Academy of the City Charter School

2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Aaron Listhaus, Executive Director, 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)
Monica Liriano	Chair	Education & Accountability, Governance, Development & Advocacy, Executive, Finance, Legal & Operations/Audit
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Francois Nzi	Member	Education & Accountability Committee, Executive Committee

Aaron Listhaus has served as the Executive Director since April 1, 2022.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

Academy of the City (AoC) fosters community, supports families, welcomes children of all backgrounds, celebrates diversity and promotes social justice. With our challenging, hands-on liberal arts experience, we strive to develop joyful, creative, independent and successful lifelong learners.

AoC was originally authorized as a K-5 school in 2010 and opened its doors to its first class of 100 students in Grades K-1 in August 2011. AoC received a three-year renewal in 2016, and subsequently received a full five-year renewal in 2019 with approval to expand the school to include the middle school grades, 6th through 8th. The 2021-22 school year was the third year of our third charter term.

AoC is deeply embedded in every neighborhood of CSD 30, one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse in the country. Our student body represents the diversity of this culturally rich part of Western Queens. Our students are newcomers, first generation Americans, from families who have recently moved to Queens and those that have been here for generations. There are 14 different home languages spoken in the homes of the students we serve. Last year, our student body was 9% Black, 49% Hispanic, 27% Asian and 13% White. In 2021-22, 12% of our students were English language learners, 10% students with disabilities and 63% were eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunch. It is our vision that every child in our diverse community will achieve academic, social and personal excellence.

This past school year, our BEDS date enrollment was 718 students in Grades K-8. Notably our enrollment as of June 30, 2022 was 721 students and our approved charter enrollment was 728, which means we were successful in maintaining our enrollment. This is particularly significant given the negative impact the pandemic had on student enrollment and retention across all schools; yet AoC managed to end the school year with an enrollment that was 99% of our maximum chartered enrollment.

Our community-based, independent charter school was founded on the principles of:

- Community involvement
- Workplace democracy partnering with the United Federation of Teachers
- Reflective practices in pedagogy, site-based management and governance
- Continuous Professional Development
- Personal Accountability
- Transparency
- Entrepreneurship

These principles have continued and supported the excellence and growth of our program over our 10 years serving children in our CSD 30 Queens community.

AoC offers a rigorous, liberal arts curriculum that is standards-based and data-driven. A hallmark of AoC's pedagogy is our robust program in interdisciplinary project-based learning. Our students receive daily instruction in the core subjects of ELA, mathematics, science and social studies as well as weekly instruction in music, fine arts and physical education. Students work together as full class, independently and collaboratively in small groups, supported by their teachers. From the youngest of grades, AoC promotes student choice as we give all children an opportunity to select clubs or electives, enrichment opportunities in a small group setting, in which they would like to participate.

AoC went back to full in-person learning in 2021-22 after a full year of remote learning in 2020-21. There was only one short period (7 days total) of remote instruction due to high COVID case rates among teachers and staff. The remote period began two days before the school closed for December break and remained remote for the first five days after the December break ended. The short transition to remote learning was seamless given the systems that had been established during the 2020-21 school year.

In 2021-22, AoC added back to its assessment protocol a nationally normed assessment—NWEA—in reading and math. With the cancellation of the NYS assessments in Spring 2020 (and for all intents and purposes, in Spring 2021), AoC was left without a nationally-normed assessment tool to benchmark and

evaluate our students' performance against a representative sample, which would continue to disadvantage us as we sought to understand the impact of the pandemic on student learning and our efforts to accelerate learning to overcome learning loss. The NWEA was administered three times during the year (fall, winter and spring).

During 2021-22, the elementary school enhanced its ELA instruction with the addition of Lexia Core 5 to accelerate learning after prolonged remote instruction. As will be discussed further in the ELA section of this APPR, Lexia Core 5 added between 15 and 25 minutes of individualized and tailored reading instruction each day. To address the social, mental and emotional toll that the pandemic and prolonged remote instruction had on students, AoC fully trained all elementary school staff members in Responsive Classroom. Responsive Classroom had always been modeled in the elementary school; however, new staff had not always received training. However, because of the urgency to support students emotional and mental health coming back from the pandemic, it was imperative all staff receive training. Responsive Classroom was critical in supporting students on their way back to in-person learning by perpetuating an environment that provided positive reinforcement. Through Responsive Classroom strategies, we helped students cope with their feelings by speaking about them and creating a safe environment in which to express themselves. All staff members were provided with ongoing professional development in Responsive Classroom throughout the year both virtually and from in-person Responsive Classroom PD providers.

With regard to families, AoC hosted events designed to connect the school with families, including Town Halls, which were held virtually. These platforms provided opportunities for the school and families to share with each other areas of concern both academically and non-academically as a result of the pandemic and kept families informed about what is going on in the school and available resources in the community to help them with their needs.

The return to in-person learning in 2021-22 was more fraught for the AoC middle school. Unlike the middle school, the elementary school had been in operation for many years prior to the pandemic with stable leadership. As a result, it had a strong foundation not only to return to but upon which it could build when it returned in person in 2021-22. The middle school, however, did not have that foundation as it was expanding from a Grade 5-6 division to a Grade 5-8 division during the pandemic. AoC's middle school expansion began with the 2019-20 school year when it added its first 6th grade—the year in which the pandemic first impacted instruction. Its second year of expansion occurred in a fully remote environment. When school returned in person in 2021-22, AoC had a fully grown middle school, 5th through 8th grade with the overwhelming majority of its students (and leadership and teachers) having had their entire AoC middle school experience to date be in a remote environment. Making the transition back to in-person learning more challenging was the fact that for the first time the entire middle school community was occupying a building and there were no previous systems in place upon which to fall back on let alone build upon. Finally, AoC's executive leadership was in transition—the school's Executive Director position was still vacant and there was a mismatch in the skills and core competencies of the middle school leadership at the time and the skills and core competencies that were needed to address the myriad challenges that needed to be addressed. These factors impacted student learning in the middle school.

By the end of the 2021-22 school year, AoC had new and experienced leadership filling the Executive Director and middle school Principal positions—key changes that are already strengthening instruction in the current 2022-23 school year at AoC's middle school at a time when addressing pandemic learning loss and the social-emotional needs of its young adolescents are of primary concern.

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	54	57	57	81	108	50								407
2018-19	54	56	58	55	82	107								412
2019-20	87	84	58	58	57	87	99							530
2020-21	81	82	85	57	84	77	81	89						636
2021-22	85	83	82	86	76	74	73	78	81					718

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

AoC's students will meet or exceed Common Core and NYS Learning Standards for their grade level in all aspects of literacy, including reading, writing, speaking and listening.

BACKGROUND

Provide a brief narrative discussing English language arts curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development at the school in Kindergarten – 8th grades. Provide a summary of any changes to the school's modality (e.g., hybrid, remote) for ELA instruction throughout the year including any important changes to the ELA program or staff during the 2021-22 school year.

AoC returned to full in-person instruction in 2021-22, and only had to transition to remote learning for 7 total days book-ending December winter break as a result of high COVID rates among staff and students as discussed previously.

The AoC ELA curriculum is designed to ensure that students learn to read and write with interest and understanding, write to communicate clearly, speak confidently and expressively and listen with attention and understanding. The School's ELA curriculum is closely aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. For ELA, AoC uses the Teachers College Readers and Writers workshop model for Grades K-1, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMF) *Journeys* for Grades 2-4 and HMH *Collections* for Grade 5-8. Grades 3-8 also engage in novel study in which the whole class reads the same novel with accompanying reading and writing lessons. ELA instruction is aligned with NYS standards-based instruction that is supported by the curriculum.

Teachers use a lesson format that follows a predictable structure 1. Warm up/Introduction 2. Teach/Introduce new material 3. Try/Collaborate 4. Clarify/Formative Assessment. Small group, targeted instruction occurs during guided reading. Our ongoing ELA program consists of a standards-informed reading workshop which includes shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading and Writer's workshop including shared writing, guided writing, and independent writing, and phonics instruction. Our teachers use a variety of research-based teaching methods to differentiate instruction for all students. Teachers' lesson plans included work for students on grade level, those who needed advanced treatment of the material and those who needed additional support, specifically our ELL and SPED students.

Additionally, ELLs, special education and at-risk students receive targeted instruction with the appropriate instructional specialists in order to receive the necessary support, mandated and/or related services. Special Education and ELL Teachers pushed-into classrooms to provide guided instruction and support for students identified as needing these instructional support services. In addition, Special

Education and ELL Teachers provided pull-out instruction as necessary or as mandated by the SPED students' IEPs. Teachers' lesson plans included work for students on grade level, those who needed advanced treatment of the material and those who needed additional support, specifically our ELL and SPED students.

In order to measure and record readers' progress, we use the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P) for formal assessment for all grades (or until a student tests out of this assessment). F&P was administered three times during the year: Fall, Winter and Spring.

In 2021-22, AoC added back to its assessment protocol a nationally normed assessment—NWEA—in reading (and math). With the cancellation of the NYS assessments in Spring 2020 (and for all intents and purposes, in Spring 2021), AoC was left without a nationally-normed assessment tool to benchmark and evaluate our students' performance against a representative sample, which would continue to disadvantage us as we sought to understand the impact of the pandemic on student learning and our efforts to accelerate learning to overcome learning loss. The NWEA was administered three times during the year (fall, winter and spring).

AoC is committed to building the capacity of our teachers through professional development. AoC provides time in the daily and weekly schedule for teachers to plan and collaborate together in grade level meetings and department meetings. This past year, AoC's ELA PD priorities were to support reading and writing growth, as well as deficiencies resulting from the pandemic and continued remote learning in 2020-21. To deliver PD, AoC engaged external PD consultants to provide training and workshops to teachers; in addition, teachers also led PD initiatives with their colleagues.

In 2021-22 in order to address reading deficits in the elementary school, AoC added the Lexia Core 5 Program for grades K-4. The Lexia Core 5 Program is a digital program used on iPads and Chromebooks that tailors reading and related-ELA lessons to individual student learning. Lexia Core 5 provides significant feedback and data to teachers giving them insight into how their class as whole is doing as well as individual students in order to inform instruction. Lexia Core 5 was implemented during the breakfast program where children engaged in 15 to 25 minutes of daily Lexia Core 5 after having breakfast. Lexia Core 5 was purposefully chosen as an instructional tool to address reading loss as a result of prolonged remote learning.

Additionally, last year students in the elementary school testing grades were provided with test prep from Sylvan Learning. Sylvan Learning tutors began their work in January 2021 continuing through the ELA test date working with classrooms of approximately 25 students as part of the afterschool program. Approximately 1/3 of 3rd and 4th grade students took part in Sylvan test prep.

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

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts ("ELA") assessment to students in 3rd through 8th 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 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	71		1	1	13	86
4	64		2	1	11	78
5	68		1	0	8	77
6	64		1	0	7	72
7	68		0	0	8	76
8	69		0	0	12	81
All	404		5	2	59	470

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Brief narrative highlighting results in the data table below that directly addresses the measure, i.e. the overall percent of students *in at least their second year* achieving at proficiency. Narrative explicitly stating whether the school met the measure and discussing by how much the school fell short of or exceeded the measure, as well as notable performance in specific grades and populations. Also, use this section to explain the results in the context of the school program, attributing the results to effective practices or problem areas.

With 57% of all tested students in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the NYS ELA test, AoC did not meet the measure of 75% percent of students in at least their second year achieving proficiency. The table below provides the percent of students in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the NYS ELA test by grade and for all grades 3-8. With the exception of Grade 8 which *exceeded* the benchmark by 3 percentage points and Grade 6 which fell short of the benchmark by just 3 points, all other grades fell well below benchmark.

In 2021-22, elementary grades (Grades 3-4) struggled in comparison to middle school grades with less than 50% of each of those grades meeting proficiency standards on the NYS ELA test. That elementary school students struggled in comparison with middle school students is a reflection of the fact that for these younger students the learning of foundational skills was interrupted by the pandemic. These 3rd and 4th graders were in 1st and 2nd grade respectively in 2019-20 when the school year was disrupted in March 2020 by the pandemic and then spent a full school year in 2020-21 in remote learning. Compared to our elementary school students' performance on the 2019 NYS ELA assessment (pre-pandemic), our 2022 proficiency rates were 30 points below 2019 for Grade 3, 16 points below for Grade 4.

We only have 2019 middle school NYS ELA test data for Grade 5 to compare our current middle schooler's performance. AoC's middle school was still growing during the early years of this Accountability Period and the 2019-20 school year was the first year that AoC had a 6th grade. This was the year that NYS assessments were first canceled as a result of the pandemic. The same percent of Grade 5 students in at least their second year achieved proficiency—44%—in 2022 and 2019. In 2019, our 5th grade 44% proficiency was a significant drop from our 3rd and 4th grade proficiency that year (a 20- to 30-point difference from 4th and 3rd grade proficiency, respectively). As will be discussed later, in order to

[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.

provide needed support to our 5th graders we made the decision to move the 5th grade back to the elementary school. Research has shown that developmentally, 5th graders are better taught within the framework of an elementary approach where teachers, unlike middle school teachers, have the literacy content knowledge to develop interventions and support 5th graders who are still mastering *learning to read* (many 5th graders are not yet ready for a learning environment where they are *reading to learn*).

While the performance of our 6th through 8th grades in the middle school was strong, it is important to note that a significant proportion of these students (and indeed students across all tested grades at AoC as is evident from the Table enumerating the number of students tested and not tested earlier in this section) did not take the test. We experienced a greater percent of parents opting out of the test than we had pre-pandemic. Many parents felt it was too soon to have their children sit for a high stakes test after prolonged remote learning. Of the parents who opted their children out of the test, many were parents of students who were behind academically. Therefore, our proficiency rates on the NYS assessments would likely be lower had we not had a large opt-out population. For this reason, our NWEA assessments that were added back to our instructional program this year is providing us with more meaningful data with closer to 100% of our students having taken the NWEA.

The learning loss of our students in ELA skills that our NYS ELA assessments reveal, particularly at the elementary school level, is consistent with what national test results show for students across the country as the New York Times' September 1, 2022 alarming headline blared, "The Pandemic Erased Two Decades of Progress in Math and Reading." The pandemic brought historic declines in students' reading abilities with students who were already the furthest behind before COVID losing the most ground. According to the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022 tests show that 9-year-olds' reading scores fell by the largest margin in more than 30 years and students who were already struggling before COVID hit saw the greatest drop in scores during the past two years.

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	44%	71	45%	69
4	47%	64	48%	61
5	44%	68	44%	64
6	70%	64	72%	60
7	62%	68	62%	68
8	77%	69	78%	68
All	57%	404	58%	390

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Narrative discussing year-to-year trends during the current Accountability Period[2]. This discussion shows how the school is making progress towards, or maintaining, a high level of performance.

[2] A school's Accountability Period includes the final year of the previous charter term through the penultimate year of the current charter term. For schools in their initial charter, the Accountability Period includes the first year of operation through the fourth year of the charter term.

Additional evidence may include other valid and reliable assessment results that demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's instructional program

The first year of our current Accountability Period was the 2019-20 school year which was also the first year of the pandemic during which AoC transitioned to remote learning at the end of March 2020. AoC remained remote for the entire 2020-21 school year before returning to in-person learning in 2021-22. The 2021-22 school year is the first year in the current Accountability Period that students were administered the NYS assessments (while they were administered in Spring 2021, 100% of AoC students did not take the 2021 assessments as all students were in a remote setting). This is also the first year in the current Accountability Period that AoC is administering an internal nationally-normed ELA assessment (the NWEA MAP). As a result, AoC is not able to discuss year to year trends based on valid and reliable assessment results.

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.[3]

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

58% of AoC's 3rd-8th graders scored at least a Level 3 on the 2022 NYS ELA assessment. AoC's performance matched that of CSD 30. Among individual grades, AoC outperformed CSD 30 in Grade 8 (by 14 points) and Grade 6 (by 7 points), but fell short of CSD 30 in Grades 3-5 and 7.

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 2nd Year	All District Students

[3] 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.

	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	45%	69	56%	2327
4	48%	61	53%	2307
5	44%	64	47%	2365
6	72%	60	65%	2732
7	62%	68	59%	2643
8	78%	68	64%	2753
All	58%	390	58%	15127

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

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

Given the lack of a consistent record of data suitable for analysis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains paramount that schools continue to collect and report on internal exam results in order to build a base of evidence suitable for making a strong case for renewal. Provide narrative discussing how the school evaluated student growth and achievement in ELA during the 2021-22 school year using internal assessments.

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: NWEA MAP. We had a higher participation rate on our NWEA MAP Reading test than we did on the NYS ELA test. NWEA was administered three times during the year (Fall, Winter and Spring) to students across all grades in the school. Because of the higher participation rate, we believe the NWEA provides a meaningful assessment of the growth and achievement of our students during the 2021-22 school year. AoC's student performance did not meet SUNY's benchmarks for the NWEA as the table below summarizes. Of note, for Measure 1: while AoC's median growth percentile for all students in the tested grades was the 42nd percentile, Grade 7 did exceed benchmark with a median growth percentile of 64 and Grade 6 fell just short of benchmark with a median growth percentile of 48.

In addition to the NWEA MAP Reading test, AoC also administered the F&P Benchmark Assessment to all students (or until a student tests out of this assessment) in the Fall, Winter and Spring to measure and record our students' progress in reading. Among the key takeaways from the F&P was the fact that Kindergarten and first graders were not solid in their letter sound relationships and other phonics and phonemic awareness skills which is delaying the reading process significantly. Significant instructional time was spent on these early literacy skills which our students did not receive during their preK years prior to coming to us given preK was either delivered remotely or students did not attend preK at all. In the upper elementary school grades, reading challenges were exacerbated during the pandemic by the screen barrier—remote learning didn't support side by side reading with teachers or the magnitude of small group reading that would have occurred in an in-person classroom.

NWEA ELA

2021-22 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment End of Year Results

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3rd through 8th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	438	42%	No
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3rd through 8th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	235	44	No
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities[4]	42	47	29	No
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3rd through 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards.[5]	2+ students	75%	298	40%	No

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

[5] https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf.

End of Year Performance on 2021-22 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient[6]	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	40%	68	43%	54
4	39%	70	44%	39
5	29%	77	33%	40
6	35%	68	45%	33
7	36%	75	41%	54
8	39%	80	38%	78
All	36%	438	40%	298

End of Year Growth on 2021-22 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment
By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3	44	68
4	Null[7]	70
5	29	77
6	48	68
7	64	75
8	32	80
All	42	438

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Narrative discussing any concerns the school may have regarding the data reported above and the school's attempts to mitigate those concerns. For example, schools should describe any barriers to achieving high participation rates, unexpected challenges arising from the administration, etc. The school should also supplement the information above with additional quantitative evidence from other types of academic assessments or evidence capturing the results of co-academic interventions. **Schools with Accountability Plans that contain additional measures or conditions on renewal under the Elementary/Middle ELA goal should report those results here.**

This is the first year during the current Accountability Period that AoC has administered a nationally-normed Reading assessment—the NWEA. AoC operated in-person during the 2021-22 school year, and

[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.

[7] NWEA has not populated the median growth percentile for AoC's 4th grade. We are in contact with NWEA to understand why this is the case.

thus AoC did not experience any issues regarding testing administration as it would have had in a remote environment that would impact the validity and reliability of the testing results. NWEA also had strong participation rates in the NWEA exams, particularly in comparison to NYS assessments where many parents chose to opt out of the test because they felt their children were not ready to sit for NYS assessments after extended remote learning.

SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

AoC did not meet the Absolute, Comparative or Growth Measures for ELA. It is important to note with regard to Comparative measures, while the percent of all tested students in the two-year Cohort at AoC performing at proficiency on the NYS ELA test was not *greater* than that of students in the same tested grades in CSD 30, AoC did *match* the proficiency rate of CSD 30 (58%).

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.	Not Met
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.	Not Met
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

Narrative explaining how the school will strive to maintain consistency in its data collection and reporting. The narrative also explains what specific steps the school will take to maintain or improve academic performance based on the specific results associated with this goal, focusing in particular on strategic interventions including providing enhanced support or program revisions for explicit grades, cohorts, or subpopulations.

Given the urgency to address pandemic learning loss and accelerate learning, AoC engaged Project77 at the start of the 2022-23 school year to support instructional leaders and teachers in both the elementary school and middle school in analyzing and interpreting student data from both internal assessments and New York State assessments so leaders and teachers have a clearer, deeper and more insightful understanding of the data to ensure that the data is used effectively in instructional decision-making to promote student growth and achievement in ELA.

Among the steps that AoC has taken and is taking to address the challenge to accelerate growth and move students who are well behind grade level to grade level proficiency are:

- AoC received a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies to run a Summer Boost program for rising 2nd to 8th graders focused on intensive reading and math instruction using the Lavinia curriculum.

AoC will be getting student performance and growth data from the administrators of this grant program soon and will be able to quantify the impact that the program had on boosting student performance in reading and math. Our initial assessment is that for those students who exhibited regular and strong attendance, the program was able to support reading growth.

- The elementary school is undergoing a curriculum adoption process to replace the current ELA curriculum. Journeys (Grades 2-5) is being retired by the publisher and Teachers College Reading and Writing which has been used in Grades K-1 has been deemed not enough to address the early literacy skills deficits our K and 1 students are arriving to AoC with post-pandemic. While exploring ELA curriculums for 2023-24, AoC is supplementing Journeys in Grades 2-5 with Novel Study. We are piloting Into Reading's reading and writing program in Grade 1 this year while still implementing some of the TC Reading and Writing curriculum. We are expanding the use of Fundations to include Grade 2 from previously only using it in Grades K-1 given the significant deficits of our early elementary school students. We also trained all staff in Writing Revolution. Through Writing Revolution, we are ensuring writing is embedded in every academic area. Given the writing deficits of our students which was one of the weaknesses in our remote program in 2020-21, there is an urgency to accelerate the growth of writing skills by ensuring that writing was integrated throughout the curriculum.
- We have moved Grade 5 from the middle school to the elementary school. Prior to the pandemic, our 2019 NYS ELA scores showed a clear decline in proficiency from 4th to 5th grades and in 2022 our lowest performers were 5th graders both on the NYS ELA test and the NWEA MAP Reading test. As students move to 5th grade, the focus of learning shifts from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. In order to address the social-emotional and metacognitive development of 10- to 11-year-olds (the typical age range of 5th graders), we needed to move 5th grade back to an elementary school framework. Research has shown that developmentally, 5th graders are better taught within the framework of an elementary approach where teachers, unlike middle school teachers, have the literacy content knowledge to develop interventions and support 5th graders who are still mastering *learning to read* (many 5th graders are not yet ready for a learning environment where they are *reading to learn*). Grade 5 is designed as a transitional grade that gradually releases students from the elementary framework where they begin the year needing more literacy-based interventions to a middle school framework by the end of the year.
- We will continue to engage Sylvan Learning tutors in the elementary school beginning January to provide afterschool test prep to 3rd through 5th graders through the dates of the NYS assessments. In the middle school, students will receive test prep in both the NYS ELA, math and science assessments as well as the SHSAT and ISEE test for high school admissions. This test prep will be provided by AoC middle school teachers.
- In the elementary school, we are increasing our ELL teaching staff from two to three ELL teachers and are also adding an ICT classroom to Kindergarten and Grade 5 as well as middle school's Grade 6. Thus, we are increasing our instructional interventionists to support the needs of these special populations.

As a result of her review and audit of the middle school instructional program, the new middle school principal has made critical holistic changes this year designed to strengthen instruction across the middle school.

- The middle school is now implementing the Danielson Framework as its teacher evaluation framework in order to strengthen instruction and pedagogical practice. Previously, AoC's middle school had designed an internal rubric for teacher evaluation that did not provide teachers with evidence-based feedback and did not support a holistic cycle of observation, feedback, teacher support and evaluation. As such, it was not designed to support the building of teachers' instructional capacity and student performance outcomes.
- The middle school principal has instituted regular and ongoing professional development. Teachers across all content areas noted that in the past they did not feel they were provided with the support

they needed to implement the school's curriculum. There is now once per month half-day (3 hour) PDs for teachers.

- The middle school principal and her instructional leadership team are conducting regular Learning Walks in which they have daily visits into classrooms to observe how teachers are implementing specific Danielson Domains (currently Domains 2 and 3).
- The middle school principal has focused on developing a culture of collaboration and has created systems by which this collaboration can occur. She has created content level grade teams and provided common planning time for these teams to work together to create a more aligned curriculum and to establish learning targets.
- Building off the data work that Project77 is doing with leaders and teachers, the middle school leadership team is working with teachers in creating their own benchmark assessments and building their capacity in evaluating data and using both informal and formal, formative and summative data in guiding classroom instruction.
- The middle school principal has replaced Journeys with McGraw Hill's StudySync. Novel Study continues to be a part of middle school ELA. ELA teachers are receiving extensive PD on StudySync in order to ensure they are implementing the curriculum effectively in the classroom. Teachers in the past had not felt they were adequately supported on curriculum implementation which led many teachers to create their own resources that may or may not have been aligned to NYS Learning Standards. With the urgency to accelerate learning after the pandemic, ensuring there was a common curriculum across the middle school grades with teachers able to implement it effectively is an imperative.
- The middle school principal is incorporating co-teaching models in the ELA and math classrooms. Teachers with excess time on their schedules are being deployed in classrooms which have students who have the lowest scores on both NWEA and NYS reading and math assessments. Co-teaching was not a model used previously in the AoC middle school; thus, teachers are receiving PD in how to implement co-teaching effectively in the classroom.
- Recognizing the increased social emotional challenges that our students are presenting as a result of the pandemic and the critical need to strengthen their social emotional skills to support their personal and academic growth, AoC's middle school is implementing Second Step—a character education/social emotional curriculum that is delivered daily through Advisory.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

AoC's students will meet or exceed Common Core and NYS Learning Standards for their grade level in math.

BACKGROUND

The mathematics curriculum at AoC is designed to ensure that students have a sound base in numeration and number sense on which the mathematical skills can be rooted. In 2021-22, AoC continued to implement HMH's Go Math curriculum in Grades K-4 and Illustrative Math in Grades 5-8. Go Math was supplemented with teacher-developed resources and EngageNY lessons as well as more hands-on learning experiences in order to address math topics that we have found are not sufficiently addressed in the Go Math curriculum. Additionally, literacy is integrated within math instruction including more math talk and math conversation among students.

In 2020-21, AoC administered the Go Math benchmark assessments three times a year for grades K through 4 (fall 2021, winter 2022 and spring 2022). Ongoing formative assessments were conducted throughout the year, using the common core standards as a framework to inform our observations about children's learning and to analyze student work.

In 2021-22, AoC added back to its assessment protocol a nationally normed assessment—NWEA—in math (and reading). With the cancellation of the NYS assessments in Spring 2020 (and for all intents and purposes, in Spring 2021), AoC was left without an assessment tool to benchmark and evaluate our students' performance against a representative sample, which would continue to disadvantage us as we sought to understand the impact of the pandemic on student learning and our efforts to accelerate learning to overcome learning loss. The NWEA was administered three times during the year (fall, winter and spring).

Math instruction is delivered in the workshop instructional model, as teachers gradually release responsibility of the learning from teacher to the student. Our teachers use a variety of research-based teaching methods to differentiate instruction for all students. Teachers' lesson plans included work for students on grade level, those who needed advanced treatment of the material and those who needed additional support, specifically our ELL and SPED students. Additionally, ells, special education had group sessions with the appropriate instructional specialists in order to receive the necessary support, mandated and/or related services. Special Education and ELL Teachers pushed-into classrooms to provide guided instruction and support for students identified as needing these instructional support services. ELL students also receive pull out instruction with the ELL teachers. As required by their IEPs, SPED students also were provided with pull-out instruction by the Special Education teacher.

Teachers are provided with support in math curriculum and instruction by AoC's instructional coaches and received math PD from external PD consultants, including from the published curriculum it uses, to provide training and workshops to teachers. PD and collaboration centered around the instructional priorities for the year which included supporting growth in mathematical standards, as well as addressing math deficiencies resulting from prolonged remote/hybrid instruction during the pandemic.

As stated earlier, AoC returned to full in-person learning in the 2021-22 with only a short 7-day period in which the school needed to transition to remote learning due to high COVID positivity rates. In order to provide students with additional preparation for NYS assessments after two years in which these assessments were not administered, students in the elementary school testing grades were provided with test prep from Sylvan Learning. Sylvan Learning tutors began their work in January 2021 continuing through the ELA test date working with classrooms of approximately 25 students as part of the afterschool program. Approximately 1/3 of 3rd and 4th grade students took part in Sylvan test prep.

In 2021-22, AoC's elementary school underwent a curriculum adoption process facilitated by an outside consultant to find a new math curriculum to replace Go Math. In addition to Go Math being retired by its publisher, AoC found that the curriculum had a number of gaps year to year and leaders and teachers relied on EngageNY resources to fill in those gaps. For instance, the curriculum did not support nor address fractions well at different grades. Further, Go Math's curriculum did not revisit and review previous standards and concepts in a spiral manner which was necessary for our students. The Curriculum Adoption Process concluded with the selection of Bridges which was piloted in a number of classrooms across grades at the end of the 2021-22 school year and is being fully implemented in 2022-23.

The middle school added a math interventionist in 2021-22 to provide students with additional math

support. The math interventionist worked with other instructional interventionists (ELL and SPED teachers) to support struggling students, particularly the ELL and SPED subgroups.

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 8th 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[8]				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Other reason	
3	73				11	84
4	59				18	77
5	68				9	77
6	62				11	73
7	63				13	76
8	40				41	81
All	365				103	468

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Brief narrative highlighting results in the data table below that directly addresses the measure, i.e. the overall percent of students *in at least their second year* achieving at proficiency. Narrative explicitly stating whether the school met the measure and discussing by how much the school fell short of or exceeded the measure, as well as notable performance in specific grades and populations. Also, use this section to explain the results in the context of the school program, attributing the results to effective practices or problem areas.

The table immediately below provides the percent of students in at least their second year achieving proficiency on the NYS Math test by grade and for all grades 3-8. No grades met benchmark of 75%

[8] 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.

proficiency. AoC's performance fell below benchmark by 26 to 54 points across the tested grades. In 2019, when AoC last administered the NYS assessments (pre-pandemic), AoC only served K-5. In 2019, AoC's Grade 3-5 students performed very strongly on the NYS math assessment, with 72% of Grade 3-5 students meeting proficiency standards. Our Grade 3-5 student performance on the 2022 NYS Math exam has fallen precipitously after two years of the pandemic. Again, as with ELA, our NYS Math assessment results are in line with what has happened across the country in terms of significant declines across all student subgroups, in math scores. Our lowest performing grades were Grade 5 (21% proficient) and Grade 8 (23% proficient). In Grade 8, 37% of all tested students took the Algebra I Common Core Regents exam in lieu of the Grade 8 NYS Math exam. Thus, the Grade 8 NYS Math exam proficiency unlike Grade 7 does not include the higher performing math students in the grade which would explain the drop in proficiency from Grade 7 to Grade 8 of 21 points.

This was the first year that we had students take the Algebra Common Core Regents exam (2021-22 was the first year we had 8th grade students). Our accelerated math students (those who take Algebra I in Grade 8) performed very strongly on the NYS Regents Algebra I Common Core exam. 100% of the students who took the Regents passed with at least a 65 (Level 3 and above). Notably, 18 of the 23 students (78%) who took the Regents exam scored a Level 4 or 5 which signifies *college and career readiness* in mathematics.

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	48%	73	49%	70
4	44%	59	44%	57
5	19%	68	21%	63
6	34%	62	35%	57
7	44%	63	44%	63
8	23%	40	23%	39
All	36%	365	37%	349

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Performance on a Regents Math Exam
Of 8th Grade All Students by Year

Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Percent Passing with a 65	Number Tested
8	2017-18	NA	NA	NA
8	2018-19	NA	NA	NA

8	2021-22	Algebra	100%[9]	23

Narrative discussing year-to-year trends during the current Accountability Period[10]. This discussion shows how the school is making progress towards, or maintaining, a high level of performance. Additional evidence may include other valid and reliable assessment results that demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's instructional program

The first year of the Accountability Period was the 2019-20 school year which was also the first year of the pandemic during which AoC transitioned to remote learning at the end of March 2020. AoC remained remote for the 2020-21 school year before returning to in-person learning in 2021-22. The 2021-22 school year is the first year in the current Accountability Period that students were administered the NYS assessments (while they were administered in Spring 2021, 100% of AoC students did not take the 2021 assessments). This is also the first year in the current Accountability Period that AoC is administering an internal nationally-normed Math assessment (the NWEA MAP). As a result, AoC is not able to discuss year to year trends based on valid and reliable assessment results.

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.[11]

[9] Note that 78% of AoC 8th Graders who took the Algebra Common Core Regents exams scored at least a Level 4 which indicates College and Career Readiness in Algebra (a higher standard than passing with a 65).

[10] A school's Accountability Period includes the final year of the previous charter term through the penultimate year of the current charter term. For schools in their initial charter, the Accountability Period includes the first year of operation through the fourth year of the charter term.

[11] 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.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

With the exception of Grade 7 where AoC exceeded the CSD 30 Grade 7 proficiency rate by 1 points, AoC's proficiency fell below that of CSD 30. Its aggregate proficiency for all tested students in the 2-year cohort was 37% falling short of CSD 30 by 7 percentage points.

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 2nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	49%	70	51%	2448
4	44%	57	49%	2414
5	21%	63	41%	2445
6	35%	57	43%	2813
7	44%	63	43%	2655
8	23%	39	33%	1697
All	37%	349	44%	14472

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

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

Given the lack of a consistent record of data suitable for analysis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains paramount that schools continue to collect and report on internal exam results in order to build a base of evidence suitable for making a strong case for renewal. Provide narrative discussing how the school evaluated student growth and achievement in mathematics during the 2021-22 school year using internal assessments.

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 mathematics: NWEA MAP. We had a higher participation rate on our NWEA MAP math test than we did on the NYS math test. NWEA was administered three times during the year (Fall, Winter and Spring) to students across all grades in the school. Because of the higher participation rate, we believe the NWEA provides a meaningful assessment of the growth and achievement of our students during the 2021-22 school year. AoC's student performance against SUNY's benchmarks for the NWEA was mixed as the table below summarizes. AoC met Measure 1 with the school's median growth percentile for all tested students in Grades 3-8 being at the 55th percentile exceeding the 50th percentile benchmark and Measure 2 being able to support strong growth of low achievers with their median percentile growth being at the 56th percentile, just higher than the 55th percentile benchmark. AoC did not meet the growth benchmark for SPED students and fell far below benchmark of 75% of all tested students meeting proficiency standards. At AoC, 38% of the two-year cohort of tested students met proficiency in math. Only Grade 3 had slightly higher than half of all tested two-year cohort students meet proficiency.

While the majority of students are currently below grade level in math, the growth data for all students and for low initial performers indicate that they made more than one year's growth over the course of the 2021-22 school year. AoC students will need to continue to make up more than one year's growth in order to close the gap between their current performance and grade level proficiency. So that is promising news with the data. AoC's SPED students were not, however, closing the gap between AoC's general education students.

In addition to the NWEA MAP Math test, AoC's elementary school also administered the Go Math Assessment to all students in Grades K-4 in the Fall, Winter and Spring to measure and record our students' progress in reading. Among the key takeaways from the Go Math was the fact that Kindergarten and first graders were moving towards math proficiency in line with pre-pandemic levels. Kindergarten was the highest performance grade with 76% at proficiency on end of year assessments. The fact that Grade K and Grade 1 students did well on the Go Math internal assessments are indicative of the fact that our math instruction is effective when students are learning in an in-person setting. Students were mastering foundational math skills at high rates in these early grades. The Go Math assessment results were aligned with data from the NYS Math assessments for students at the higher elementary grades well below where they were pre-pandemic.

2021-22 NWEA MAP Mathematics Assessment End of Year Results

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3rd through 8th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	459	55	Yes
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3rd through 8th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	293	56	Yes

Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities[12]	57	50	45	No
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3rd through 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards.[13]	2+ students	75%	315	38%	No

End of Year Performance on 2021-22 NWEA MAP Mathematics Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient[14]	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	53%	81	52%	65
4	32%	74	46%	41
5	22%	76	26%	39
6	20%	71	31%	36
7	33%	76	40%	55
8	28%	82	29%	79
All	32%	459	38%	315

End of Year Growth on 2021-22 NWEA MAP Mathematics Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3	51	81
4	59	74
5	45	76
6	53	71

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

[13] https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf.

[14] 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.

7	84	76
8	45	81
All	55	459

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Narrative discussing any concerns the school may have regarding the data reported above and the school's attempts to mitigate those concerns. For example, schools should describe any barriers to achieving high participation rates, unexpected challenges arising from the administration, etc. The school should also supplement the information above with additional quantitative evidence from other types of academic assessments or evidence capturing the results of co-academic interventions. **Schools with Accountability Plans that contain additional measures or conditions on renewal under the Elementary/Middle Mathematics goal should report those results here.**

This is the first year during the current Accountability Period that AoC has administered a nationally-normed Math assessment—the NWEA. AoC operated in-person during the 2021-22 school year, and thus AoC did not experience any issues regarding testing administration as it would have had in a remote environment that would impact the validity and reliability of the testing results. NWEA also had strong participation rates in the NWEA exams, particularly in comparison to NYS assessments where many parents chose to opt out of the test because they felt their children were not ready to sit for NYS assessments after extended remote learning.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

AoC did not meet the Absolute, Comparative or Growth Measures for Math on the NYS Math assessments. While we did not meet these measures, other assessments do indicate promising trends within math. Specifically, our NWEA growth data shows that all students and low achieving students made more than one year's math growth over the 2021-22 school year. Given that students are behind grade level in math, students will need to achieve more than one year's growth consistently each year in order to overcome their deficits and ultimately perform at grade level. Further, AoC has been able to support the achievement of its higher performing math students as reflected in the Grade 8 Algebra 1 Common Core Regents results with 100% of test-takers passing the test with a 65 (at least a Level 3) and 78% meeting College and Career Readiness standards in Math scoring at a Level 4 or 5.

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.	Not Met

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

Narrative explaining how the school will strive to maintain consistency in its data collection and reporting. The narrative also explains what specific steps the school will take to maintain or improve academic performance based on the specific results associated with this goal, focusing in particular on strategic interventions including providing enhanced support or program revisions for explicit grades, cohorts, or subpopulations.

Given the urgency to address pandemic learning loss and accelerate learning, AoC engaged Project77 at the start of the 2022-23 school year to support instructional leaders and teachers in both the elementary school and the middle school in analyzing and interpreting student data from both internal assessments and New York State assessments so leaders and teachers have a clearer, deeper and more insightful understanding of the data to ensure that the data is used effectively in instructional decision-making to promote student growth and achievement in math.

Among the steps that AoC has taken and is taking to address the challenge to accelerate growth and move students who are well behind grade level to grade level proficiency are:

- AoC received a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies to run a Summer Boost program for rising 2nd to 8th graders focused on intensive reading and math instruction using the Lavinia curriculum. AoC will be getting student performance and growth data from the administrators of this grant program soon and will be able to quantify the impact that the program had on boosting student performance in reading and math. Our initial assessment is that for those students who exhibited regular and strong attendance, the program was able to support reading growth.
- The elementary school underwent a Curriculum Adoption Process last year in order to replace the Go Math curriculum. This year, the elementary school is fully implementing the Bridges curriculum which was selected after this year-long process, which included piloting the program at the end of the school year in a number of different classes across the K-5 span. The new math curriculum will support the need to accelerate math learning in our students whose NYS Math and NWEA test data shows the majority of our students below grade-level proficiency. Importantly, Bridges requires 80 minutes of daily math instruction versus 60 minutes in our previous Go Math program. Bridges involves more hands-on and collaborative student-led learning as opposed to teacher-directed learning and thus is more aligned with our school mission and vision. Bridges involves a continuous spiral review—spiraling back on concepts learned and building off of them—which was lacking in Go Math. This spiraling back will be critical in helping students become secure in previous grade level math standards with which they have not yet gained fluency and proficiency.
- Elementary school teachers will have comprehensive math PD from Bridges as well as from an external consultant who is working with teachers once per week within the coaching cycle. The external consultant works with teachers on pre-planning, coaching during the lesson and a reflection recap to identify strengths and areas for improvement to be addressed in subsequent lessons.
- We have moved Grade 5 from the middle school to the elementary school. Our 2022 NYS math scores showed a clear decline in proficiency from 4th to 5th grades (23 point decline). Our lowest

performers on both the NYS Math test and the NWEA MAP Math test were our 5th graders. As students move to 5th grade, the focus of learning shifts from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. And math like all subjects requires students to be strong readers. Math involves being able to read and understand complex word problems in order to solve them. In order to address the social-emotional and metacognitive development of 10-11 year-olds (the typical age range of 5th graders), we needed to move 5th grade back to an elementary school framework. Research has shown that developmentally, 5th graders are better taught within the framework of an elementary approach where teachers, unlike middle school teachers, have the literacy content knowledge to develop interventions and support 5th graders who are still mastering *learning to read* (many 5th graders are not yet ready for a learning environment where they are *reading to learn*). Grade 5 is designed as a transitional grade that gradually releases students from the elementary framework where they begin the year needing more literacy-based interventions to a middle school framework by the end of the year.

- We will continue to engage Sylvan Learning tutors beginning January to provide afterschool test prep to elementary testing grades 3rd through 5th graders through the dates of the NYS assessments. In the middle school, students will receive test prep in both the NYS ELA, math and science assessments as well as the SHSAT and ISEE test for high school admissions. This test prep will be provided by AoC middle school teachers.
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As a result of her review and audit of the middle school instructional program, the new middle school principal has made critical holistic changes this year designed strengthen instruction across the middle school.

- The middle school is now implementing the Danielson Framework as its teacher evaluation framework in order to strengthen instruction and pedagogical practice. Previously, AoC's middle school had designed an internal rubric for teacher evaluation that did not provide teachers with evidence-based feedback and did not support a holistic cycle of observation, feedback, teacher support and evaluation. As such, it was not designed to support the building of teachers' instructional capacity and student performance outcomes.
- The middle school principal has instituted regular and ongoing professional development. Teachers across all content areas noted that in the past they did not feel they were provided with the support they needed to implement the school's curriculum. There is now once per month half-day (3 hour) PDs for teachers.
- The middle school principal and her instructional leadership team are conducting regular Learning Walks in which they have daily visits into classrooms to observe how teachers are implementing specific Danielson Domains (currently Domains 2 and 3).
- The middle school principal has focused on developing a culture of collaboration and has created systems by which this collaboration can occur. She has created content level grade teams and provided common planning time for these teams to work together to create a more aligned curriculum and to establish learning targets.
- Building off the data work that Project77 is doing with leaders and teachers, the middle school leadership team is working with teachers in creating their own benchmark assessments and building their capacity in evaluating data and using both informal and formal, formative and summative data in guiding classroom instruction.
- The middle school principal is incorporating co-teaching models in the ELA and math classrooms. Teachers with excess time on their schedules are being deployed in classrooms which have students who have the lowest scores on both NWEA and NYS reading and math assessments. Co-teaching

was not a model used previously in the AoC middle school; thus, teachers are receiving PD in how to implement co-teaching effectively in the classroom.

- Math teachers are receiving extensive PD in Illustrative Math, the math program that has been used in the middle school previously, in order to ensure they are implementing the curriculum effectively in the classroom. Teachers in the past had not felt they were adequately supported on curriculum implementation. With the urgency to accelerate learning after the pandemic, ensuring teachers are able to implement the math curriculum effectively is an imperative.
- Recognizing the increased social emotional challenges that our students are presenting as a result of the pandemic and the critical need to strengthen their social emotional skills to support their personal and academic growth, AoC's middle school is implementing Second Step—a character education/social emotional curriculum that is delivered daily through Advisory.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

AoC students will meet or exceed the NYS core curriculum standards and National Education standards for their grade level.

BACKGROUND

The science curriculum is designed to ensure that students collect and record first-hand data and to represent and analyze it using the scientific method. Children learn to identify patterns, describe relationships, make connections, develop models, pose questions, make predictions, check hypothesis and puzzle over answers using the scientific method.

AoC uses the Science *Dimensions* text by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Grades K-4 and IQWST from Activate Learning for Grades 5-8, both are highly correlated with the NYS and Next Generation Science Standards. Science instruction combines mastery of core vocabulary and conceptual knowledge with the application of scientific principles in laboratory settings. Science assessments, for example, include sections that focus on the key terms and ideas of a unit as well as a performance task component that require students to synthesize and analyze data from laboratory experiments. Science teachers also actively work to reinforce key mathematical concepts, especially graphing and measurement skills. In addition, the Grade 7 science curriculum includes a partnership with the Billion Oyster Project which offers public school students (among other constituents) the opportunity to learn about New York City's rich oyster history and lead the movement to restore it. This STEM partnership provides students with the chance to learn science through the lens of New York's waterways and the ecosystems that exist among them. Through this partnership, 7th graders were able to engage together in practical hands-on *in-person* experimentation led by AoC's 7th Grade science teacher and presenters from the Billion Oyster Project outdoors along New York waterways at College Point in Flushing Bay, Williamsburg Yacht Club and New York Harbor. The culmination of the partnership is the end of year Billion Oyster Project Symposium in which students developed and submitted created projects related to New York Harbor.

Professional development for our science teachers includes training from consultants provided by the curriculum we utilize as well as individual workshops that teachers attend. In addition, science teachers receive coaching from leadership team members.

As stated previously, AoC returned to in-person learning in the 2021-22 school year with a minor interruption due to high COVID infection rates that forced the school to revert to remote learning for 7 days around the December winter break. There were no changes to the science program or science staffing during the 2021-22 school year.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE 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 and 8th grade in spring 2022. Additionally, AoC 8th grade students who were in the Regents level Living Environment class took the Living Environment Regents exam in lieu of the Grade 8 NYS Science exam. 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

Brief narrative highlighting results in the data table below that directly addresses the measure, i.e. the overall percent of students *in at least their second year* achieving proficiency. Narrative explicitly stating whether the school met the measure and discussing by how much the school fell short of or exceeded the measure, as well as notable performance in specific grades and populations. Also, use this section to explain the results in the context of the school program, attributing the results to effective practices or problem areas.

The Table below summarizes the performance of AoC's 4th and 8th graders on the NYS Grade 4 and Grade 8 Science test. 89% of AoC's 4th graders in at least their second year at the school met proficiency standards on the NYS Science exam, exceeding the accountability benchmark of 75%. Only 33% of the AoC Grade 8 students met proficiency standards on the NYS Grade 8 Science exam, falling well short of the 75% benchmark. However, it is important to note that 23 8th grade students were administered the NYS Living Environment Regents exam and 87% of them passed the Regents with at least a 65.

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 2nd Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	89%	61
8	33%	39
All	67%	100

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Performance on a Regents Science Exam
Of 8th Grade All Students by Year

Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Percent Passing with a 65	Number Tested
8	2017-18	NA	NA	NA
8	2018-19	NA	NA	NA
8	2021-22	Living Environment	87%	23

Narrative discussing year-to-year trends during the current Accountability Period. This discussion shows how the school is making progress towards, or maintaining, a high level of performance. The school can use a supplemental table for this section on performance disaggregated by number of years in the school. **Schools that administer a Regents science exam to 8th grade students in lieu of the state exam should report the results above.**

The first year of the Accountability Period was the 2019-20 school year which was also the first year of the pandemic during which AoC transitioned to remote learning at the end of March 2020. AoC remained remote for the 2020-21 school year before returning to in-person learning in 2021-22. The 2021-22 school year is the first year in the current Accountability Period that students were administered the NYS assessments (while they were administered in Spring 2021, 100% of AoC students did not take the 2021 assessments). As a result, AoC is not able to discuss year to year trends based on NYS assessments. Our Grade 4 performance on the NYS Grade 4 Science assessment was strong reflecting the strength of our hands-on science curriculum. While our advanced science students excelled on the Living Environment Regents exam with 87% of students passing with at least a 65, only 33% of our non-Regents track students met proficiency standards on the NYS Grade 8 Science test.

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.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

Present a narrative providing an overall discussion of the school's attainment of this Accountability Plan goal.

AoC met the goal for Grade 4 with 89% of all tested students in at least their second year at AoC scoring at least a Level 3. AoC did not meet the goal for Grade 8 with only 33% of all tested students in at least their second year at AoC scoring at least a Level 3. However, 78% of 8th grade students in at least their second year who took the NYS Regents Living Environment Exam in lieu of the NYS Grade 8 Science Test passed the test with at least a 65.

ACTION PLAN

Narrative explaining how the school will strive to maintain consistency in its data collection and reporting in the context of possible changes to the modality of instruction. The narrative also explains what specific steps the school will take to maintain or improve academic performance based on the specific results associated with this goal, focusing in particular on strategic interventions including providing enhanced support or program revisions for explicit grades, cohorts, or subpopulations.

Given the urgency to address pandemic learning loss and accelerate learning, AoC engaged Project77 at the start of the 2022-23 school year to support instructional leaders and teachers in both the elementary school and the middle school in analyzing and interpreting student data from both internal assessments and New York State assessments so leaders and teachers have a clearer, deeper and more insightful understanding of the data to ensure that the data is used effectively in instructional decision-making to promote student growth and achievement in science.

Among the steps that AoC is taking this school year (2022-23) to maintain the high performance of students in science in the elementary school and to improve performance in the middle school are:

- We have moved Grade 5 from the middle school to the elementary school and Grade 5 students will use *Dimensions* science curriculum in order to have continuity of curriculum and instruction across all elementary school grades. As students move to 5th grade, the focus of learning shifts from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. And science like all subjects requires students to be strong readers. In order to address the social-emotional and metacognitive development of 10-11 year-olds (the typical age range of 5th graders), we needed to move 5th grade back to an elementary school framework. Research has shown that developmentally, 5th graders are better taught within the framework of an elementary approach where teachers, unlike middle school teachers, have the literacy content knowledge to develop interventions and support 5th graders who are still mastering *learning to read* (many 5th graders are not yet ready for a learning environment where they are *reading to learn*). Grade 5 is designed as a transitional grade that gradually releases students from the elementary framework where they begin the year needing more literacy-based interventions to a middle school framework by the end of the year.
- In the middle school, students will receive test prep in both the NYS ELA, math and science assessments as well as the SHSAT and ISEE test for high school admissions. This test prep will be provided by AoC middle school teachers.
- In the elementary school, we are increasing our ELL teaching staff from two to three ELL teachers and are also adding an ICT classroom to Kindergarten and Grade 5 as well as middle school's Grade 6. Thus, we are increasing our instructional interventionists to support the needs of these special populations.

As a result of her review and audit of the middle school instructional program, the new middle school principal has made critical holistic changes this year designed to strengthen instruction across the middle school.

- The middle school is now implementing the Danielson Framework as its teacher evaluation framework in order to strengthen instruction and pedagogical practice. Previously, AoC's middle school had designed an internal rubric for teacher evaluation that did not provide teachers with evidence-based feedback and did not support a holistic cycle of observation, feedback, teacher support and evaluation. As such, it was not designed to support the building of teachers' instructional capacity and student performance outcomes.
- The middle school principal has instituted regular and ongoing professional development. Teachers across all content areas noted that in the past they did not feel they were provided with the support they needed to implement the school's curriculum. There is now once per month half-day (3 hour) PDs for teachers.

- The middle school principal and her instructional leadership team are conducting regular Learning Walks in which they have daily visits into classrooms to observe how teachers are implementing specific Danielson Domains (currently Domains 2 and 3).
- The middle school principal has focused on developing a culture of collaboration and has created systems by which this collaboration can occur. She has created content level grade teams and provided common planning time for these teams to work together to create a more aligned curriculum and to establish learning targets.
- Building off the data work that Project77 is doing with leaders and teachers, the middle school leadership team is working with teachers in creating their own benchmark assessments and building their capacity in evaluating data and using both informal and formal, formative and summative data in guiding classroom instruction.
- The middle school principal has replaced AoC's previous science curriculum with McGraw Hills' Inspire curriculum. AoC attributes the very low performance of Grade 8 students on the 2022 NYS Grade 8 Science exam to the quality of instruction last year. It was in science where it was most pronounced that teachers had not been supported on curriculum implementation which led many teachers to create their own resources that may or may not have been aligned to NYS Learning Standards. With the urgency to accelerate learning after the pandemic and improve science growth and achievement in the middle school, having a common science curriculum across the middle school grades with PD to ensure teachers are able to implement it effectively is an imperative.
- Recognizing the increased social emotional challenges that our students are presenting as a result of the pandemic and the critical need to strengthen their social emotional skills to support their personal and academic growth, AoC's middle school is implementing Second Step—a character education/social emotional curriculum that is delivered daily through Advisory.

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

AoC's 2020-21 Accountability Status is in Good Standing as it is the same as the 2020-21 and 2019-20 school years which were based on the 2018-19 NYS test results.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

AoC's performance on the NYS ELA and math assessments have consistently met AYP for all accountability subgroups and thus has been In Good Standing for the last three years.

Accountability Status by Year

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