to teachers through our three-week summer Teacher Institute, weekly PDs on Wednesday afternoons, instructional meetings, and tailored bi-weekly 1:1 meetings that will include labsites, opportunities to practice teaching strategies with small groups of learners, and learner work studies.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of the scientific method to design, conduct, and analyze experiments, and represent conclusions.

BACKGROUND

Elm’s engaging science curriculum will be inquiry and project-based. The curriculum will build students’ foundational science skills by completing experiments that will answer scientific questions related to life, earth, and physical science. In Year 1-2, leadership will guide and collaborate with STEM teachers to develop an innovative and rigorous curriculum. Currently, Elm has adopted Amplify as our science curriculum due to its emphasis on experiments and inquiry-based learning, as well as its direct alignment to New York State’s CCLS and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Pacing calendars, assessments, units and lessons will be developed in-house and eventually achieve horizontal alignment with Humanities.

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State science examination.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th grade in spring 2022. The school converted each student’s raw score to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students enrolled in at least their second year to score at proficiency.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

In the 2021-22 school year, 52 Elm learners in Grade 4 took the NYS Science Exam for the first time. In Grade 4, 48 were General Education learners, 14 were Emergent Bilingual Learners, and 4 received Special Education services.



In Grade 4, 96% of learners in at least their second year at Elm received a proficient score on the Science Exam. Amongst the learners in at least their second year at Elm, 12 were Emergent Bilingual Learners and 3 received Special Education services.

Based on these results, Elm exceeded the accountability goal of 75% of learners in their second year exceeding proficiency by 21%.

Upon reflection, the Director of STEM along with the leadership team also believe that the following areas can continue to strengthen and grow: an increased collection of informal science data and more opportunities for inquiry based instruction. Similar to our ELA and math program, informal data collection guided instruction on a daily basis and allowed teachers to more closely monitor learner progress and effectively close gaps in knowledge. Additionally, knowing the many content gaps that emerged due to virtual learning, we shifted our approach to a mastery-based curriculum, that didn't allow learners to explore and investigate.

In the 2022-23 school year, we will have multiple opportunities during science units to informally collect data, analyze the data, and effectively use flex days included in the unit to address knowledge gaps and misconceptions. We are also excited to fully implement the Amplify Science curriculum with fidelity, that will allow learners to investigate real-world problems through inquiry based experiences.

Charter School Performance on 2021-22 State Science Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency of Students in At Least 2 nd Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	96%	50
All	96%	50

Goal 3: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state science exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

The Institute does not require charters to report on this measure for 2021-22.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY SCIENCE GOAL

In the 2021-22 school year, we exceeded our Accountability Plan Goal. This lets us know that our science program is working.

ACTION PLAN

In the 2022-23 school year, we will continue to provide rigorous instruction and assessment in Science. This year, with fewer COVID restrictions, we are excited for learners to engage in more collaborative group work in science that will provide them with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of science concepts and skills.





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: 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

Elm Community Charter School’s ESSA status this year is: Good Standing - Made Progress

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Elm Community Charter School ensures that all state reporting, city reporting, and accountability reports are provided in a timely manner.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing
2021-22	Good Standing

