



Academy of the City Charter School

2023-24 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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Katie-Lyn Santacruz, Head of School, prepared this 2023-24 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, Finance/Audit, Executive, Governance, Development
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David Pollak	Treasurer	Finance/Audit
Christopher Herman	Trustee	Education
Kristin Gower	Trustee	

Katie-Lyn Santacruz was appointed the Head of School as of July 1, 2024, prior she was Middle School Principal from October 2023-June 2024 and Elementary School Principal from July 2019 to October 2023.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Academy of the City Charter School (AoC) is a charter school located in CSD 30 in Queens, New York City currently serving 702 students in Grades K-8. The mission of AoC, which opened its doors in August 2011 and is beginning its 14th academic year this year, is as follows:

Academy of the City provides its students with the rigorous and student-centered education, values and tools needed to succeed at the highest levels. We are committed to being an inclusive, equitable and joyful community, where all children reach their full potential.

AoC was originally authorized as a K-5 school in 2010 opening its doors with 100 total students in Grades K and 1 the following year. 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. In December 2023 AoC was approved for another five year renewal term.

Like the community school district in which it is located, AoC's student body is a highly diverse one socio-economically, racially, ethnically and academically. CSD 30 is in fact one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse communities in the country. AoC is deeply embedded in every neighborhood of CSD 30 drawing students from many parts 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 at least 25 different home languages spoken in the homes of the students we serve ranging from Arabic, Bosnian, Hindi, French, Romanian, Tagalog, Spanish, Chinese, Italian, Albanian, Polish, Nepali, Hindi and others. Our student body is currently 5% Black, 57% Hispanic, 25% Asian and 11% White. In 2022-23, 17% of our students were English language learners, 7% students with disabilities and 68% were eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunch. It is our vision that all children reach their full potential.

This past school year, our BEDS date enrollment was 738 students in Grades K-8. Notably our enrollment as of June 30, 2024 was 729 students and our approved charter enrollment was 700, which means we were successful in maintaining our enrollment. This is particularly significant given the negative impact the pandemic had on student enrollment in the New York City school district, impacting both traditional public and charter schools. AoC ended the school year with an enrollment that was 104% of our maximum chartered enrollment.

AoC's Key Design Elements are the following:

- Student-centered instruction: AoC uses the gradual release of responsibility model (GRR) as the overarching instructional model. This model shifts the cognitive load slowly and purposefully so students gradually assume increasing responsibility for their learning becoming more competent and independent learners. When students actively participate in their own learning through discussion and collaboration, they engage more fully in higher order skills. The peer learning aspect of this model is highly effective in working with inclusive classrooms of heterogeneous students, including students with disabilities (SWD), English language learners (ELL) and economically disadvantaged students (ED). GRR supports instructional differentiation as teachers use comprehensive and ongoing assessment data to identify student needs, tailor instruction and determined flexible small groups.
- Literacy across the curriculum: Literacy is infused in every subject across the AoC curriculum which emphasizes the integration of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and incorporates topic-appropriate leveled readers in daily lesson plans across all content areas and in all grades. This focus is beneficial to all students (particularly in light of the tremendous pandemic learning loss) and has particular importance to ELLs who need comprehensive and continual exposure to language as well as support in the development of their English language skills.

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- Data-driven instruction: AoC implements a comprehensive program of assessment. Ongoing assessment and the analysis and use of a variety of data, disaggregated as needed, is a key component of the school's educational program ensuring instruction is tailored to address individual student needs.
- A commitment to inclusion: AoC's instructional model is an inclusive one that holds all students—general education, SWD, ELL and ED—to the same rigorous and high academic standards and provides every student with the supports and scaffolds needed to achieve them. Instructional specialists plan with general education teachers to ensure classroom teachers are appropriately differentiating lessons to address the needs of special populations. For ELLs, the classroom teacher incorporates sheltered instructional strategies to integrate language and content and infuse sociocultural awareness to scaffold instruction for students learning English. The special education coordinator works with each general education teacher whose classrooms include SWD to review each student's IEP and the scaffolding and strategies necessary to differentiate lessons to address their learning needs. AoC currently also has an ICT setting for Grades 7 and 8.
- A commitment to professional development: AoC supports its instructional staff with extensive and continuous professional development. AoC has adopted the Danielson Teacher Evaluation Model and the coaching cycle based on Danielson ensures that teachers are regularly supported in building their instructional capacities and expertise.
- A longer school day: AoC's school day runs from 8 am to 4 pm—longer than traditional public schools.
- A focus on social-emotional learning (SEL): AoC is committed to building our students' social-emotional competencies and resilience—it is an imperative in light of the loss, isolation and trauma our students have suffered from the pandemic. Through Responsive Classroom in AoC's elementary school and the work of the Wellness Team in the middle school to deliver SEL lessons and presentations, students learn, practice and internalize the tools they need to build self-management and interpersonal skills fundamental to the achievement of any type of success.
- High school graduation and access: AoC has developed a comprehensive high school guidance and access program tailored to our students and families in each middle school grade, 6th through 8th to ensure they are fully informed of the public and non-public high school choices available to them. By 8th grade, each student and family are provided with the individual guidance and support necessary to make informed decisions about the schools that would best align with their student's academic profiles, their extracurricular, artistic and/or athletic interests, talents and skills, their preference for size and location, etc. and ultimately which school they choose to attend from among their acceptances.

AoC implemented one modification to the instructional program in 2023-24 which has become a permanent addition to the instructional program. Because pandemic-related funding ended, AoC could no longer engage with Sylvan Prep to provide test prep for its students. Therefore, instructional leadership made the decision to bring test prep for Grades 3-8 in-house through the use of iReady. AoC adopted the use of iReady as an instructional tool to support test prep. Through iReady students are able to revisit, practice and master skills and standards they are weak in. iReady lessons are individualized for each student as teachers are able to assign lessons based on an analysis of student level data that provides information as to what standards students have not mastered. Starting in January, students in Grades 3-8 take one or two iReady test prep sessions a week in ELA and in math in addition to their regular blocks of ELA and math in the schedule.

This year (2024-25), AoC has reduced the length of the school day by one hour. Students' instructional day is now 7 hours instead of 8. The day begins at 8:15 am and ends at 3:15 pm for students (previously,

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the day was from 8 am to 4 pm). It is important to note that in shortening the day, the number of instructional minutes during the day has not changed. Instead, AoC has shortened lunch and recess and also arrival and dismissal. The change in the day was a result of union negotiations, but more importantly, post-pandemic, what had previously been an attractive element for families of our having a longer school day became a deterrent for families making the decision to enroll. At Kindergarten Open Houses for the last two years, feedback from families (as well as the feedback from existing AoC families) was that the day was too long and that the dismissal at 4 pm precluded families from enrolling their children in afterschool programs in the community. This feedback was not isolated to AoC. In discussions with other CSD 30 charter schools, the AoC leadership found that they too were shortening their school days for the same reason. AoC still provides early drop off for families from 7:30 to 8:15 and an after school program from 3:15- 6 pm for families whose work schedule requires that option. The afterschool programs are fee-based and run by community partners: Woodside on the Move in the elementary school and Cali Center in the middle school. The afterschool programs include a homework hour followed by enrichment activities (including piano lessons in the elementary school) and a drama club in the middle school.

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
2021-22	82	84	81	85	76	77	71	78	81					715
2022-23	83	82	81	79	84	78	85	66	77					717
2023-24	83	88	88	86	83	84	75	82	69					738

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

All students attending AoC will become proficient readers and writers of the English language.

BACKGROUND

The Savvas Learning Company's myView Literacy K-5 is the reading and writing curriculum used in AoC's elementary school. While myView incorporates the practice of phonics in its curriculum, AoC supplements it with Wilson's Foundations for more phonics and phonemic awareness work in Grades K-2. AoC also supplements myView with Novel Study for grades 3-5. Novel Study takes place 3 days a week for 30 minutes each day. AoC's ELA program also includes Lexia Core 5 where students engage in 15 minutes of daily work on this online instructional program. This is individualized reading and phonics lessons based on student performance on the initial Lexia Core 5 assessment. The program adjusts the student's individual path based on their ongoing performance. Data from student work on Lexia Core 5 are used by teachers to inform whole class reteaching plans, small group instruction and individual student support. Elementary school students are engaged in a total of between 165 and 171 minutes of ELA instruction daily.

The middle school uses McGraw-Hill's StudySync ELA curriculum, a rigorous reading and writing digital curriculum which students access on their Chromebooks and other devices. This curriculum is divided into four core thematic units of students each with an essential question that is answered through a variety of high quality texts in which students engage. The curriculum includes resources to scaffold learning for ELLs, which supports the priority to embed instructional differentiation and strategies for ELLs within content area classrooms. Students in middle school have 45 minutes of ELA daily with an additional 45 minute block two days a week.

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 SWD's 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 SWD. AoC offers an ICT setting for those children whose IEPs require it. During 2023-24, AoC had an ICT class in Grades K,1, 6 and 7. This year AoC will have ICT classes in Grades 7 and 8.

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. AoC also administers the nationally normed assessment—NWEA—in reading (and math). 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. Our professional development priorities last year were to build teachers' pedagogical practices including: reading and effectively using data to inform classroom instruction; differentiating instruction within the general education classroom for ELL and SWD; understanding the Danielson Framework to better integrate it into practice; ongoing support with the newly implemented curriculums in each school division; and effectively utilizing the RtI process to identify and support the needs of struggling students.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ELA

ELA Measure 1 - Absolute

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.

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The tables below summarize the participation information for this year’s test administration as well as the performance of all students and students enrolled for at least two years.

2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested						Total Enrolled
		Absent	Refusal	ELL/IEP	Admin error	Medically excused	Other reason	
3	80	3	0	0	0	0	0	83
4	76	3	5	4	0	0	0	88
5	78	0	8	3	0	0	0	89
6	64	0	7	8	0	0	0	79
7	71	4	4	8	0	0	0	87
8	52	0	14	0	0	0	0	66
All	421	10	38	23	0	0	0	492

Performance on 2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year¹

Grade	All Students			Enrolled in at least their Second Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
3	80	37	46%	71	33	46%
4	76	33	43%	62	30	48%
5	78	38	49%	62	33	53%
6	64	29	45%	38	17	45%
7	71	44	62%	60	40	67%
8	52	28	54%	40	22	55%
All	421	209	50%	333	175	53%

ELA Measure 2 - Absolute

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.

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the English language arts test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year

¹ Students are considered “enrolled in at least their second year” if they were enrolled on BEDS day of the school year prior to the most recent exam administration.

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by the state’s ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state’s 2023-24 English language arts MIP for all students of **113**. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.²

English Language Arts 2023-24 Performance Index

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
421	21%	29%	35%	14%

$$\begin{array}{rclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 29\% & + & 35\% & + & 14\% & = & 78 \\
 & & & & 35\% & + & 14\% & = & 49 \\
 & & & & & + & (.5)*28\% & = & 7 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & 134
 \end{array}$$

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

AoC’s performance against the above two absolute performance measures was mixed with the school achieving one but falling short of the other. AoC’s ELA 2023-24 Performance Index is 134 which exceeds the State’s PI of 113. AoC, therefore, met this goal. The aggregate proficiency rate of AoC’s Grade 3-8 students in the two-year cohort was 53% which falls short of the 75% goal. Thus, AoC did not meet this measure.

AoC attributes the strong performance on the NYS ELA assessments as evidenced by its performance index to the strengthening of teachers’ instructional practice, including their effective use of the school’s curricular choices. Last year was the first full year of the elementary school’s full implementation of the MyView curriculum which had been piloted in 2022-23 in the spring in a few grades. Further, as discussed in our most recent renewal application, a priority in the middle school was for teachers to implement a structured curriculum across all content areas. For many years, teachers had relied on teacher-created materials that were of variable quality and seldom built knowledge in a coherent manner. Thus, 2023-24 was the first year that AoC’s middle school teachers were fully implementing the McGraw Hill StudySync curriculum and being provided with regular coaching, training and PD on its implementation. The shift to all teachers utilizing StudySync has clearly had a positive impact on AoC’s students’ progress in ELA. In fact, AoC’s 7th and 8th graders had the highest percentage of proficiency on the ELA exam among all grades at AoC, at 62% and 54%, respectively. Additionally, adding iReady test prep, with one or two ELA test preps a week beginning in January was an important addition to the instructional program. The ELA teachers in the middle school and classroom teachers in the elementary school were responsible for facilitating iReady test prep in addition to the regular ELA blocks for their students. In the elementary school, children engaged in iReady test prep on their Chromebooks in order to get the 5th graders prepared for computer-based testing for the first time on the 2024 NYS assessments.

The fact that AoC has not yet achieved 75% proficiency in ELA is reflective of the work that is still necessary to accelerate student learning after the negative impacts on student learning and social emotional development as a result of the pandemic. Our 3rd and 4th graders were the lowest performing

² You can find the statewide MIP goals for 2022-23 to 2026-27 [here](#)

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grades on the NYS ELA assessments. It is important to note that our 4th graders were in K and Grade 1 in 2019-20 and 2020-21 and our 3rd graders would have been in preK-4 and K in those two years. The pandemic interrupted critical foundational years for our children in learning literacy skills, numeracy skills and social emotional skills, the gaps of which we are still having to address.

ELA Measure 3 - 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 all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

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

2023-24 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	46%	71	49%	2220
4	48%	62	55%	2346
5	53%	62	51%	2395
6	45%	38	52%	2612
7	67%	60	62%	2515
8	55%	40	61%	2633
All	53%	333	55%	14721

ELA Measure 4 - 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.

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The difference between the school's actual and predicted

³ Schools can access these data when the NYSED releases its database containing grade level ELA and mathematics results for all schools and districts statewide.

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performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the target for this measure. Given the timing of the state’s release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results.⁴

2022-23 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Mean Scale Score		Effect Size
		Actual	Predicted	
3	75.9%	447.0	441.5	0.55
4	58.3%	456.0	448.3	0.83
5	71.8%	452.0	443.9	0.87
6	79.3%	449.0	441.6	0.82
7	72.7%	456.0	445.8	1.04
8	66.2%	461.0	450.2	1.10
All	70.7%	453.0	445.0	0.85

ELA Measure 5 - 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.

METHOD

Given the timing of the state’s release of Growth Model data, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁵

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2022-23 and also have a state exam score from 2021-22 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2021-22 score are ranked by their 2022-23 score and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students’ growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school’s mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the target for this measure, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

2022-23 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile

⁴ These data can be found in the school’s Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

⁵ These data can be found in the school’s Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

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	School	Target
4	NA	50.0
5	NA	50.0
6	NA	50.0
7	NA	50.0
8	NA	50.0
All	NA	50.0

ELA INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2023-24, in addition to the New York State 3rd– 8th grade exams, the school primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in ELA: **NWEA MAP**

In addition to the NWEA MAP Reading test (which was administered three times a year: fall, winter and spring), AoC also administered the F&P Benchmark Assessment to all students (or until a student has tested out of this assessment) in the Fall, Winter and Spring to measure and record our students' progress in reading. At the elementary school, students were also assessed on the MyView curriculum assessments. This year, AoC is piloting stepping away from the F&P assessments and replacing them with the MyView assessments. In middle school, AoC moved away from the self-created midterm assessments that had been used the previous year. Leadership found that they were not a useful, valid nor reliable tool to measure student growth and achievement against learning standards and thus was not useful to inform instruction. Instead, the middle school relied on the NWEA ELA assessments.

AoC has continued to engage Project77 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 ELA. After each administration of the NWEA MAP assessments, Project 77 conducts a comprehensive data analysis, which includes not only an analysis of student performance against SUNY metrics for the NWEA but also against metrics developed by the school instructional leadership and teachers to measure student progress in accelerating learning. In the elementary school, data dive days were held after the interim assessment data was compiled by Project 77 and led by an outside consultant and then by the Grade 3-5 Assistant Principal. In the middle school, the Principal shared the data analysis from Project 77 at a PD or staff meeting which was then followed up more comprehensively in grade level meetings to discuss trends and next steps. At both the elementary school and middle school level, these data analysis meetings inform plans of action by class and grade level to meet the needs of the group as well as individual students. The data has resulted in changes (for example, shifts in instruction and supplementing curriculum as needed).

This school year, the analysis of NWEA data and 2024 NYS assessment data provided by Project 77 was used in August pre-opening professional development with grade level teams and content area teams which discussed the data and created plans around standards that teachers need to continue to address according to the data.

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NWEA

2023-24 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 3 rd through 8 th 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	463	39	No
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th 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	303	36	No
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities ⁶	39 ⁷	43	18	No
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th 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. ⁸	2+ students	75%	365	33%	No

End of Year Performance on 2023-24 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
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⁶ 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

⁷ Target should reflect the median growth percentile for all general education students. In the case that the school elects to measure the achievement of a different subpopulation, the target should reflect the median growth percentile of all students at the school not included in that subpopulation.

⁸ <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf>.

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	Percent Proficient ⁹	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	39%	82	40%	72
4	28%	81	32%	63
5	23%	84	25%	67
6	32%	71	31%	42
7	34%	76	39%	64
8	26%	69	30%	57
All	30%	463	33%	365

End of Year Growth on 2023-24 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3	45	82
4	35	81
5	32	84
6	37	71
7	46	76
8	44	69
All	39	463

SUMMARY OF THE ELA GOAL

As is evident from the table below, AoC had mixed results in achieving the absolute and comparative goals. 53% of all tested AoC students who were enrolled in at least their second year performed at least a Level 3 on the 2024 NYS ELA exam falling short of the 75% goal; however, AoC's aggregate PI of 134 exceeded the state's MIP of 113. AoC's 53% two-year cohort proficiency rate fell two points short of CSD 30's proficiency rate of 55%; however, according to the NYSED in a Press Release dated August 20, 2024 announcing the release of the preliminary NYS ELA, Math and Science testing data, aggregate Grade 3-8 NYS proficiency on the 2024 NYS ELA exam was 46%. AoC's aggregate Grade 3-8 NYS ELA proficiency rate for the two-year cohort was 7 points higher than that of the state. Additionally, AoC's aggregate proficiency rate of the 2-year cohort was 4 points higher than that of NYC (which was 49%). Thus, while falling short of CSD 30, AoC students did outperform both their NYC and NYS peers. Further, when one compares AoC performance to students in schools which are more demographically similar to AoC, AoC outperforms them as is evident by the Effect Size metric. AoC exceeded its predicted level of performance on the 2024 NYS ELA exam with an effect size of 0.85. AoC is unable to assess performance against the

⁹ Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.

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Growth goal as 2022-23 growth scores are unavailable due to an error in data reporting according to the Institute.

With regard to NWEA performance, AoC did not meet the Institute’s absolute, closing the achievement gap or growth goals. It is important, however, to put the absolute and growth goals in context. The NWEA data has not yet been normed on a post-pandemic (2020-2025) data set. The NWEA 2020 norming study was created with data from 2015-2020. This is an important point because NWEA even acknowledges norms are sensitive to changes in student populations and given the scale of the pandemic and its known effects on student achievement, this context should be taken into account when viewing AoC’s performance against these metrics. The 2020 norming study thresholds for growth goals and proficiency likely do not reflect the current reality of how students are performing across the nation. What the NWEA data shows us is that our students are not performing at pre-pandemic levels.

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.	No
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.	Yes
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.	No
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.	Yes
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.	NA

EVALUATION OF ELA GOAL

As discussed in the Summary of the ELA Goal and as is evident from the table above, AoC student performance on the 2024 NYS ELA assessments were mixed in terms of achieving Absolute, Comparative and Growth goals. The following summarizes the results of each measure:

- Absolute Measure (75% of AoC’s two-year cohort will score at least Level 3): AoC fell short of this goal by 22 points).
- Absolute Measure (AoC’s PI will exceed the State’s MIP): AoC exceeded this target with a PI of 134 versus the State’s MIP of 113.
- Comparative (AoC’s two-year cohort proficiency rate will exceed CSD 30): AoC fell short of this goal by 2 points. AoC’s proficiency was 53% versus CSD 30’s of 55%.
- Comparative (AoC will have an effect size of 0.3 or above): AoC exceeded this goal with an effect size of 0.85.

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As discussed previously, AoC attributes the strong performance on the NYS ELA assessments as evidenced by its PI and comparative performance metrics (Effect Size and comparative performance against NYS and NYC, falling just short of CSD 30) to the strengthening of teachers' instructional practice, including their effective use of the school's curricular choices. Last year was the first full year of the elementary school's full implementation of the MyView curriculum which had been piloted in 2022-23 in the spring in a few grades. Further, as discussed in our most recent renewal application, a priority in the middle school was for teachers to implement a structured curriculum across all content areas. For many years, teachers had relied on teacher-created materials that were of variable quality and seldom built knowledge in a coherent manner. Thus, 2023-24 was the first year that AoC's middle school teachers were fully implementing the McGraw Hill StudySync curriculum and being provided with regular coaching, training and PD on its implementation. The shift to all teachers utilizing StudySync has clearly had a positive impact on AoC's students' progress in ELA. In fact, AoC's 7th and 8th graders had the highest percentage of proficiency on the ELA exam among all grades at AoC, at 62% and 54%, respectively. Additionally, adding iReady test prep, with one or two ELA test preps a week beginning in January was an important addition to the instructional program. The ELA teachers in the middle school and classroom teachers in the elementary school were responsible for facilitating iReady test prep in addition to the regular ELA blocks for their students. In the elementary school, children engaged in iReady test prep on their Chromebooks in order to get the 5th graders prepared for computer-based testing for the first time on the 2024 NYS assessments.

The fact that AoC has not yet achieved 75% proficiency in ELA is reflective of the work that is still necessary to accelerate student learning after the negative impacts on student learning and social emotional development as a result of the pandemic. Our 3rd and 4th graders were the lowest performing grades on the NYS ELA assessments. It is important to note that our 4th graders were in K and Grade 1 in 2019-20 and 2020-21 and our 3rd graders would have been in preK-4 and K in those two years. The pandemic interrupted critical foundational years for our children in learning literacy skills, numeracy skills and social emotional skills, the gaps of which we are still having to address.

Our NWEA results (closing the achievement gap metrics for SWD and low achievers) show that our more at-risk populations are not making adequate annual growth to move to grade level proficiency and close the achievement gap between them and their general education peers.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

The 2023-24 year was the first year that Grades 5-8 NYS assessments were being administered as computer-based tests (CBT). At the middle school level, AoC students had the necessary facility with using computers as they were regularly using them as part of the core curriculum; however, in the elementary school there was a concern that AoC's 5th graders needed more practice so that their performance on the NYS assessments would not be negatively impacted by the fact that the assessments were CBT. To address this need, students in the elementary school were administered the iReady test prep, discussed earlier, on their Chromebooks. Having had that practice taking the test prep assessments on the computer proved to be helpful as our 5th graders' performance on the NYS ELA assessments does not appear to indicate that they were hampered by the CBT nature of the assessment. Our 5th graders' proficiency rate was 2 points higher than that of their CSD 30 5th grader peers; further, our Grade 5 students exceeded their predicted performance by a 0.85 Effect Size.

Since the pandemic, many AoC parents were opting their children out of taking the NYS assessments. To address this concern, AoC leadership held testing meetings with families in order to impress upon them the importance of having their children participate in the 2024 NYS testing program highlighting their importance for their children from being an important measure for the school to use to shape instructional

decisions for the benefit of their children to helping their children be strong candidates for programs for high school. These meetings were effective in increasing AoC's participation rate on the NYS assessments this past year. Our 2024 NYS ELA participation rate was 86% versus a 79% in 2023.

Finally, as it relates to student performance on the NWEA assessments, the end of the year NWEA assessments were administered one to two weeks after the NYS math assessment and it is possible that students were feeling the impact of test fatigue. The timing of the state tests combined with end of year June events provided limited time during which AoC could administer NWEA assessments. As a result, the timing so close to the NYS assessments was not ideal and may have impacted student performance on these internal assessments.

Finally, as discussed briefly earlier the NWEA results need to be put into greater context. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a profound disruption to education worldwide. While standardized assessments like the NWEA MAP Growth offer valuable insights into student learning, however, it's crucial to interpret these results within the unique context of a post-pandemic world.

NWEA's 2020 norming study, the benchmark against which student performance is measured, was established using data collected between 2015 and 2020.¹⁰ It involved a vast sample of 3.6 to 5.5 million test scores from 500,000 to 700,000 students across 24,500+ public schools in the United States.¹¹ While this provides a broad representation of pre-pandemic student achievement, these students experienced a vastly different educational landscape compared to their post-pandemic counterparts.

The pandemic has undeniably altered the educational landscape, and it's reasonable to assume that student achievement norms have shifted alongside it. Factors like extended periods of remote learning, social-emotional challenges, and disrupted routines have likely affected student progress in ways that are not fully captured by pre-pandemic benchmarks, which were built upon data from students who did not experience these challenges.

As NWEA itself has stated, "due to pandemic learning loss, school staffing challenges, and federal and local policy changes, the MAP Growth norms are in need of an update. We are currently planning to update MAP Growth national norms in summer of 2025."¹² This acknowledgment underscores the limitations of the current norms in reflecting the reality of student learning in a post-pandemic world.

It is thus recommended to exercise caution when interpreting NWEA results, particularly when comparing them to pre-pandemic expectations. Seemingly low scores may initially cause concern, but they may simply reflect the new normal in student achievement. There is evidence to suggest the pandemic has reset the baseline, and this shift should be considered when evaluating student progress and setting growth goals.

While NWEA scores remain a valuable tool for educators, they must be viewed through the lens of the post-pandemic context and with the understanding that the norms themselves are undergoing a necessary update. By focusing on individual student growth, utilizing multiple data points, and exercising patience, we can ensure a fair and accurate assessment of student learning as we navigate this new educational landscape.

ELA ACTION PLAN

The literacy curricula that AoC teachers are implementing in the elementary school and middle school are expected to support student growth and achievement in ELA this year. This will be the second year of full implementation of MyView in the elementary school and the StudySync curriculum in the middle

¹⁰ <https://teach.mapnwea.org/impl/normsResearchStudy.pdf>

¹¹ <https://teach.mapnwea.org/impl/MAPGrowthNormativeDataOverview.pdf>

¹² https://connection.nwea.org/s/nwea-news/17-state-expansion-of-the-enhanced-item-selection-algorithm-MCDOB2VK7YABD3LLL5ILP3OZRLCM?language=en_US

school. For the middle school, in particular, the implementation of StudySync has been a profound change for teachers after many years of middle school teachers' inconsistent use of existing curriculum that been purchased by the school with most teachers drawing from a wide range of resources to create their own curriculum with no intentional work to ensure alignment with New York State/Next Generation Learning Standards.

AoC's move away from outsourcing test prep to Sylvan Learning and move it in-house to the use of iReady and AoC teachers (classroom teachers in the elementary school and ELA and math teachers in the middle school) overseeing test prep is another component of the instructional program that will support students' literacy achievement. By having teachers oversee test prep, instead of outside Sylvan tutors, teachers are able to bridge test prep and classroom instruction, ensuring data and informing secured regarding student strengths and challenges are informing each instructional component.

This year, AoC added a Director of Student Support to its instructional leadership. The Director of Student Support is responsible for supervising the special education coordinators and the student support providers (special education teachers, ELL teachers, etc.). The addition of the Director of Student Services was intentionally designed to bridge the gap between the classroom teachers and the student support specialists. In the past, structured communication and collaboration between these educators had not been supported by the organizational structure for the benefit of special populations in the classrooms. While AoC has provided teachers with a number of PD around how to differentiate instruction in order to support special learners it has not been enough to move these students forward with the urgency desired. By having the Director of Student Support in grade team and department team meetings along with the support providers, instructional planning will benefit from these specialists providing scaffolding and interventions necessary to differentiate instruction for ELLs, SWD and other learners to ensure all learners in the classroom can access the curriculum and make progress towards the NYSLS.

Finally, AoC's use of Danielson Framework for teacher evaluation focus which is now in its third year of full implementation having replaced a previous in-house developed teacher evaluation tool is supporting improvement in teachers' pedagogical skills and student learning by identifying meaningful and actionable feedback to support teacher improvement.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

All students attending AoC will demonstrate competency in their understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

The elementary school uses the Math Learning Center's Bridges in Math curriculum for grades K-5. Among the strengths of the Bridges curriculum is that the program moves forward while continuing to revisit previously learned standards through a spiral review. The curriculum also includes 25 minutes of Number Corner for all grades where the whole class participates in a review cycle of three to five standards. Students are engaged in 80 minutes of daily instruction in the elementary school.

AoC's middle school implements McGraw Hill's Illustrative Math program to create a solid foundation for Algebra in grades 6 and 7 in preparation for Algebra in Grade 8. A change in the middle school math program in 2023-24 was that all 8th graders took Algebra. In the past, AoC offered by regular Grade 8 Math and Algebra I, with the majority of those taking Algebra I being the more advanced math student. The decision to have all 8th graders take Algebra was to promote greater equity. AoC used McGraw Hill's Illustrative Math for Algebra, in the past AoC used McGraw Hill Algebra I. McGraw Hill's math texts focuses

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on depth of topics and not breadth to ensure that students master material through detailed instruction, questions, problem solving and visual and hands-on aids addressing the needs of different learners. The learning process allows students to gain a strong math foundation upon which to build increasingly complex skills. All 8th graders take the NYS Algebra I Common Core Regents exam. With the change in the length of the school day, students in the middle school have 45 minute class periods. Students have 45 minutes of math each day and two days of the week they have an additional 45 minutes math period.

Math instruction is delivered in the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) 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. GRR allows for flexible grouping, math rotation stations, and manipulatives to help students at different levels construct their understanding through active learning. 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 and SWD 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, SWD also were provided with pull-out instruction by the Special Education teacher. During 2023-24, AoC had an ICT class in Grades K, 1, 6 and 7. This year, AoC has an ICT class in Grades 7 and 8.

In addition to curricular unit assessments, AoC’s math assessment protocol includes an a nationally normed assessment—NWEA—in math. The NWEA was administered three times during the year (fall, winter and spring).

As stated previously, because pandemic-related funding ended, AoC could no longer engage with Sylvan Prep to provide test prep for its students. Therefore, instructional leadership made the decision to bring Math test prep for Grades 3-8 in-house through the use of iReady. AoC adopted the use of iReady as an instructional tool to support test prep. Through iReady students are able to revisit, practice and master skills and standards they are weak in. iReady lessons are individualized for each student as teachers are able to assign lessons based on an analysis of student level data that provides information as to what standards students have not mastered. Starting in January, students in Grades 3-8 take one or two iReady test prep sessions a week in in math in addition to their regular block of math in the schedule.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Math Measure 1 - Absolute

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.

The tables below summarize the participation information for this year’s test administration as well as the performance of all students and students enrolled for at least two years.

2023-24 State Mathematics Exam									
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested									
Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested							Total Enrolled
		Absent	Refusal	ELL/IEP	Admin error	Medically excused	Other reason	Took Regents	

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3	83	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	83
4	77	0	7	6	0	0	0	0	90
5	79	0	7	3	0	0	0	0	89
6	61	0	10	8	0	0	0	0	79
7	70	0	8	5	0	0	0	0	83
8	NA*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	67	NA
All	370**	0	32	22	0	0	0	67	424**

*There are no 8th grade scores because all AoC 8th graders took the NYS Algebra I Regents in lieu of the Grade 8 NYS Math assessment (67 8th graders took the Regents, 2 students were absent).

**This number does not include Grade 8 since they did not take the Grade 8 NYS Math assessment.

Performance on 2023-24 State Mathematics Exam

By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	All Students			Enrolled in at least their Second Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
3	83	44	53%	73	40	55%
4	77	54	70%	62	46	74%
5	79	40	51%	63	34	54%
6	61	26	43%	35	15	43%
7	70	34	49%	57	32	56%
8	NA*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
All	370	198	54%	290	167	58%

*There are no 8th grade scores because all AoC 8th graders took the NYS Algebra I Regents in lieu of the Grade 8 NYS Math assessment (67 8th graders took the Regents, 2 students were absent).

Math Measure 2 - Absolute

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.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the mathematics test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2023-24 mathematics MIP for all students of **115.3**. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

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Mathematics 2023-24 Performance Index (PI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
370	17%	29%	41%	13%

$$\begin{array}{rcccccc}
 \text{PI} & = & 29\% & + & 41\% & + & 13\% & = & 83\% \\
 & & & & 41\% & + & 13\% & = & 54\% \\
 & & & & & + & (.5) * 13\% & = & 6.5\% \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & 143.5
 \end{array}$$

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

AoC’s performance against the above two absolute performance measures was mixed with the school achieving one but falling short of the other. AoC’s Math 2023-24 Performance Index is 143.5 which exceeds the State’s PI of 115.3. AoC, therefore, met this goal. However, the aggregate Math proficiency rate of AoC’s Grade 3-8 students in the two-year cohort was 58% which falls short of the 75% goal. Thus, AoC did not meet this measure.

AoC attributes the strong performance on the NYS Math assessments as evidenced by its performance index to the strengthening of teachers’ instructional practice, including their effective use of the school’s curricular choices. Last year was the second full year of the elementary school’s full implementation of the Bridges math curriculum and teachers are becoming very competent in the curriculum’s implementation. Bridges had been chosen through a comprehensive curriculum review and selection process because it specifically addressed gaps/weaknesses of our previous Go Math curriculum in addressing specific needs of our students as it related to the lack of foundational math skills among our older elementary school students as a result of remote learning during the pandemic. A key asset of the Bridges curriculum is the Number Corner which is 25 minutes of daily work where students cycle through different standards. This continual to spiraling backwards as the curriculum moves forwards ensures that previous learned standards are continued to be practiced and revisited. The structure of the curriculum along with the 80 minute daily math block has resulted in strong math performance among our elementary school students.

With regard to middle school, as discussed previously in the ELA narrative of this report, a priority in the middle school was for teachers to implement a structured curriculum across all content areas. For many years, teachers had relied on teacher-created materials that were of variable quality and seldom built knowledge in a coherent manner. 2023-24 was the first year that middle school was using the McGraw Hill Illustrative Math curriculum. In addition, the middle school had all new math teachers in 2023-24. Thus, there was a learning curve for the teachers as well last year which is reflected in the middle school students’ math performance on the NYS assessments; however, they have all been open to using the curriculum and the training and PD they are receiving in its implementation. As will be discussed in more detail later, this was also the first year that all grade 8 students took Algebra I culminating in the NYS Algebra I Regents exam.

As discussed previously, all Grade 3-8 students were also engaged iReady math test prep starting in January, with one or two Math test preps a week. The math teachers in the middle school and classroom teachers in the elementary school were responsible for facilitating iReady test prep in addition to the regular math blocks for their students. In the elementary school, children engaged in iReady test prep on their Chromebooks in order to get the 5th graders prepared for computer-based testing for the first time on the 2024 NYS assessments. In the middle school, math test prep was conducted using the iReady workbooks. Because middle school students have facility with the computer particularly since the

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Illustrative Math curriculum is computer based, instructional leaders felt it was important to have students do math test prep with pencil and paper in order to encourage them to work out problems by hand and check their work. This was important so that when students took the NYS Math test, they would have been in the habit during test prep of using the scrap paper that was available to work out the problems.

Math Measure 3 - 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 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.

2023-24 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	55%	73	56%	2406
4	74%	62	60%	2554
5	54%	63	58%	2285
6	43%	35	54%	2767
7	56%	57	63%	2566
8	NA	NA	49%	1276
All	58%	290	57%	13854

Math Measure 4 - 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.

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METHOD

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The difference between the school's actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the target for this measure. Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results.¹³

2022-23 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Mean Scale Score		Effect Size
		Actual	Predicted	
3	75.9%	455.0	447.9	0.53
4	58.3%	455.0	452.9	0.18
5	71.8%	451.0	446.5	0.38
6	79.3%	443.0	444.3	-0.10
7	72.7%	448.0	449.0	-0.08
8	66.2%	455.0	442.8	0.86
All	70.7%	450.8	447.6	0.24

Math Measure 5 - 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.

METHOD

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.¹⁴

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2022-23 and also have a state exam score in 2021-22 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2021-22 scores are ranked by their 2022-23 scores and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-

¹³ These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

¹⁴ These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

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wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order for a school to meet the measure, the school would have to achieve a mean growth percentile above the target of 50.

2022-23 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	NA	50.0
5	NA	50.0
6	NA	50.0
7	NA	50.0
8	NA	50.0
All	NA	50.0

MATHEMATICS INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2023-24, in addition to the New York State 3rd-8th grade exams, the school primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in mathematics: **NWEA MAP**

NWEA MAP Math assessment was administered three times during the year (Fall, Winter and Spring) to students across all grades in the school. In addition to the NWEA MAP Math test, AoC's elementary school also administered the Bridges' curriculum's Comprehensive Growth Assessments for K and 1 and the Bridges curriculum's Interim Assessments for Grades 3-5 (as well as the Bridges unit tests).

The initial baseline assessments for math were done with NWEA MAP Math assessment. AoC engaged Project77 during the 2023-24 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. After each administration of the NWEA MAP assessments, Project 77 conducted a comprehensive data analysis, which included not only an analysis of student performance against SUNY metrics for the NWEA but also against metrics developed by the school instructional leadership and teachers to measure student progress in accelerating learning. In the elementary school, data dive days were held after the interim assessment data was compiled by Project 77 and led by an outside consultant and then by the Grade 3-5 Assistant Principal. In the middle school, the Principal shared the data analysis from Project 77 at a PD or staff meeting which was then followed up more comprehensively in grade level meetings to discuss trends and next steps. At both the elementary school and middle school level, these data analysis meetings inform plans of action by class and grade level to meet the needs of the group as well as individual students. These internal assessment data have informed AoC's instructional program both at a micro level (individual teacher coaching, small student intervention groups, etc.) and a macro level (schoolwide professional development priorities, etc.).

NWEA

2023-24 NWEA MAP Math Assessment End of Year Results

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Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th 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	469	41	No
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th 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	305	38	No
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities ¹⁵	41 ¹⁶	43	33	No
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th 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. ¹⁷	2+ students	75%	369	33%	No

End of Year Performance on 2023-24 NWEA MAP Math Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students	Enrolled in at least their Second Year
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¹⁵ 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

¹⁶ Target should reflect the median growth percentile for all general education students. In the case that the school elects to measure the achievement of a different subpopulation, the target should reflect the median growth percentile of all students at the school not included in that subpopulation.

¹⁷ <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/02/NY-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-22.pdf>.

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	Percent Proficient ¹⁸	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	62%	84	61%	74
4	40%	80	41%	63
5	22%	86	25%	69
6	24%	72	26%	42
7	22%	78	25%	64
8	14%	69	14%	57
All	31%	469	33%	369

End of Year Growth on 2023-24 NWEA MAP Math Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3	65	84
4	45	80
5	34	86
6	32	72
7	35	78
8	35	69
All	41	469

SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

As is evident from the table below, AoC had mixed results in achieving the absolute and comparative goals. 58% of all tested AoC students who were enrolled in at least their second year performed at least a Level 3 on the 2024 NYS ELA exam falling short of the 75% goal; however, AoC’s aggregate PI of 143.5 exceeded the state’s MIP of 115.3. AoC’s 58% two-year cohort proficiency rate exceeded that of CSD 30 by 1 point thus meeting the goal; further, according to the NYSED in a Press Release dated August 20, 2024 announcing the release of the preliminary NYS ELA, Math and Science testing data, aggregate Grade 3-8 NYS proficiency on the 2024 NYS Math exam was 52%. AoC’s aggregate Grade 3-8 NYS ELA proficiency rate for the two-year cohort was 6 points higher than that of the state. Additionally, AoC’s aggregate proficiency rate of the 2-year cohort was 5 points higher than that of NYC (which was 53%). Thus, AoC students outperform their CSD 30, NYC and NYS peers. AoC, however, fell short of the second comparative measure, when compared to students in schools which are more demographically similar to AoC. AoC’s effect size was 0.24, falling short of the 0.3 goal. This metric is based on the 2022-23 performance data. As is evident from the effect size table, AoC’s 6th and 7th grade actual mean scale score in 2022-23 fell

¹⁸ Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.

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below that of the predicted mean scale score. As discussed previously, the AoC middle school teachers had not been using a NYSL-aligned math curriculum at that time, the negative impact of that fact is reflected in this metric. AoC is unable to assess performance against the Growth goal as 2022-23 growth scores are unavailable due to an error in data reporting according to the Institute.

With regard to NWEA performance, AoC did not meet the Institute’s absolute, closing the achievement gap or growth goals. As discussed previously, it is important, however, to put the absolute and growth goals in context. The NWEA data has not yet been normed on a post-pandemic (2020-2025) data set. The NWEA 2020 norming study was created with data from 2015-2020. This is an important point because NWEA even acknowledges norms are sensitive to changes in student populations and given the scale of the pandemic and its known effects on student achievement, this context should be taken into account when viewing AoC’s performance against these metrics. The 2020 norming study thresholds for growth goals and proficiency likely do not reflect the current reality of how students are performing across the nation. What the NWEA data shows us is that our students are not performing at pre-pandemic levels.

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.	No
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.	Yes
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.	Yes
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.	No
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.	NA
Absolute	Each year, 80% of all AoC Grade 8 students who take the Algebra I Common Core Regents will score at least at Performance Level 3.	No
Comparative	Each year, the percent of AoC 8 th grade students who score at least at Performance Level 3 on the NYS Algebra I Common Core Regents exam will meet or exceed that of 8 th graders in NYC CSD 30 who score at least at Performance Level 3 on the NYS Algebra I Common Core Regents exam.	NA

EVALUATION OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

As discussed in the Summary of the Math Goal and as is evident from the table above, AoC student performance on the 2024 NYS Math assessments were mixed in terms of achieving Absolute, Comparative and Growth goals. The following summarizes the results of each measure:

- Absolute Measure (75% of AoC's two-year cohort will score at least Level 3): AoC fell short of this goal by 17 points).
- Absolute Measure (AoC's PI will exceed the State's MIP): AoC exceeded this target with a PI of 143.5 versus the State's MIP of 115.3.
- Comparative (AoC's two-year cohort proficiency rate will exceed CSD 30): AoC met this goal, exceeding CSD 30's proficiency by 1 point. AoC's proficiency was 58% versus CSD 30's of 57%.
- Comparative (AoC will have an effect size of 0.3 or above): AoC fell short of this goal with an effect size of 0.24.

As discussed previously, AoC attributes the strong performance of its elementary school students on the NYS Math assessments as evidenced by its PI and comparative performance metrics (comparative performance against CSD 30, NYS and NYC) to the strengthening of its elementary school teachers' instructional practice, including their effective use of the Bridges curriculum which was in its second year of full implementation in 2023-24. AoC's elementary school students performed more strongly relative to their CSD 30 counterparts than AoC's middle school students. AoC's grade 4 two-year cohort almost met the 75% proficiency goal with 74% scoring at least a Level 3, exceeding CSD 30's Grade 4 proficiency rate by 14 points. AoC's grade 3 two year cohort's proficiency rate was on par with that of CSD 30's Grade 3 while AoC's grade 5 fell 4 points short of CSD 30's Grade 5.

The middle school math performance fell well short of CSD 30 with AoC's Grade 6 two-year cohort's proficiency rate 11 points lower than that of CSD 30's Grade 6 and AoC's Grade 7 two year cohort's proficiency rate 7 points below that of CSD 30's Grade 7. Last year was the first year that the middle school was implementing the McGraw Hill Illustrative Math curriculum, and that along with the fact that AoC had new math teachers led to challenges in consistently effective instruction.

Our NWEA results (closing the achievement gap metrics for SWD and low achievers) show that our more at-risk populations are not making adequate annual growth to move to grade level proficiency and close the achievement gap between them and their general education peers.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

The 2023-24 year was the first year that Grades 5-8 NYS assessments were being administered as computer-based tests (CBT). At the middle school level, AoC students had the necessary facility with using computers as they were regularly using them as part of the core curriculum; however, in the elementary school there was a concern that AoC's 5th graders needed more practice so that their performance on the NYS assessments would not be negatively impacted by the fact that the assessments were CBT. To address this need, students in the elementary school were administered the iReady test prep, discussed earlier, on their Chromebooks. Having had that practice taking the test prep assessments on the computer proved to be helpful as our 5th graders' performance on the NYS Math assessments does not appear to indicate that they were hampered by the CBT nature of the assessment. Our 5th graders' proficiency rate was within 4 points of their CSD 30 5th grade peers; further, our Grade 5 students exceeded their predicted performance by a 0.38 Effect Size.

Since the pandemic, many AoC parents were opting their children out of taking the NYS assessments. To address this concern, AoC leadership held testing meetings with families in order to impress upon them the importance of having their children participate in the 2024 NYS testing program highlighting their

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importance for their children from being an important measure for the school to use to shape instructional decisions for the benefit of their children to helping their children be strong candidates for programs for high school. These meetings were effective in increasing AoC’s participation rate on the NYS assessments this past year. Our 2024 NYS Math participation rate was 87% versus a 79% in 2023.

Last year was the first year that all Grade 8 students at AoC took Algebra I in lieu of regular Grade 8 math. As such, all Grade 8 students took the Algebra I Regents exam. In previous years, only advanced math students took Algebra I and the rest of the 8th graders remained in standard Grade 8 math. As a result of this change, AoC’s passing rate on the Regents exam at Level 3 or above dropped from 100% in 2022-23 to 55% in 2023-24, and the percent of students who passed the Regents with a Level 4 or 5 (the College and Career Readiness score) dropped from 79% in 2022-23 to 27% in 2023-24.

As it relates to student performance on the NWEA assessments, the end of the year NWEA assessments were administered one to two weeks after the NYS math assessment and it is possible that students were feeling the impact of test fatigue. The timing of the state tests combined with end of year June events provided limited time during which AoC could administer NWEA assessments. As a result, the timing so close to the NYS assessments was not ideal and may have impacted student performance on these internal assessments.

Finally, as discussed in previously and in greater depth in the Additional Context section of the ELA goal, NWEA results need to be viewed in the context of the post-pandemic environment in which we find ourselves given that our NWEA MAP results are measured using NWEA’s 2020 norming study, the benchmark against which student performance is measured, was established using data collected between 2015 and 2020¹⁹ where student performance pre-pandemic is vastly different from what it is post-pandemic.

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

Grade	Yeare	Regents Exam	Number Tested	Number Passing (Level 3 and above)	Percent Passing (Level 3 and above)	Percent Passing (Level 4 and above)
8	2021-22	Algebra I	23	23	100%	74%
8	2022-23	Algebra I	29	29	100%	79%
8	2023-24	Algebra I	67	37	55%	27%

MATHEMATICS ACTION PLAN

We expect that the continued use of the Bridges curriculum in the elementary school and the McGraw Hill Illustrative Math (including Illustrative Math Algebra curriculum) in the middle school will support student growth and achievement in Math this year as teachers, especially in the middle school, become more familiar and adept with curriculum implementation. This will be the third year of full implementation of Bridges in the elementary school and the second year of implementation of the Illustrative Math curriculum in the middle school.

¹⁹ <https://teach.mapnwea.org/impl/normsResearchStudy.pdf>

AoC's move away from outsourcing test prep to Sylvan Learning and move it in-house to the use of iReady and AoC teachers (classroom teachers in the elementary school and math teachers in the middle school) overseeing test prep is another component of the instructional program that will support students' math achievement. By having teachers oversee test prep, instead of outside Sylvan tutors, teachers are able to bridge test prep and classroom instruction, ensuring data regarding student strengths and challenges are informing each instructional component.

This year, AoC added a Director of Student Support to its instructional leadership. The Director of Student Support is responsible for supervising the special education coordinators and the student support providers (special education teachers, ELL teachers, etc.). The addition of the Director of Student Services was intentionally designed to bridge the gap between the classroom teachers and the student support specialists. In the past, structured communication and collaboration between these educators had not been supported by the organizational structure for the benefit of special populations in the classrooms. While AoC has provided teachers with a number of PD around how to differentiate instruction in order to support special learners it has not been enough to move these students forward with the urgency desired. By having the Director of Student Support in grade team and department team meetings along with the support providers, instructional planning will benefit from these specialists providing scaffolding and interventions necessary to differentiate instruction for ELLs, SWD and other learners to ensure all learners in the classroom can access the curriculum and make progress towards the NYSLS. NWEA closing the achievement metrics in math show that greater support is needed for SWD and low achievers in order to drive student growth in these special populations.

Finally, AoC's use of Danielson Framework for teacher evaluation focus which is now in its third year of full implementation having replaced a previous in-house developed teacher evaluation tool is supporting improvement in teachers' pedagogical skills and student learning by identifying meaningful and actionable feedback to support teacher improvement.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

All students attending AoC will become proficient in their understanding and use of science.

BACKGROUND

AoC's 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. Science instruction is delivered through an inquiry-based approach and incorporates mastery of core vocabulary and conceptual knowledge with the application of scientific principles in laboratory settings.

AoC's elementary school uses the Science *Dimensions* text by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Currently Grades K-4 in the elementary school grades have one 45 minute science class weekly and the 5th graders have two 45 minute periods each week. Science is taught by a designated science teacher in the elementary school. AoC's middle school uses McGraw Hill's *Inspire Science* text for Grades 6-8. This was the first year that all Grade 8 students took Living Environment culminating in the Regents Living Environment Exam. In the past, AoC offered both the standard Grade 8 Science class as well as the Grade 8 Living Environment Regents with the more advanced science students being placed in the Living Environment class. Students in Grades 6 and 7 have 45 minutes of daily science and grade 8 students have 45 minutes of Living Environment daily.

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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.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Science Measure 1 - Absolute

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.

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 5th grade in spring 2024. The table below summarizes the performance of students enrolled for at least two years.

Charter School Performance on 2023-24 State Science Exam
By Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Students in At Least Their 2 nd Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	61	18	30%
8	NA*	NA	NA
All	61	18	30%

*All Grade 8 AoC students took the NYS Living Environment Regent in lieu of the Grade 8 NYS Science Exam.

Science Measure 2 - Comparative

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 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 and the results for the respective grades in the school district of comparison.

2023-24 State Science Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Charter School Students in at Least 2 nd Year			All District Students		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	61	18	30%	NA	NA	NA
8	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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All	61	18	30%	NA	NA	NA
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SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

AoC did not meet the Absolute Performance Goal of 75% of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year performing at proficiency on the NYS science exam. Only 30% of AoC's 5th graders performed at proficiency. At this time, we are unable to report on the Comparative Performance Goal as the results for CSD 30 on the NYS Grade 5 Science exam has not yet been released.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State examination.	No
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	NA
Absolute	Each year, 75% of AoC Grade 8 students who take the NYS Living Environment Regents Exam will score at least at Performance Level 3.	No
Comparative	Each year, the percentage of AoC Grade 8 students who score at least at Performance Level 3 on the NYS Living Environment Regents exam will meet or exceed that of 8 th graders in NYC CSD 30 who score at least at Performance Level 3 on the NYS Living Environment Science Exam.	NA

EVALUATION OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

Only 30% of AoC Grade 5 Students in the 2-Year BEDS cohort scored proficient on the NYS Science exam which is 45 points short of the 75% goal. No comparative data is available for CSD 30 performance on the Grade 5 science exam. This was the first year that NYS administered the Grade 5 NYS Science assessment.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

2024 was the first year that NYS administered the Grade 5 NYS Science assessment which was also a computer-based assessment. While AoC had been able to prepare Grade 5 students for taking a CBT in ELA and math through the iReady test prep on their Chromebooks that began in January. They did not have similar regularly scheduled intensive computer-based test prep for Science. In observing our students take the NYS Science exam, it was apparent that a number struggled with the CBT format in science which may have contributed to a low percentage of AoC students meeting proficiency. While CSD 30 comparative proficiency is not available, NYS has released statewide Grade 5 Science proficiency, which is 35% or just 5 points higher than AoC.

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All AoC Grade 8 students took the Living Environment Regents for the first time last year, instead of only AoC's accelerated science students. The results are in the table below. AoC Grade 8 performance on this Regent exam fell 7 points short of the 75% passing rate goal.

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

Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Number Tested	Number Passing	Percent Passing
8	2021-22	Living Environment	23	20	87%
8	2022-23	Living Environment	29	26	90%
8	2023-24	Living Environment	66	45	68%

ACTION PLAN

AoC's performance on the NYS Science assessments (NYS Grade 5 Science and NYS Living Environment Regents) did not meet absolute performance goals. Our 5th graders proficiency rate fell well short of the 75% benchmark with just 30% scoring at a Level 3 or above, although it is important to note that AoC student performance is generally in line with that of Grade 5 students across New York State as discussed previously.

Last year, as we did with math by having all 8th graders take Algebra 1, we embraced a more inclusive approach to science, striving to extend the opportunity to take the Living Environment Regents Exam to students of diverse abilities. In light of the inherent diversity of our classrooms, there was no longer a singular Regents class exclusively housing high-achieving students. As a result of this more inclusive approach, our performance on the Living Environment Regents exam did drop from previous years. 68% of our 8th graders scored at least a Level 3 in 2023-24, which is just 7 points below our 75% goal.

AoC's elementary school science teacher is currently re-evaluating the Dimensions curriculum and pacing out of the standards over 4th and 5th grade to ensure students are exposed to more content given that the 5th grade schedule has science just two days each week. In addition, there are plans to incorporate more opportunities for students to practice science work on the computer in preparation for the computer-based NYS science assessment. In the middle school, there are now two consistent science teachers who are much more competent in the implementation of the science curriculum. Middle school science teachers are a hard to staff position, given that teachers who are certified to teach science (and especially a Regents level science) are more likely to seek a high school teaching position than a middle school one.

AoC's addition of a Director of Student Support to its instructional leadership this year will also strengthen instructional differentiation in science in order to support the growth and achievement of all students, particularly those representing special populations. The Director of Student Support is responsible for supervising the special education coordinators and the student support providers (special education teachers, ELL teachers, etc.). The addition of the Director of Student Services was intentionally designed to bridge the gap between the classroom teachers and the student support specialists. In the past, structured communication and collaboration between these educators had not been supported by the organizational structure for the benefit of special populations in the classrooms. While AoC has

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provided teachers with a number of PD around how to differentiate instruction in order to support special learners it has not been enough to move these students forward with the urgency desired. By having the Director of Student Support in grade team and department team meetings along with the support providers, instructional planning will benefit from these specialists providing scaffolding and interventions necessary to differentiate instruction for ELLs, SWD and other learners to ensure all learners in the classroom can access the curriculum and make progress towards the NYSLs.

Finally, AoC's use of Danielson Framework for teacher evaluation focus which is now in its third year of full implementation having replaced a previous in-house developed teacher evaluation tool is supporting improvement in teachers' pedagogical skills and student learning by identifying meaningful and actionable feedback to support teacher improvement.

GOAL 4: ESSA

ESSA Measure 1

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.

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. More information on assigned accountability designations and context can be found [here](#).

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2021-22	In Good Standing
2022-23	Local Support and Improvement (LSI)
2023-24	LSI

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Under New York State's accountability system, AoC has continued to be In Good Standing, which in the last two years has been renamed as Local Support and Improvement (LSI). As there were no Recognition School determinations for 2023-24 and 2022-23, the LSI determination AoC received for both years was the "highest" accountability status awarded.