



University Prep Charter Middle School

2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Andrea D’Amato, 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)
Steve Barr	Chair	
Judith Bergtraum	Member	
Justin Pasternak	Teacher Representative	Teacher Representative
Burton Sacks	Treasurer	Finance
Miguel Suarez	Member	Negotiation
Randi Weingarten	Member	

Andrea D’Amato has served as the Executive Director since July 1, 2019. David Patterson has served as the Principal since August 28, 2018.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The University Prep Charter Middle School (UPCMS) has as its mission to prepare students for success in high school, college, leadership, and life. Ensuring growth in all three areas is our professional commitment and privilege. UPCMS (or “the School”) achieves this mission by creating small, college-preparatory learning communities where all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community) actively engage in the education process. We create a student-centered environment that unifies the efforts of family, community, and school to foster lifelong learning, cross-cultural competency, social responsibility, and academic excellence. The underlying belief at UPCMS is that all students can go to college and that their preparation is our professional responsibility and moral obligation.

University Prep Charter Middle School opened in Fall 2019 serving grades 5 and 6 and will grow each year until reaching full enrollment. University Prep Public Schools opened UPCMS to offer an earlier start to college and career preparation. University Prep Public Schools also operates University Prep Charter High School, which was nationally recognized as a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School in the category of Exemplary High-Performing Schools.

Our Approach

We believe that with appropriate academic supports, students of all abilities learn more in classes with highly challenging content than in those with low academic rigor. The administration and staff of University Prep Public Schools are forward-focused, making sure that we are working to achieve long-term longitudinal academic goals for our students. Regardless of the age group, teachers and administrators are striving to ensure that all students have the preparation necessary to excel at the next level.

UPCMS students enroll in a scope and sequence of courses aligned to the New York State and Common Core Learning Standards. We employ a team of highly qualified individuals to help identify and service the social and emotional needs of our diverse student body which fosters our school's culture of support and creates a strong sense of community.

Key Design Elements

The key design elements of University Prep Public Schools are:

A Shared Commitment to Academic Excellence – The UPCMS community of stakeholders shares a commitment to academic excellence. We design and decide together. At UPCMS, we prioritize our commitment to teacher voice and agency through our community decision-making model of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership means instructional decision-making is shared and extended between administrators and faculty; and, that responsibility for excellence is held by those with expertise. Anchored in our unique partnership with the United Federation of Teachers, our model provides systemic, mission-aligned opportunities for teachers to share responsibilities and lead various initiatives. To sustain and extend the effectiveness of our practice, we collaborate on the design of professional development opportunities. We ensure professional development provides teachers with timely, relevant, and challenging content within structures inter-visitation, coaching, mentorship, small group leadership, etc.) created by and for teachers. We measure our shared commitment to excellence through multiple data points, including teacher turnover rate.

Powerful Teaching and Learning – The UPCMS instructional program delivers powerful teaching and learning throughout our community. To assess the power or impact of our teaching and learning we begin with an empirical foundation of data. Our administrators and faculty convene structured, data-rich meetings to benchmark performance and evaluate progress. Department team meetings, grade-level team meetings, and inquiry groups inform our instructional decision-making and shape our approach to ongoing schoolwide impact analysis. Two cornerstones of our work are Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) and our Problem-Solving methodology. Our ICT model places two certified teachers (one general education, one special education) in a single classroom. The model increases the individual attention for students, reduces our teacher-to-student ratio, and leverages the skills of highly-trained special education teachers in building comprehensive and collaborative solutions for all learners. The model also allows students with IEPs to receive instruction from a content specialist rather than a special educator.

The core of University Prep Middle School's academic work is threefold: to prepare students to discuss big ideas; to defend their own and others' opinions, and to find joy in reading and thinking. UP Middle is a knowledge-led school—the goal of the school is to teach a broad, in-depth set of cultural and historical knowledge that is challenging and vital and that students can successfully commit to long-term memory through instruction and assessment. To achieve this, our teachers will work closely in teams—across grades and within departments— to create, practice, teach, and analyze lessons with shared ideas and concepts across courses, based on an idea that is simple but powerful—that knowledge builds on knowledge.

The most important aspect of UP Middle's design is that it is purposeful in employing a curriculum that is specific, sequenced, and aligned. The curriculum presents a sequence of study that is organized and distinguished in both breadth and depth—what students learn is coherent, cumulative, and content-specific. The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, a K-8 course of study developed and refined by the Core Knowledge Foundation at the University of Virginia and in use by some of the highest performing middle schools in New York City today.

The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn in English, history, geography, mathematics, science, music, and the visual arts. It seeks to identify the content and skills that comprise the foundational knowledge that all students need in order to know a lot about the world, think and read critically, and solve problems by learning from the past and using knowledge wisely.

These three broad definitions of what it means for a student to be successful are predicated on the mastery of six core skills or abilities that encompass reading, writing, listening, speaking, and numeracy:

1. Students read grade-level fiction and non-fiction, across content subject areas, selected by both teachers and themselves, every day, for a sustained period of time;
2. Students read fiction and informational texts, across content subject areas, that reflect grade-level complexity and the Common Core State reading standards 1-10;
3. Students demonstrate, through writing and speaking, a high level of comprehension when reading or listening, across content subject areas—understanding context and background knowledge, locating evidence to support answers, and tightly and accurately summarizing material they have read or listened to;
4. Students argue—analyze, evaluate, support, and defend—their positions with evidence

when writing and speaking about appropriately complex issues and topics in their classes, across content subject areas;

5. Students learn the core algebra strand defined by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics;
6. Students write expository essays and creative prose that reflect an understanding and mastery of appropriate sentence structure, grammar, usage, and spelling, across content subject areas.

We have also developed several other high-impact approaches for students. Faculty hold weekly office hours with students. At UPCMS, students use office hours to build rapport with faculty, probe deeply and build on the knowledge acquired in class, seek clarification on open questions, and strengthen bonds within and across the community. We run a Saturday Academy to provide additional academic support for students throughout the year. Our Summer Bridge program, like the composition class, is a formal structure to mitigate the challenges faced by our incoming students.

Inclusive School Culture – The integrity of the UPCMS learning community is rooted in our commitment to an inclusive school culture. We affirm “inclusion” as our shared point of departure, or beginning, in all communication and interactions within the community. Inclusion looks and feels like a thoughtful, principled commitment to practice and reinforces our core values by considering and respecting the true diversity (visible and invisible, spoken and unspoken) at UPCMS. Students work towards a set of four core values that keep them on course to be successful at the college of their choice and beyond. “The Core Four” are:

- Accepting Personal Responsibility: students see themselves as the primary cause of their outcomes and experiences
- Discovering Self-Motivation: students find purpose in their lives by discovering personally meaningful goals and dreams
- Mastering Self-Management: students plan for and take purposeful actions in pursuit of their goals and dreams
- Creating Positive Interdependence: students build mutually supportive relationships that help them to achieve their goals and dreams – while helping others do the same

We conduct regular Town Hall meetings. These monthly gatherings are shared celebrations of success within our learning and service communities. We present honor roll certificates and attendance awards. Students also showcase their talents in the performing arts. We have built rich, layered support structures wherein four counselors provide support services and loop with our students to ensure stability and strengthen interpersonal connections.

Student Leadership and Character Development – Fulfilling the mission of UPCMS calls for administrators and faculty to embody and instill principles of student leadership and character development. We model our ideals through a daily advisory period wherein students receive explicit instruction on essential skills such as life management, college readiness, and reducing risk factors. We supplement this instruction by providing students with opportunities to lead and demonstrate character through faculty-led clubs and athletics. Clubs include Spanish Honor Society, UPCMS Pillars (Boys Club), Music Club, and the Dance and Movement Club. Extensive athletics offerings include basketball and soccer (boys and girls), baseball (boys), softball (girls), and cheerleading. In addition to the opportunities to lead during the academic year, students can

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demonstrate their acquired skills as Summer Bridge Assistants who welcome and guide incoming students to the UPCMS community.

Family and Community Involvement – At UPCMS, our model of family and community involvement will incorporate five traditional methods of information sharing and collaborative decision-making: parent association meetings, back-to-school night, introduction to college night, enrollment meetings, and quarterly parent-teacher conferences. Each of these structured events allows parents and families to be informed members of the school community. To ensure ongoing access to accurate and timely information, we deploy the PowerSchool school information platform and conduct seminars to train parents in using the platform, as well as e-mail.

School Demographics

In the 2021-22 school year, UPCMS served 377 students in grades 5-8 at year-end. Of the total student body enrolled on BEDS Day, 53.8% were Hispanic, 40.6% Black, 0.3% Asian, 1% Multi-racial, 1.5% Native American, 1.8% White, and 1% unknown. Over 90% of students were living in poverty, 20% had a disability, and 5% were English Language Learners.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

The table below provides 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														
2019-20						59	96							155
2020-21						62	126	110						298
2021-22						50	117	121	104					392

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at the school will become proficient in reading and reading of the English Language.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned to the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age-appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas

and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backward-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the ELA curriculum Reading Reconsidered.

To further support student learning in ELA, UPCMS offers “Reading and Speaking” and “Writing and Language” courses. During Reading and Speaking, students read approximately fifteen to twenty whole grade-level fiction, non-fiction, and dramatic texts; a number of short stories and poems; and many newspaper and magazine articles, all of which are read aloud in the classroom or read partially aloud and silently by students. These read-alouds continue in the school through all grades, based on research that shows students’ comprehension through listening outpaces their comprehension through reading until at least the ninth grade. This reading is close reading, requiring students to annotate and underline passages, read and reread carefully passages for meaning, and summarize passages.

These practices are done to help students understand meaning in texts, and to provide practice in arguing and solving problems based on the material. Students engage in debate during class about essential questions raised by the books they read, and use evidence from texts to support their positions. Students participate in at least three discussions per week about their reading in Reading and Talking.

In Writing and Language, students are expected to write at least three times a week, and to complete one major writing assignment per unit, or approximately two per marking period. These writing assignments include whole-school common page lengths and use a common scoring guide. Major work is written in at least two drafts, and all teachers provide multiple high-quality exemplar papers to provide models for students both before and during the writing process. Finally, students are expected to make presentations based on their written work at least once a marking period. These presentations are opportunities for peers to take notes, open up points of agreement or disagreement about the argument presented, and respond in the spirit of informed debate.

Writing and Language focuses on the development of writing at the level of the sentence, a need shared by many incoming middle schoolers. Grammar includes word study based on word roots, explicit vocabulary development, and the process of learning to develop ever more complex, grammatically sound sentences using the technique of sentence diagramming. Students practice taking apart sentences in texts they are currently reading, and writing new sentences based on similar ideas and content.

Teachers understand how to effectively implement and teach the school’s curriculum by participating in preservice professional development focused on the Core Knowledge Curriculum. After learning about the content of the Core Knowledge sequence, each department creates a preliminary map of ten sequential units per grade for each subject area. Over the school year, teachers flesh out the maps generated in UP University by creating detailed instructional, domain-based unit plans that include individual lesson plans. Regularly scheduled planning time across grade levels and within departments supports the successful development and renewal of the maps that are initially written at the start of the year. Professional learning communities also work to revivify aspects of curriculum design and student assessment as the school year progresses and we learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of our students.

Student achievement data in the classroom are the foundation of collective decisions surrounding curricular choices and direction, instructional goals, and intervention and support programs for

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struggling students. Throughout, the goal of data gathering and sharing is to support best practices in the classroom and the development of all units of common school-wide formative assessments, or checks for understanding. UPCMS tracks student performance on diagnostic assessments, formative assessments, summative assessments, high-stakes tests, final grades, and D and F (interim and final) grades.

All same-course teachers at UP Middle meet at least two times a week to help design short, regular, and common formative assessments that are used throughout a given unit to guide and improve instruction and student success. Teachers input and share results to compare outcomes, discuss trends, develop action plans for targeted student interventions, and identify pockets of missed comprehension. Students who regularly struggle with many skills on the common formative assessments are identified during the grade team meetings, where the purpose is to address student needs and make recommendations for further comprehensive academic intervention and support. Students who are identified as struggling in a number of classes are recommended to the administration for further supports.

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 Grades 5-8 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						
4						
5	37	0	0	0	5	42
6	103	1	0	1	9	114
7	104	0	0	0	9	113
8	104	0	0	1	22	127
All	348	1	0	2	45	396

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.

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RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Of the 396 students enrolled at UPCMS at the time of testing, all but 48 took the 2022 NYS ELA exam. Of these tested students, 238 students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in their second year at the school. As 5th Grade is the entry year for UPCMS, no fifth graders were enrolled for more than one year.

In our third year of operation but first testing year due to the pandemic, 50.6% of tested students overall attained a Level 3 or Level 4 on the exam, and 54.2% of the students enrolled in their second year attained proficiency at these levels. As mentioned above, no 5th Grade student scores are counted in the 54.2% for students in their second year at the school.

With these scores, UPMCS did not meet the Absolute Measure of 75% of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year attaining proficiency. The school missed the target by 20.8 percentage points.

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				
4				
5	32.4	37	N/A	0
6	61.2	103	65.9	44
7	48.1	104	48.5	97
8	49	104	50	100
All	50.6	348	54.2	238

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The 2021-22 school year is the first year of New York State ELA testing for UPCMS due to the pandemic. Therefore, we have no year-to-year trends to analyze. Overall, however, we feel we are making tremendous gains in student achievement in ELA, as evidenced by our internal assessment data over the past three year.

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.

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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

On the 2021-21 NYS ELA exam, 32.9% of the 5th through 8th Grade students in NYC CSD 7 received Level 3 or Level 4 scores. In comparison, 54.2% of UPCMS 6th-8th Grade students enrolled in at least their second year reached proficiency.

Overall, UPCMS met this comparative measure for its ELA Goal, exceeding the District by 21.3 percentage points. Scores for UPCMS 6th Graders exceeded the district scores for the grade by 27.5 percentage points. Our 7th Grade students scored above their district peers by 10 percentage points while our 8th Graders surpassed their district peers by 14.3 percentage points. Scores for 5th Grade cannot be compared, as 5th Grade students at the school were only enrolled in their first year.

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	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3				
4				
5	N/A	0	19	946
6	65.9	41	38.4	906
7	48.5	97	38.5	937
8	50	100	35.7	971
All	54.2	238	32.9	3,760

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](#).

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The 2021-22 school year was the first year of New York State ELA testing for UPCMS due to the pandemic. Therefore, we have no year-to-year trends to analyze.

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: STAR

UPCMS evaluated student achievement in ELA through the Star Assessment, an interim assessment that assesses student mastery of New York State standards. Scoring is norm-referenced, allowing for a comparison of student performance with that of other students across the US. UPCMS also assessed student achievement in ELA through summative assessments, which are aligned to the New York State standards. The assessments are administered at the conclusion of each unit taught over the year and evaluated against a target of 75% of students passing. Students were asked to solve a challenging and messy problem using skills and knowledge developed over the course of the unit. Some of these assessments also asked students to respond to an argument with evidence either in support of or against a position. In ELA, the novel study units used Reading Reconsidered Teach Like a Champion Middle School English Curriculum.

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RESULTS AND EVALUATION

UPCMS students fell short of the target on the Star Assessment in ELA administered in October 2021. The mean grade equivalent (GE) for 5th grade students was 4.5, which is 0.5 GE lower than the target of 5.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 6th grade students was 5.35, which is 0.65 lower than the target of 6.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 7th grade students was 5.47, which is -1.55 points lower than the target of 7.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 8th grade students was 6.45, which is -1.55 points lower than the target of 8.0 GE.

Performance on the Star Exam in ELA By Grade				
	Oct Mean GE	Oct Target GE	Oct Difference to Grade Level GE	May Mean GE
5 th grade	4.5	5.0	-0.5	5.16
6 th grade	5.35	6.0	-0.65	5.59
7 th Grade	5.47	7.0	-1.55	6.04
8 th Grade	6.45	8.0	-1.55	6.49

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Muti-year comparisons cannot be made as UPMCS shifted from STAR to NWEA Map during the pandemic to address the need for a greater level of internal assessment data in lieu of State testing. The school has now shifted back to STAR as the preferred internal assessment. Therefore, we are unable to use either assessment for year-to-year growth measurement.

SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

In the 2021-22 school year, the first year of testing for UPMCS, we did not meet one of the Absolute Measures and are unable to assess the other. We did meet the Comparative Measure for which we are accountable in 2021-22.

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.	Met

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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

In the 2022-23 school year, UPCMS will continue to make strategic curricular changes in ELA and History to address learning loss experienced by our students due to the pandemic. We will also continue to prioritize uniform literacy (writing and reading) practices across all classes—specifically, Everybody Writes, Show Call, Sentence Stems, shared reading, guided reading, and reading for homework as pre-work for the next day's classwork. We will be adding a 4-year US History sequence that will enable our students to take the US History Regents at the end of the 8th Grade.

Additionally, UPCMS will continue to enhance and extend independent practice in the coming school year and use Accelerated Reader to ensure that students get credit for the books they read. The school will help build students' home libraries with rich, engaging books that their parents can read alongside, with, or to them, and that siblings can read and benefit from, as well. In addition to further expanding and curating classroom libraries, UPCMS will continue to provide students with access to a considerably greater array of books through OverDrive, an ebook and audiobook reading application.

UPCMS is also working to achieve higher growth with students who are behind grade level in reading. Zero Period, our period dedicated to helping lagging readers make more progress to get on grade level, will be part of a set regular schedule in the 2022-23 year and will include regular checks for student growth. All students who are 1.25 years behind will be required to attend. Teachers and leaders at the school worked during the summer of 2021 to design a new Zero Period curriculum that focuses on close reading and shared reading. The new curriculum will also incorporate a series of assessments that will allow the school to track growth in reading level proficiency over the course of the school year. This data will be shared with both students and parents throughout the year.

Professional Development for content and learning specialist teachers will continue to be a priority in 2022-23. UPCMS will focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula, especially as we grow to include 8th Grade. UPCMS has established a set schedule for collaboration for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as through inter-visitations.

Lastly, UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year through the use of STAR assessments and curriculum unit assessments. Outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year. Independent reading progress will be tracked by pages and words read and compared against targets based on reading level.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

All students at the school will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematics computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned to the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age-appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backward-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the math curriculum Eureka’s Great Minds program.

The Mathematics program at UP Middle has two strands: one that focuses on mastering foundational procedures, and another that focuses on algebraic problem solving and mathematical reasoning. First, to build the vital foundation necessary for success in high school and college, we dedicate much of our math instruction to solidifying procedural knowledge. We emphasize the development of strong number sense, excellent mental-math skills, and a deep understanding of place value. Students engage in daily timed procedural drills that allow students to gain fluency in operation sense and computational skills.

Second, our mathematics curriculum relies on the belief that every student should be exposed to algebraic mathematical thinking skills starting in the fifth grade. Starting in the early years, students will exercise in algebraic reasoning skills and practice algebraic notation. Throughout middle school, students are provided with increasingly more frequent opportunities to solve complex problems and to independently draw conclusions. With this technique, all students will have learned the core algebra strand defined by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics by the end of eighth grade. Additionally, students that excel in mathematics during sixth and seventh grades will have the opportunity to enroll in a regent’s level algebra course for their eighth grade year

Teachers understand how to effectively implement and teach the school’s curriculum by participating in preservice professional development focused on the Core Knowledge Curriculum. After learning about the content of the Core Knowledge sequence, each department creates a preliminary map of ten sequential units per grade for each subject area. Over the school year, teachers flesh out the maps generated in UP University by creating detailed instructional, domain-based unit plans that include individual lesson plans. Regularly scheduled planning time across grade levels and within departments supports the successful development and renewal of the maps that are initially written at the start of the year. Professional learning communities also work to revivify aspects of curriculum design and student assessment as the school year progresses and we learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of our students.

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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 Grade 5-8 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).

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4						
5	38	0	0	0	4	42
6	105	1	0	1	6	113
7	103	0	0	0	9	112

³ 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.

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8	104	0	0	1	22	127
All	350	1	0	2	41	394

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Of the 394 students enrolled at UPCMS at the time of testing, all but 44 took the 2022 NYS Math exam. Of these tested students, 243 students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in their second year at the school. As we enroll students beginning in 5th Grade, no 5th Grade students are counted in the percent of students in their second year reaching proficiency.

In our third year of operation but first testing year due to the pandemic, 12.6% of tested students overall attained a Level 3 or Level 4 on the exam, and 12.3% of the students enrolled in their second year attained proficiency at these levels. As mentioned above, no 5th Grade student scores are counted in the 12.3% for students in their second year at the school.

With these scores, UPMCS did not meet the Absolute Measure of 75% of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year attaining proficiency. The school missed the target by 62.7 percentage points.

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				
4				
5	5.3	38	N/A	0
6	13.33	105	6.5	46
7	10.7	103	11.5	96
8	16.3	104	15.8	101
All	12.6	350	12.3	243

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The 2021-22 school year is the first year of New York State Math testing for UPCMS due to the pandemic. Therefore, we have no year-to-year trends to analyze. Overall, however, we feel we are making tremendous gains in student achievement in Math, as evidenced by our internal assessment data over the past three years.

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Algebra 1

In 2021-22, 20 8th Grade students took the Algebra 1 Regents exam, and 55% of the scholars tested received a score of 65 or above. Factoring in the Special Waiver process, 95% of students tested were proficient on the Algebra 1 Regents exam.

As 2021-22 was the first year that UPCMS enrolled 8th Grade students, so no year-to-year comparisons can be made.

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

Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Percent Passing with a 65	Number Tested
8	2018-19	Algebra I	N/A	N/A
8	2019-20	Algebra I	N/A	N/A
8	2020-21	Algebra I	N/A	N/A
8	2021-22	Algebra	55 (95 with waiver)	20

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 in the corresponding grades in the school district.⁴

⁴ 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](#).

2021-22 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

On the 2021-21 NYS Math exam, 13.9% of the 5th through 8th Grade students in NYC CSD 7 received Level 3 or Level 4 scores. In comparison, 12.3% of UPCMS 6th-8th Grade students enrolled in at least their second year reached proficiency.

Overall, UPCMS did not meet this comparative measure for its Math Goal, falling short of the District by 1.6 percentage points. Scores for UPCMS 6th Graders were below the district scores for the grade by 6.7 percentage points. Our 7th Grade students scored below their district peers by 1.3 percentage points while our 8th Graders surpassed their district peers by 0.9 percentage points. Scores for 5th Grade cannot be compared, as 5th Grade students at the school were only enrolled in their first year.

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				
4				
5	N/A	0	14.9	960
6	6.5	46	13.2	909
7	11.5	96	12.8	938
8	15.8	101	14.9	908
All	12.3	243	13.9	3,715

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The 2021-22 school year was the first year of New York State Math testing for UPCMS due to the pandemic. Therefore, we have no year-to-year trends to analyze.

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.

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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: **STAR**

UPCMS evaluated student achievement in Math through the Star Assessment, an interim assessment that measures student mastery of New York State standards. Scoring is norm-referenced, allowing for a comparison of student performance with that of other students across the US. UPCMS also assessed student achievement in mathematics through summative assessments, which were administered at the conclusion of each unit taught over the year. The assessments are aligned to the New York State standards. Students were asked to solve a challenging and messy problem using skills and knowledge developed over the course of the unit. Some of these assessments also asked students to respond to an argument with evidence either in support of or against a position. In mathematics, the units used Eureka-Great Minds (Engage NY) math curriculum.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

UPCMS students fell short of the target on the Star Assessment in Math administered in October 2021. The mean grade equivalent (GE) for 5th grade students was 4.57, which is 0.43 GE lower than the target of 5.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 6th grade students was 5.28, which is 0.78 lower than the target of 6.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 7th grade students was 5.93, which is 1.07 points lower than the target of 7.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent for 8th grade students was 6.79, which is -1.21 points lower than the target of 8.0 GE.

Performance on the Star Exam
in Math By Grade

	Oct Mean GE	Oct Target GE	Difference to Grade Level GE	May Mean GE
5 th grade	4.57	5.0	-0.43	4.89
6 th grade	5.22	6.0	-0.78	5.75

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7 th Grade	5.93	7.0	-1.07	6.68
8 th Grade	6.79	8.0	-1.21	7.43

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Muti-year comparisons cannot be made as UPMCS shifted from STAR to NWEA Map during the pandemic to address the need for a greater level of internal assessment data in lieu of State testing. The school has now shifted back to STAR as the preferred internal assessment. Therefore, we are unable to use either assessment for year-to-year growth measurement.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

In the 2021-22 school year, the first year of testing for UPCMS, we did not meet one of the Absolute Measures and are not required or able to assess the other. We did not the applicable Comparative Measure and are unable to assess the other. We are also not required or able to assess the Growth goal at this time.

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

In the 2022-23 school year, UPCMS will be making strategic curricular changes in Math to address learning loss experienced by our students due to the pandemic and to ensure coherent and coordinated practice across grades.

UPCMS is also working to achieve higher growth with students who are behind grade level in Math by expanding Zero Period, our period dedicated to helping struggling learners make more progress. In 2022-23, Zero Period will be part of a set regular schedule and will include regular checks for

student growth. All students who are 1.25 years behind will be required to attend. In the forthcoming year, the school will also add a two-hour Saturday morning academy. The school also intends to begin a tutoring program, GatorCorps, that makes use of UPCHS current students and alumni who are at college. This program will offer individual and small-group tutoring and academic support to students in all subject areas in the evenings during the week and on Friday afternoons when students have an early dismissal.

In the upcoming school year, UPCMS will continue to focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula. UPCMS has established a set schedule for collaboration for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as through inter-visitations.

Lastly, UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year through the use of internal assessments and curriculum unit assessments. Outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

All students at the school will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned with the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age-appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backward-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the science curriculum Amplify Science.

Effective instruction in science requires, first and foremost, hands-on experience and observation from a student’s very first day in school, and this is reflected in the practices in science education at UP Middle. Students apply the scientific method of inquiry to critically assess ideas presented by others and to gain insights into natural phenomena. Students ask questions to think critically about the world and bring a healthy skepticism to differing perspectives derived from extensive content knowledge. They conduct research, are fully prepared to seek appropriate sources, and comprehend grade-level informational texts to supplement what they already know during inquiry work. After conducting research, they construct testable hypotheses. They experiment, carrying out both proper scientific investigation and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. They analyze results by assessing data and observations and drawing conclusions from results. They

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evaluate and defend their positions using evidence. Students at UP Middle can communicate the results of their inquiry when both writing and speaking.

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 8th 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

Of the 127 8th Grade students enrolled at UPCMS at the time of testing, 91 took the 2022 NYS Science exam. Of these students, 90 were enrolled in their second year at the school. In our third year of operation but first testing year due to the pandemic, 38.9% of tested students enrolled in their second year attained proficiency at these levels.

With these scores, UPMCS did not meet the Absolute Measure of 75% of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year attaining proficiency. The school missed the target by 36.1 percentage points.

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		
8	38.9	90
All	38.9	122

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			
8	2018-19			
8	2021-22	N/A	N/A	N/A

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No 8th Grade students took a Regents Science exam in 2021-22.

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.

ACTION PLAN

In 2022-23, UPCMS will continue using the Amplify Science middle school curriculum, as it has demonstrated success.

UPCMS will also continue to focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula. UPCMS is establishing a set schedule for collaboration for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as through inter-visitations. UPCMS is also working to onboard new teachers to become part of UPCMS's shared culture and develop ownership of building a strong school culture.

Lastly, UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year, through the use of internal Science assessments and unit assessments. UPCMS has redesigned its curricula to include a pre- and post-assessment for at least five units in each content area, and outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year.

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

UPCMS is in Good Standing

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

2019-20 was UPCMS' inaugural year. We have been in Good Standing for our first three years of operation.

Accountability Status by Year

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