ELM COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

2023-24 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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Elm Community
CHARTER SCHOOL

Priscilla Walton (Executive Director) and Kayla Cobb (Principal), 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)
Zaineb Hussain	Board Chair	Executive, Academic
Michael Dorcelly	Secretary	Executive, Academic
Anupa Jacob	Treasurer	Executive, Finance
Derian de la Torre	Member	Finance, Development
Pam Chan	Member	Academic
Grace Yun	Member	Academic
Kyla Chirico	Member	Development

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

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

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

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

Elm Community Charter School opened its doors in August 2018, initially serving Kindergarten and 1st Grade students. We have since grown to full capacity, now educating over 450 learners across grades Kindergarten through Fifth Grade.

Our academic program and school culture are built upon five key design elements:

1. **Collaborative Learning**: We believe students learn best when challenged to discuss, debate, and form conclusions with others similar and different from themselves. This approach develops critical thinking, creativity, social skills, and the ability to articulate ideas clearly. Our program emphasizes collaborative group work, using rubrics that focus on the learning process as much as the final product.
2. **Student-Led Integrated Studies**: Our curriculum engages learners in interdisciplinary studies, pushing them to use higher-order thinking skills and adapt their knowledge to real-world scenarios. Our Integrated Studies blocks in Humanities and STEM encourage learners to design their own experiments and projects, explore divergent solutions and conclusions, and show their understanding of content through the development of their own evidence-based conclusions fostering a love for learning and academic success.
3. **Data-Driven Small Group Learning**: We tailor instruction to the individual needs of learners through weekly data analysis of learner work and strategic scheduling. Our approach includes splitting classes for up to 2 hours daily and providing small group instruction for up to 3 hours a day. With two teachers in every classroom, teachers have the flexibility to implement a myriad of teaching options, including parallel teaching and co-teaching.
4. **Self-Exploration and Self-Awareness**: We prioritize learners' social and emotional intelligence, believing self-awareness is crucial for academic success. Our schedule includes time for learners to process their emotions around failure, disagreements, and conflicts. The goal is to cultivate learners' self-awareness so that they are able to articulate their feelings, preferences, and ideas with one another. We utilize our school counselors SEL curriculum as well as Yale's RULER program on Emotional Intelligence to nurture this development.
5. **Creative Courses (Doing and Making to Think Differently)**: We believe students learn best when they can make things with their hands and voices, experiencing topics through the arts. We offer

a well-rounded education through our Creative Courses, which consist of fine arts, chorus/vocal and music theory, physical education and organized sports, dance, and media. This approach allows students to experience topics through various artistic mediums and present their knowledge through creative projects rather than an academic task.

Since our founding year, we have maintained consistency in our core academic program while continuously refining our approaches to best serve our growing student body. Our commitment to these design elements has remained steadfast, allowing us to provide a unique and effective educational experience for learners of central Queens.

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
2020-21	48	78	56	55										237
2021-22	45	51	74	53	52									275
2022-23	69	70	80	78	52	29								378
2023-24	68	79	79	89	82	37								434

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

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

Background

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

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

Elm has created its own curriculum based off of Teachers College Writing Project (TCRWP) to support all students in becoming proficient writers. TCRWP employs a balanced literacy approach, is aligned to New York Next Generation Standards, and provides students with multiple opportunities throughout the day

to strengthen their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in various forums. This is especially beneficial for our ELLs, whom we call our Emergent Bilingual Learners (EBLs), as they expand their receptive and expressive language skills.

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

Governing our rigor and programmatic direction are our ELA benchmark assessments and F&P assessments (grades 1-5). Each assessment provides different information on student understanding, misconceptions, and independent achievement levels. At the end of each quarter (cycle), leaders and teachers gather to analyze the data in order to determine new homogenous small groups (mastery), new heterogeneous small groups (inquiry), as well as identify at-risk learners who are in need of differentiated instruction or need to move up in RtI tiers of support. Additionally, assessments provide helpful information on the next cycle's priorities and teacher development foci.

Elementary 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.

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	87	1	-	-	-	1	1	90
4	80	-	2	-	-	-	-	82
5	36	-	1	-	-	-	-	37
All	203	-	-	-	-	-	-	209

Performance on 2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam

By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year[1]

Grade	All Students			Enrolled in at least their Second Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
3	87	47	54%	58	34	59%
4	80	46	58%	60	38	63%
5	36	21	58%	22	17	77%
All	203	114	56%	140	89	64%

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 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]

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level													
	Level 1			Level 2			Level 3			Level 4				
	17%			27%			42%			15%				
		PI	=	27	+	42	+	15	=	84				
							42	+	15	=	57			
								+	(.5) 15	=	7.5			
									PI	=	148.5			

[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.

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

The Performance Index (PI) for our school's ELA results in 2023-24 is 148.5, which exceeds the state's Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) of 113 by 35.5 points. This clearly demonstrates that our school has met and surpassed the ESSA school performance goal for this year.

Breaking down the performance levels, we see that 84% of our learners scored at Level 2 or above, which is considered partially proficient or better. More impressively, 57% of our learners achieved proficiency by scoring at Levels 3 or 4, with a notable 15% reaching the advanced performance level (Level 4).

Our performance can be attributed to several key factors in our school program:

1. Data-Driven Small Group Learning: Our tailored instruction and strategic scheduling for small group learning have significant impact on addressing individual learner needs, contributing to a relatively low percentage (17%) of learners at Level 1.
2. Collaborative Learning: Our emphasis on group discussions contributes to the percentage of learners achieving proficiency, as it develops critical thinking skills crucial for ELA performance.

While we are pleased with these results, we recognize that there is still room for improvement, particularly in moving more learners from Level 2 (27%) to Level 3 or 4. We will continue to refine our instructional strategies, namely in our tier 2 supports, with a particular focus on supporting learners who are on the cusp of proficiency to make that crucial leap.

In conclusion, our school has not only met, but exceeded the state's MIP for ELA performance. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of our innovative educational approach and sets a strong foundation for continued academic success.

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]

[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. The NYSED announces the releases of these data here.

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 2nd Year		District 24 NYC Public Schools	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	59%	58	35%	3427
4	63%	60	40%	3584
5	77%	22	38%	3576
All	64%	140	38%	10,587

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 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	80.8%	449.0	440.5	0.85
4	70.4%	451.0	445.7	0.55
5	87.5%	458.0	440.7	1.85
All	78.8%	451.5	442.2	0.96

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

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	
	School	Target
4	52.4	50.0
5	69.7	50.0
All	59.1	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: Internally Developed ELA Benchmark

F&P

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Kindergarten	48%	56%	54%	54%
1st Grade	59%	65%	60%	70%
2nd Grade	68%	71%	74%	75%
3rd Grade	67%	69%	67%	63%
4th Grade	56%	60%	59%	59%
5th Grade	69%	73%	68%	73%

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

Our analysis of our F&P data revealed varied patterns of growth across grade levels.

- Kindergarten showed steady improvement, starting at 48% proficiency in Cycle 1 and reaching 54% proficiency by Cycle 4, demonstrating a 6 percentage point growth. There were changes to the curriculum that did not align to the internal assessments, which we will rectify in 2023-24.
- 1st Grade exhibited the most significant growth, beginning at 59% proficiency in Cycle 1 and ending at 70% proficiency, showing an 11 percentage point increase.
- 2nd Grade maintained strong performance throughout the year, starting at 68% proficiency and concluding at 75% proficiency, which was the highest proficiency across all grades and represented a 7 percentage point growth.
- 3rd Grade began the year at 67% proficiency, but experienced slight fluctuations, ending at 63% proficiency, indicating a 4 percentage point decrease. In the following school year, greater emphasis will be placed on difficult comprehension skills (e.g. point of view) and a variety of instructional strategies that can support learners.
- 4th Grade started at 56% proficiency and showed small improvements, maintaining 59% proficiency in the final two cycles, for an overall growth of 3 percentage points.
- 5th Grade demonstrated some fluctuations, but an overall positive trend, starting at 69% proficiency, peaking at 73% proficiency in Cycle 2, and maintaining that level in Cycle 4, resulting in a 4 percentage point growth.

Our analysis indicates that lower grades (K-2) showed the most consistent and significant growth, suggesting strong early literacy instruction. Upper grades (3-5) displayed more varied results, pointing to a need for targeted interventions.

ELA Benchmark

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Kindergarten	65%	67%	78%	65%
1st Grade	84%	31%	65%	81%
2nd Grade	15%	16%	14%	29%
3rd Grade	10%	40%	11%	24%
4th Grade	10%	5%	17%	44%
5th Grade	25%	8%	17%	54%

This was Elm's first year conducting an internal ELA benchmark vertically aligned from Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. In previous years, Elm conducted benchmarks only in grades 3-5. Analysis on our internal ELA benchmarks show that there is considerable correlation between the benchmarks indicators and the state test. The following analysis has been considered:

- All grades grew from cycle 1 - 4, indicating growth in standards mastery
- All grades grew from cycle 1 -4, in their ability to show conceptual understanding through a myriad of question types including multiple choice, written response, and open response (math).
- Our curriculum and assessments cover the appropriate standards K-5 to ensure success in grades 3-5.

- There are question types that need to be introduced earlier. For example, we have started reading comprehension (vs. listening comprehension) in the first grade, written responses starting in first grade, and multiple choice (evaluative questions) starting in Kindergarten. We integrated testing formats and structures similar to other assessments learners in the younger grades take including NYSESLAT.

Overall, for the following school year, considerable changes will be made to the ELA benchmarks in order to account for power standards, stamina, and the balance of oral vs. written expression appropriate for each grade level.

Summary of the ELA Goal

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts exam for grades 3-8.	Not Met
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's English language arts exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Met
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met

Evaluation of ELA Goal

For the 2023-24 school year, our goal of having 75% of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year perform at proficiency on the New York State ELA exam was not met. However, the data reveals significant progress and areas of strength.

Absolute Measure 1:

Overall, 64% of our students enrolled in at least their second year achieved proficiency across all tested grades. While this falls short of our 75% goal, it represents a marked improvement from previous years and demonstrates the cumulative positive impact of our literacy program on learners who have been with us for an extended period.

Breaking down the results by grade level provides further insights:

- In 3rd grade, 59% of students enrolled in at least their second year achieved proficiency, compared to 54% of all students tested. This 5 percentage point difference highlights the effectiveness of our early literacy instruction for students who have been with us since the early grades.
- 4th grade showed more promising results, with 63% of students enrolled in at least their second year reaching proficiency, compared with 58% of all students. This 5 percentage point gap again underscores the value of sustained exposure to our literacy curriculum.
- Most notably, our 5th grade learners enrolled in at least their second year excelled, with an impressive 77% achieving proficiency, compared to 58% of all 5th grade students tested. This substantial 19 percentage point difference is a testament to the benefits of our program and the effectiveness of our upper elementary literacy instruction.

These grade-level breakdowns reveal a clear trend: the longer students are enrolled in our school, the more likely they are to achieve proficiency in ELA. This pattern validates our long-term instructional strategies and curriculum design.

Absolute Measure 2:

Our school not only met but exceeded this measure. The Performance Index (PI) of 148.5 surpassed the state's Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) of 113 by 35.5 points. Breaking down the performance levels:

- 84% of our students scored at Level 2 or above, indicating that the vast majority of our students are at least approaching proficiency.
- 57% achieved full proficiency by scoring at Levels 3 or 4, with a notable 15% reaching the advanced performance level (Level 4).
- Only 17% of students scored at Level 1, which is a relatively low percentage and suggests that our interventions for struggling readers are having a positive impact.

This distribution across performance levels reflects the success of our balanced literacy approach. The high percentage of learners at Level 3 and 4 (57%) indicates that our program is not only helping learners reach basic proficiency, but is pushing a significant portion to advanced levels of performance. The relatively low percentage at Level 1 (17%) suggests that our tiered intervention system and small group instruction are effectively supporting our struggling readers.

Comparative Measure 1:

Our school met and exceeded this measure, outperforming the local school district across all tested grades.

- 3rd Grade: 59% of our long-term students were proficient, compared to 35% in the district - a 24 percentage point advantage.
- 4th Grade: 63% of our long-term students achieved proficiency, versus 40% in the district - a 23 point lead.
- 5th Grade: An impressive 77% of our long-term students were proficient, compared to 38% in

the district - a substantial 39 point difference.

Overall, 64% of our long-term students achieved proficiency across all grades, compared to 38% in the district - a 26 percentage point advantage.

These comparisons are particularly meaningful given that we serve a similar demographic to the district school. Our higher proficiency rates suggest that our innovative approaches - including collaborative learning, and data-driven small group instruction - are highly effective in developing strong literacy skills.

Several factors contribute to these results:

- Collaborative Learning: Our emphasis on group discussions has likely contributed to the high percentage of students achieving proficiency, particularly in the upper grades. This approach develops critical thinking and articulation skills crucial for ELA performance.
- Data-Driven Small Group Learning: Our tailored instruction and strategic scheduling for small group learning have helped address individual student needs, contributing to the relatively low percentage of learners at Level 1 on the state exam.
- Vertical Alignment: Our efforts to close knowledge gaps between essential grades are showing promise, particularly in the performance of our 5th grade students.
- Early Literacy Focus: The strong performance and growth in our lower grades (K-2) on internal assessments reflect the effectiveness of our early literacy instruction, including guided reading groups and emphasis on writing instruction.

Comparative Measure 2:

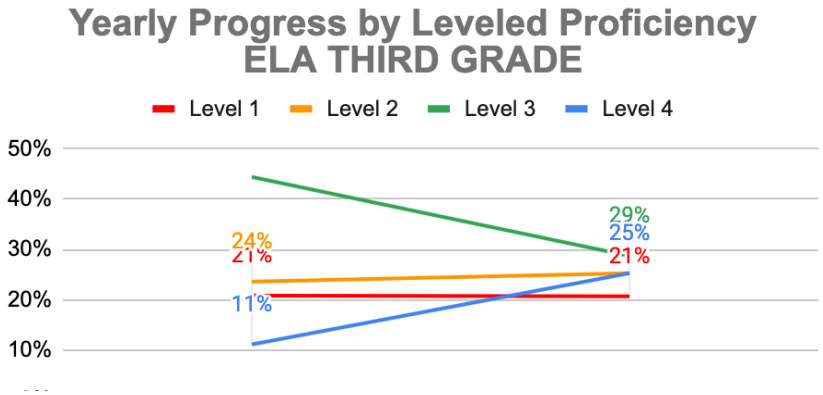
The school's overall effect size was 0.96, surpassing the target of 0.3. This result indicates that the school performed better than predicted when compared to demographically similar schools across New York State. Notably, all grade levels showed positive effect sizes, with 5th grade displaying a remarkable 1.85. These results are especially significant given that 78.8% of our learner population is economically disadvantaged, highlighting our success in overcoming socioeconomic barriers to academic achievement.

Growth Measure:

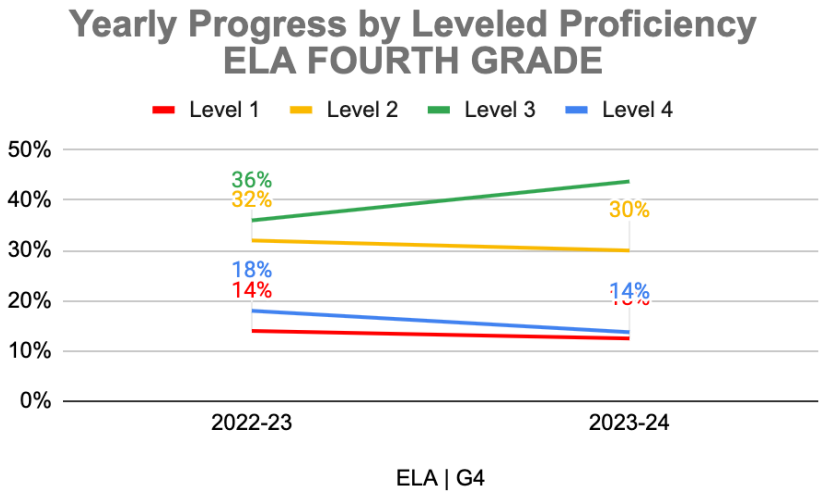
In terms of growth, the school also excelled, meeting and exceeding the target set by the state's growth model. With an overall mean growth percentile of 59.1, surpassing the target of 50, the school demonstrated strong year-over-year progress in ELA skills. Both 4th and 5th grades showed growth above the target, with 5th grade exhibiting particularly strong improvement at 69.7 percentile. These results underscore the effectiveness of the school's ELA instruction in not only achieving high performance but also in fostering consistent academic growth among learners.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Looking at the year-over-year change in performance levels, we observe the following trends.

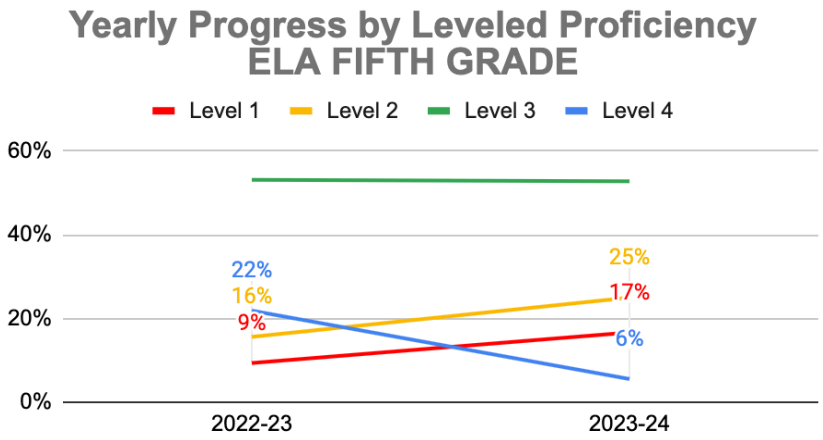


Level 1 remained stable at 21%. Level 2 increased slightly from 24% to 25%. Level 3 decreased from 44% to 29% (-16%). Level 4 increased significantly from 11% to 25% (+14%).



ELA | G4

Level 1 decreased slightly from 14% to 13% (-1%). Level 2 decreased slightly from 32% to 30% (-2%). Level 3 increased from 36% to 44% (+8%). Level 4 decreased from 18% to 14% (-4%).



ELA | G5

Level 1 increased from 9% to 17% (+7%). Level 2 increased from 16% to 25% (+9%). Level 3 remained stable at 53%. Level 4 decreased significantly from 22% to 6% (-16%).

These shifts indicate areas of progress and concern. While we see positive movement in 3rd Grade with a significant increase in Level 4 performers, Grade 5 shows a concerning trend with increases in lower levels and a decrease in Level 4 performers. Below we have identified how we plan to actively address the concerns.

- **Assessment Alignment and Data Utilization**: Our internal ELA Benchmark assessments showed significant variability across cycles and grades, indicating a need for better alignment with state standards. To address this we are:
    - Revising our ELA Benchmarks to ensure closer alignment with state standards and more accurate prediction of state exam performance.
    - Implementing more frequent, formative assessments to allow for timely interventions and instructional adjustments.
    - Providing additional professional development for teachers on data analysis and responsive instruction.
- **Data-Driven Small Group Learning | Guided Reading**: To address the need for more responsive guided reading instruction, we are introducing reading spirals (informal assessments) to allow for more frequent regrouping of students. We are also providing additional training for teachers on differentiated instruction within guided reading groups.
- **New Student Integration**: We faced challenges with the influx of new 3rd and 4th grade students, which impacted our overall proficiency rates. To mitigate this, we are incorporating more informal assessments to better understand new student learning. This includes diagnostic assessments upon entry and targeted interventions to address any gaps in foundational skills.

These concerns are being addressed through targeted strategies. We believe that our proactive approach to addressing these issues demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement in our ELA instruction. We are confident that these efforts will lead to more consistent and improved performance across all grades in the coming years.

By focusing on these key areas, we aim to build upon our existing strengths and address our areas of weakness. Our goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of when they join our school or their initial performance level, have the opportunity to achieve proficiency and excel in ELA.

ELA ACTION PLAN

To address the areas needing attention in our ELA program and build upon our success, we have developed a comprehensive action plan that focuses on maintaining consistency in data collection and reporting while implementing strategic interventions to improve academic performance.

A key priority is addressing the stagnant proficiency rates observed from last year to this year. To tackle this, we will revise our ELA Benchmarks to ensure better alignment with state standards and more

accurate prediction of state exam performance. This revision will include adjusting test length, question types, and the complexity of passages to ensure appropriate rigor across all grades. We'll also implement more frequent, formative assessments throughout the year, allowing for timely interventions and instructional adjustments. To support these changes, we'll provide additional professional development for teachers, focusing on data analysis and responsive instruction.

Our guided reading program will include more frequent informal checks. These checks will allow for timely interventions and group adjustments, helping us be more responsive to individual student needs and ensure continuous progress. We'll also provide targeted training for teachers on differentiated instruction within guided reading groups, empowering them to better meet the diverse needs of our students.

The humanities curriculum will see improvement in our critique and revision processes, with a focus on pushing more students to advanced levels of performance. We'll build on our current success in writing instruction where we're performing 8% above average, by further integrating writing skills development from the beginning of the year. This will include incorporating responses to literature into daily exit ticket and more frequent, low-stakes writing assessments.

The influx of new 3rd and 4th grade students presents a challenge in maintaining consistent growth. We need to develop strategies to quickly acclimate these students to our instructional approach and address any gaps in their foundational skills.

We're also refining our data-driven small group learning approach, particularly our practice of splitting learners into heterogeneous groups. This strategy, combined with our focus on creating lessons with significant student voice through excellent questioning techniques, will help us better meet the needs of all learners.

In terms of assessment, we're shortening our test prep period to six weeks, focusing on quality of instruction over quantity in preparation. This change, along with our revised benchmarks and more frequent formative assessments, will provide us with more accurate and actionable data throughout the year.

By implementing these strategic interventions, we aim to address our areas of concern while building upon our existing strengths. We believe these steps will lead to more consistent and improved performance across all grades and subpopulations in ELA. Our focus on data-driven instruction, curriculum alignment, and targeted support for specific grade levels and new students demonstrates our commitment to providing a high-quality, responsive ELA program for all our learners. We will regularly review and adjust these strategies based on ongoing assessment data to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students and progressing towards our ELA goals.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

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

Background

Elm will utilize two main components for Math: Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) and Math Workshop. During the 2023-24 school year, learners in each grade will have approximately 90 minutes of math instruction three days a week, ensuring ample time for both conceptual understanding and skill mastery.

Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) is an inquiry-based math program that operates in direct alignment with New York State's Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics, which are based on the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Practice. CGi emphasizes problem-solving and critical thinking, encouraging students to develop their own strategies for solving mathematical problems. This approach allows teachers to gain insight into students' mathematical thinking and tailor instruction accordingly. Through CGI, students engage in rich mathematical discussions, explain their reasoning, and learn from their peers' strategies.

Math Workshop, our mastery-based academic component, is designed to teach learners fundamental math skills through a structured, yet flexible format. The focus of this curriculum is on building a strong conceptual foundation that students can apply to solve problems in their everyday experiences. Math Workshop typically includes a mini-lesson, guided practice, independent work, and a sharing/reflection time.

For Grades Kindergarten through 2nd, we adapt materials from EngageNY, modifying them to place a greater emphasis on mastering essential math skills. This adaptation ensures that our students develop a solid foundation in core mathematical concepts while still being challenged to apply their knowledge in various contexts.

In Grades 3rd through 5th, we use the Context for Learning Mathematics curriculum. This curriculum is known for its use of realistic contexts to introduce and explore mathematical concepts, helping students see the relevance of mathematics in their daily lives.
By combining these approaches, we aim to develop students who are not only proficient in mathematical procedures, but also confident problem-solvers capable of applying mathematical thinking to real-world situations.

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	
3	88	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	91
4	79	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	82
5	36	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	37
All	203	2	3	-	-	-	2	-	210

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	88	64	73%	58	46	79%
4	79	56	71%	58	43	74%
5	36	24	67%	22	17	77%
All	203	144	71%	138	106	77%

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.

Mathematics 2023-24 Performance Index (PI)																
Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level															
	Level 1			Level 2			Level 3			Level 4						
	4%			25%			51%			20%						
		PI	=	25	+		51	+		20	=		96			
							51	+		20	=		71			
								+		(.5)* 20	=		10			
										PI	=		177			

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The Performance Index (PI) for our school's math performance in 2023-24 is 177, which significantly exceeds the state's Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) of 115.3 by 61.7 points. This demonstrates that our school has not only met but substantially surpassed the ESSA school performance goal for this year.

Breaking down the performance levels, we see that 96% of our students scored at Level 2 or above, which is considered partially proficient or better. Most impressively, 71% of our students achieved full proficiency by scoring at Levels 3 or 4, with a notable 20% reaching the advanced performance level (Level 4).

Our strong performance can be attributed to several key factors in our school program:

- Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI): Our inquiry-based approach has likely contributed to the high percentage of students achieving proficiency, as it develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills crucial for mathematics performance.
- Math Workshop: The mastery-based component of our program appears to be effective in ensuring students have a strong foundation in fundamental math skills, reflected in the significant proportion of students reaching Levels 3 and 4.
- Balanced Approach: The combination of CGI and Math Workshop provides a well-rounded math education, addressing both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency.

While we are pleased with these results, we recognize that there is still room for improvement, particularly in moving more students from level 2 (25%) to Level 3 or 4. We will continue to refine our instructional strategies, with a particular focus on supporting students who are on the cusp of proficiency to make that crucial leap.

In conclusion, our school has not only met but significantly exceeded the state's MIP for mathematics performance. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of our innovative educational approach and sets a strong foundation for continued academic success in mathematics.

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.

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 2nd Year		District 24 NYC Public Schools	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	79%	58	47%	3,668
4	74%	58	52%	3,812
5	77%	22	51%	3,304
All	77%	138	50%	10,784

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.

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.[6]

2022-23 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Mean Scale Score		Effect Size
		Actual	Predicted	
3	80.8%	456.0	446.6	0.70
4	70.4%	456.0	449.2	0.57
5	87.5%	463.0	441.5	1.69
All	78.9	457.4	446.4	0.86

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.[7]

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-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 Math Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	46.7	50.0
5	63.5	50.0
All	53.3	50.0

[6] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.
[7] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

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: Internally Developed Math Benchmark

Math Benchmarks

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Kindergarten	64%	59%	80%	74%
1st Grade	40%	61%	88%	91%
2nd Grade	40%	57%	72%	67%
3rd Grade	27%	20%	36%	68%
4th Grade	11%	13%	36%	70%
5th Grade	51%	58%	47%	49%

Throughout the 2023-24 school year, Elm evaluated learners on a quarterly basis using our internally created math benchmarks, allowing us to track progress consistently. These benchmarks served as crucial tools for measuring learner performance and growth over time. By analyzing the data from each cycle, we were able to identify trends, areas of improvement, and potential gaps in student learning. This approach provided us with timely and actionable insights, enabling us to make data-driven decisions about curriculum adjustments and targeted interventions.

The results showed varied patterns of growth across grade levels. Our lower grades (Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd) showed consistent improvement throughout the year, with particularly strong gains in 1st grade, where proficiency increased from 40% in Cycle 1 to 91% in Cycle 4. This data suggests that our early mathematics instruction strategies were highly effective.

In the upper grades (3rd, 4th, and 5th), we observed fluctuating results, which prompted us to implement targeted interventions. Notably, 3rd and 4th grades showed significant improvements by the end of the year, with proficiency rates in 3rd grade increasing from 27% in Cycle 1 to 68% in Cycle 4 and in 4th grade increasing from 11% in Cycle 1 to 70% in Cycle 4. These large improvements demonstrate the effectiveness of our responsive teaching strategies and intervention programs.

The 5th grade data, while showing initial improvement, indicated a need for additional support by the end of the year. This information is invaluable for informing our instructional planning for the upcoming school year, particularly in ensuring a strong mathematical foundation as learners transition to middle school.

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State Mathematics exam for grades 3-8.	Met
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's mathematics exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Met
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.	Met
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.	Met
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.	Met

Evaluation of the Mathematics Goal

Absolute Measure 1: The school met and exceeded this target. 77% of learners enrolled for at least their second year performed at proficiency, surpassing the goal of 75%. This achievement was consistent across all tested grades, with 3rd grade at 79%, 4th grade at 74%, and 5th grade at 77% proficiency.

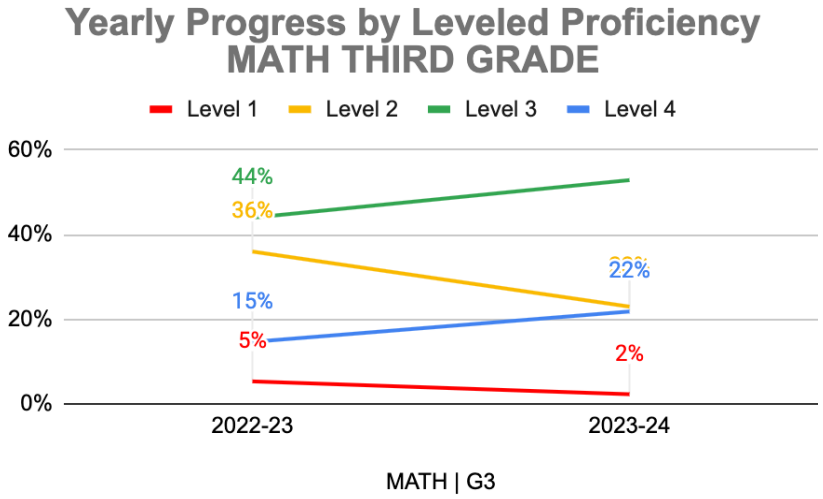
Absolute Measure 2: The school significantly exceeded this measure. Our Performance Index (PI) of 177 surpassed the state's Measure of Interim Progress (MIP) of 115.3 by 61.7 points. Notably, 96% of our students scored at Level 2 or above, with 71% achieving full proficiency at Levels 3 or 4.

Comparative Measure 1: The school met this measure, outperforming District 24 across all tested grades. Our students enrolled for at least two years showed particularly strong results, with 77% achieving proficiency compared to 50% in District 24 NYC Public Schools. This disparity was consistent across all grades, with our school outperforming the district by 32, 22, and 26 percentage points in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades respectively.

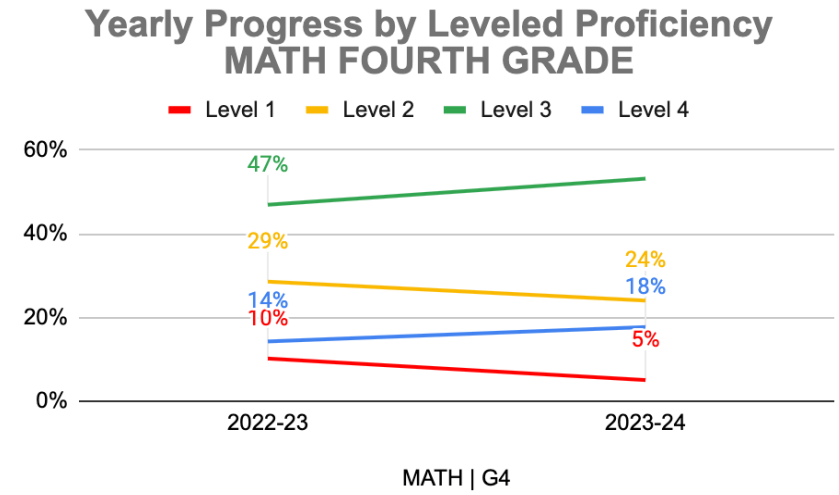
Comparative Measure 2: We have not only met but significantly exceeded expectations in both comparative performance and student growth. Our overall effect size of 0.86 surpassed the target of 0.3, with all levels showing positive effect sizes. Notably, our 5th grade displayed a remarkable effect size of 1.69, highlighting the cumulative impact of our math program. These results are particularly significant given that 78.9% of our student population is economically disadvantaged, underscoring our success in overcoming socioeconomic barriers to math achievement.

Growth Measure 1: Our school exceeded the target set by the state's growth model with an overall mean growth percentile of 53.3. While our 4th grade showed room for improvement at 46.7, our 5th grade exhibited particularly strong growth at 63.5, demonstrating the effectiveness of our upper elementary math instruction.

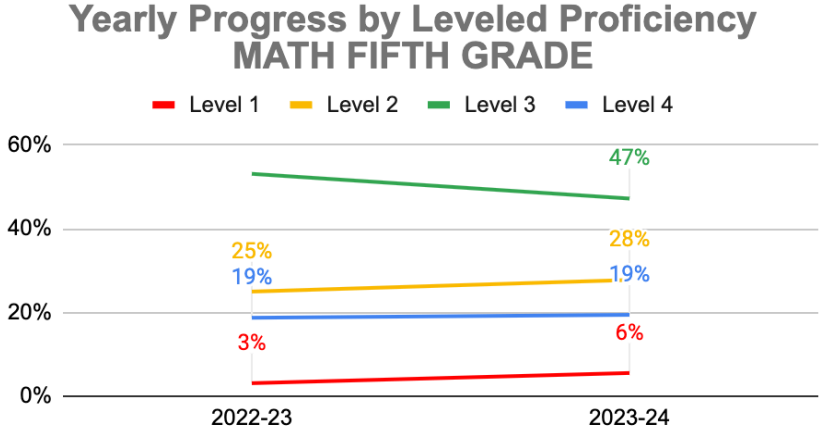
Analyzing the year-over-year change in performance levels for math, we note the following:



Level 1 decreased from 5% to 2% (-3%). Level 2 decreased significantly from 36% to 23% (-13%). Level 3 increased from 44% to 53% (+9%). Level 4 increased from 15% to 22% (+7%).



Level 1 decreased from 10% to 5% (-5%). Level 2 decreased from 29% to 24% (-5%). Level 3 increased from 47% to 53% (+6%). Level 4 increased slightly from 14% to 18% (+3%).



Level 1 increased slightly from 3% to 6% (+3%). Level 2 increased slightly from 25% to 28% (+3%). Level 3 decreased from 53% to 47%

(-6%). Level 4 remained stable at 19%.

Our analysis of year-over-year changes in math performance levels reveals significant improvements in Grades 3 and 4, with more students moving into higher performance levels. This shift aligns with our focus on developing deeper conceptual understanding through our CGI and Math Workshop approaches. However, 5th Grade showed a slight regression, with small increases in levels 1 and 2, indicating a need for targeted interventions at this grade level.

MATHEMATICS ACTION PLAN

We will continue to administer benchmark assessments throughout the school year for all grade levels, from Kindergarten through 5th grade. These assessments will be aligned with state standards and our curriculum to provide accurate measures of learner growth and achievement.

Based on our 2023-24 math benchmark results and our commitment to continuous improvement, we are implementing the following strategic interventions.

- **Curriculum Enhancement for Lower Grades**: Despite significant gains in lower grades, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. Thus, we will transition to a new curriculum, Context for Learning Mathematics. This curriculum will provide learners with real-world applications and problem-solving scenarios, building a stronger foundation for advanced mathematical thinking. We anticipate this change will help learners build on their mathematical understanding as they progress to upper grades.
- **Data Driven Small Group Learning:** In 2023-24, the leadership team focused on implementing math spiral assessments linked to Math Workshop and Math Routines. This created a system of bi-weekly data analysis and regrouping of learners based on skill level and standards. This was largely practiced Kindergarten - Fourth grade. Due to understaffing, fifth grade was unable to truly implement this initiative.
    - **Expansion of Math Spirals**: The implementation of math spirals with some grade levels in the 2023-24 school year has shown promising results in improving learner performance. To build on this success, we will extend the use of math spirals to all grade levels from the beginning of the year. Math spirals will continue to review content assessed on math benchmarks, focusing on mathematical power standards. Teachers will receive additional professional development on effectively incorporating math spirals into their instruction.
- **Tier 3 Supports for At-Risk Learners:** This year, we turn our focus on our tier 3 supports for some of our highest at-risk learners. Working with the interventionist, PDs for interventionists around focusing on power standards, linear/companion standards [ask Kizzy] focus on the highest leverage standards, work backwards from standards - professional development for interventionists

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

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

Background

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

Elementary Science

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 2nd Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	22	14	64%
All	22	14	64%

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						
	Charter School Students in at Least 2nd Year			New York Students		
Grade	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	22	14	64%			35%
All	22	14	64%			35%

Summary of the Elementary/Middle Science Goal

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

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.	Not Met
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.	N/A

EVALUATION OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

Elm's performance on the 2023-24 Science test for 5th grade learners shows both areas of strength and opportunity for improvement.

Absolute Measure 1: The school did not meet the target of 75% proficiency for learners enrolled in at least their second year. Out of 22 learners tested, 14 performed at or above proficiency, resulting in a 64% proficiency rate. While this falls short of the 75% goal, it represents a solid foundation for us to build upon.

Comparative Measure 1: Elm outperformed the state average. Our 5th graders achieved a 64% proficiency rate, compared to the state's 35%. This 29 percentage point advantage demonstrates some areas of strength of our science curriculum and instruction relative to the state.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

In addition to state tests, Elm administers Science Benchmarks at the end of every cycle to assess learner proficiency on relevant Next Generation Science Standards. The table below shows the results of these benchmarks.

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
K	81%	90%	81%	80%

1	72%	87%	77%	83%
2	82%	80%	72%	77%
3	33%	41%	67%	45%
4	30%	52%	44%	82%
5	47%	68%	24%	80%

- The lower grades (K-2) demonstrate consistently strong performance, with Kindergarten maintaining and 80-90% proficiency rate across all cycles. First and second grades also show strong results, ranging from 72-87% and 72-82% proficiency respectively.
- In contrast, the upper grades (3-5) exhibit more variability in their performance. 3rd Grade, for example, shows a notable improvement from 33% to 67% by Cycle 3, but experiences a decline to 45% in Cycle 4. 4th Grade demonstrates the most dramatic improvement, starting at 30% in Cycle 1 and culminating in an impressive 82% proficiency by Cycle 4.
- 5th Grades performance fluctuates significantly throughout the year, but ends on a high note with 80% proficiency by the final cycle.

Despite some inconsistencies, most grades show overall improvement from the beginning to the end of the year. By Cycle 4, four out of six grades achieve 80% of higher proficiency, indicating strong science instruction at the end of the year. However, the unexpected drops in proficiency for certain grades in specific cycles, particularly for 3rd and 5th grades in Cycle 3, suggest areas for potential improvement in maintaining consistent progress throughout the year.

Action Plan

These results should be considered in the context of our internal Science Benchmarks data, which showed 5th grade proficiency fluctuating throughout the year but ultimately reaching 80% by Cycle 4. The discrepancy between our internal benchmarks and the state exam results suggests a need to align our internal assessments more closely with state standards and expectations.

Our program's strengths are demonstrated by our outperformance of the state's average and the strong internal benchmark results in the final cycle. The inquiry-based approach and hands-on learning experiences likely contributed to this success. However, the failure to meet our absolute proficiency goal indicates room for improvement.

Moving forward, we will focus on:

- Assessment Alignment: Our primary focus will be on revising our internal assessments to better align with the new state standards and to increase rigor. This revision will involve shifting from primarily fact recall assessments to those requiring the application of science content, developing questions that assess higher-order thinking skills, and including more performance-based tasks.

- Habits of Thinking: We will align our curriculum with the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices, implementing what we'll call "Habits of Thinking" across all grade levels. For each unit taught, we'll focus on a specific habit of thinking per cycle. Initially, we'll concentrate on five high-leverage habits, such as evaluating and communicating information, analyzing and interpreting data, constructing explanations and designing solutions, and engaging in argument from evidence.

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	Good Standing
2022-23	Good Standing
2023-24	Good Standing

Additional Context and Evidence

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