

Accountability Plan Progress Reports for the 2009-10 School Year

Reader's Guide

SUNY Authorized Charter Schools

As set forth in the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees*, the single most important factor that the Charter Schools Institute and the SUNY Board of Trustees consider in making renewal determinations is the school's record in generating successful student achievement outcomes. In order to determine whether a school has met that high standard, **each charter school that the SUNY Board of Trustees authorizes is required to enter into an accountability agreement, known as an Accountability Plan**, which ultimately becomes part of its charter.

The Charter Schools Institute closely monitors each school's progress toward achieving the goals outlined in its Accountability Plan.

In addition, as part of its annual reporting requirements, **each SUNY authorized charter school must submit an Accountability Plan Progress Report which, from its vantage point, addresses each of the goals and outcome measures contained in its Accountability Plan.** The information presented in these Progress Reports constitutes important evidence that a school is keeping its promises to its students, parents and community, and is critical to making its case for renewal at the end of its charter period. The most important parts of Progress Reports are student achievement results on state exams and other assessments. However, not all schools will have tested grade levels for a particular state exam. Each year, the state administers English language arts and mathematics tests to 3rd through 8th grade, science tests to the 4th and 8th grades, and, up through 2009-10, social studies tests to the 5th and 8th grades.

Important Note: **The Accountability Plan Progress Report is authored by the charter school.** In reporting school progress toward meeting the outcome measures set forth in the Accountability Plan, schools are encouraged to build a case for the effectiveness of their program, and to lay the groundwork for writing a Renewal Application and ultimately for charter renewal. **The school's evaluation of its own progress does not necessarily reflect the conclusions of the Institute.** Further, the Institute does not affirm the completeness or accuracy of the report's data and may not endorse the school's characterization of the progress it has made toward achieving its Accountability Plan goals. Throughout the life of the school's charter, the Institute will visit each school, generating Institute School Visit Reports and, at the end of each charter period, a Renewal Report (select the <back> button in your browser to return to the school profile to see any/all available reports). These reports include detailed summaries of the Institute's observations of the school, as well as its evaluation of student performance and progress toward meeting the academic subject goals in its Accountability Plan.

**AMBER
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2009-10
ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 3, 2010

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Dr. Vasthi R. Acosta prepared this 2009-10 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
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INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2000, Amber’s mission is to *provide comprehensive learning experiences that will enable all students to become fully educated, creative adults, prepared to play leadership roles in New York City and in our global society.*

Amber served 394 students in 2009-2010 in grades K-5. Our students were approximately 48% African American, 44 % Latino, and 8% White/Asian/Multi-racial with 75% eligible for free and reduced lunch. There were 46% male and 54% female students.

This year we had 21 classes in grades K-5. An additional 5th grade class was added to lower the teacher student ratio in this grade. The final student body count was 394 students in June.

Amber continues to offer its students instruction in literacy through Success for All, math through TERC Investigations, science through K12 and Scott Foresman and social studies through an internally created curriculum aligned with the NYS Standards. In addition, Amber continued to offer specialty classes in reading intervention, technology, Spanish, visual arts, music and physical education.

This year Amber initiated a writing component to the social studies curriculum. This initiative was titled Humanities since the students’ writing pieces centered on social studies content. In addition, a new report card was designed and implemented that aligned with the New York State standards.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2005-06	86	77	40	38	29	46	13	329
2006-07	83	83	54	33	29	27	24	333
2007-08	83	92	64	50	28	24	23	364
2008-09	77	85	73	51	45	20	*	351
2009-10	97	82	74	60	46	35	*	394

2009-10 Ethnicity Distribution	Total #	Total %
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.00%
Black or African American	188	47.72%
Hispanic or Latino	174	44.16%
Asian or Pacific Islander	3	0.76%
White	1	0.25%
Multiracial	28	7.11%
	394	

2009-10 Gender Distribution	Total #	Total %
Female	214	54.31%
Male	180	45.69%

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at Amber Charter School will be proficient readers and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of English-language reading skills.

Background

Success For All is a prescriptive curriculum helps ensure the reading instruction in every classroom was of the same high quality.

Two consultants from SFA were hired to support implementation. These consultants visited often helping to ensure Amber's high level of implementation. They met with instructional leadership, teachers and staff developers to analyze scores, review progress of implementation, problem solve, and provide resources and guidance.

Every eight weeks the students are assessed to determine reading progress then regrouped according to ability. This continual assessment helped teachers and administration target at-risk students, identifying student's precise academic needs. The interim assessments further allowed administrators and teachers to strategize how to meet student needs and to match students to teacher's strengths as well as identify high achieving students and provide challenging material for them.

Two reading groups, not part of the SFA curriculum, were created this year in response to student need. During the third cycle it became apparent that some students had severe reading problems. These students were placed in a "Red Flag" group with a teacher who would use a corrective reading program to remediate. Another group of students seemed stagnant in their reading progress, these were put in a "Baby Wings" reading group to strengthen their phonic skills and give them more time to practice their reading skills. These groups provided an avenue for those students who moved at a slower pace than the curriculum guidelines allowed.

Sylvan Learning Center returned to work with students only in third grade for six weeks. During these weeks the teacher to student ratio shrunk, providing opportunity for more one on one instruction. This helped prepare the students with testing strategies, but more importantly provided the teacher with the opportunity to intensely work with high risk students.

Amber continued to hire **Part-time Tutors** to work with upper grades students (3-5). Like last year, tutors pushed into the classroom. Teachers assigned students to work with the tutors and dictated the skills that needed to be addressed. Teachers monitored closely the progress made and directed change in instruction when needed. These tutors were an integral part of Strategy Groups.

Based on assessments (Terra Nova, NYS exams, teacher assessments, DRA, NYS ELA/Math simulation tests) the administration and teacher identified skill gaps and created three small **strategy groups** within her class, i.e. high level, mid-level, and low level groups. The teacher worked with the low-level group, the tutor with the mid-level group, and the high level group was given high interest, high engagement projects to complete with minimal teacher direction. Benchmarks were set for each student and checked periodically. From these strategy groups, individual student goals emerged and were posted by students' desks as reminders of what they were working toward.

Amber participated in two consortiums for professional development grants this year. One was led by Fordham University Regional Educational Technology Center (RETC); Knowledge iTrust (a non-profit educational technology curriculum and software development organization), and Educate (a for-profit educational technology integration provider). This grant focused on helping teachers increase the integration of technology in their every day teaching. It is a three year grant. This, the first year, the third grade teachers received the training. Fourteen laptops were purchased and a rolling cart, so that all three third grade classes could share the laptops. The teachers utilized the laptops mostly during strategy groups and in the Humanities work. In 2010-11, the fourth grade teachers will be trained and in 2011-12 the fifth grade teachers.

The other consortium Amber participated with was spearheaded by the NYC Charter School Center and Family Life Academy Charter School. The focus of the training was for teachers who worked with English Language Learners. The Spanish and Technology teachers at Amber who also provide pull-out ESL instruction participated in this professional development.

In addition to the SFA interim assessments, **simulation tests** (old NYS exams) were given to help teachers identify areas of academic weakness. After each NYS ELA/Math simulation test, an **item analysis** was conducted by teachers, instructional leadership and staff developers. This item analysis identified the skills in need of intervention. The results were shared with the director of the After-school program and coordinator of the Saturday Academy to guide the instruction in their programs. The item analysis also helped identify skills that were weak throughout the grade and teachers were able to respond by preparing mini-lessons. Homework and strategy group assignments were also given to remedy these gaps.

As in the past years, **Saturday Academy** as well as **After-school** intervention was offered to students. In this past year both programs were aligned with the instruction of the day school, and closely monitored by administration. Teachers and tutors that worked in the day school also worked in these programs affording continuity, as well as knowledge of the students' skills and familiarity with students.

Amber has had a **Special Education Teacher (SETTS)** since 2007. Since 2008-09 the SETTS teacher was on Amber staff. Therefore, not only did our IEP students receive the required services, but teachers had an additional resource person. The SETTS teacher observed students, provided teachers with new intervention strategies to use, and he helped plan activities with teachers that would engage struggling students. In the internal staff survey the teachers rated the SETTS teacher as the person from who they received the most support. This is high praise.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year through 2008-09, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State English language arts examination.

In 2009-10, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the New York State English language arts examination.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in 3 through 5 grades in April 2010. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. Through 2008-09, the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score of 650 or above.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year’s test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have been enrolled for less than one year.

**2009-10 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	60	0	0	0	60
4	46	0	0	0	46
5	35	0	0	0	35
6	*	*	*	*	*
All	141	0	0	0	141

Results

In every single tested grade (3-5) a majority of Amber students scored at or above the Scale Score of 650. At the 650 cut off scale score Amber would have met its accountability goal of 75% or above proficient students. In third grade 91% of students, 4th grade 91% of students and 5th grade 80% of students scored at or above the 650 cut off scale score.

**Charter School Performance on 2009-10 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above 650	Number Tested
3	All Students	91.67%	60
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	91.67%	60
4	All Students	91.30%	46
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	91.30%	46
5	All Students	80.00%	35
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	80.00%	35
6	All Students	*	*
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	*	*
All	All Students	87.66%	141
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	87.66%	141

Evaluation

The gains Amber students demonstrated in last year’s jump in scores were sustained and in some grades improved. This is a testament to the new SFA reading curriculum and other strategies that were introduced last year and replicated this year. All grades met the 75% accountability goal of proficient.

Additional Evidence

In the table below, the year-to-year trends from 2005 can be viewed. Last year 3rd grade jumped from 61% to 88%, and this year they jumped to 92%. Fourth grade also showed increases; in 2008-09 they jumped to 82% from 52% a huge gain. Then this year they increased to 91%. Therefore, both 3rd and 4th grades increased their growth. In 5th grade there was a slight drop from 95% last year to 80% this year. The number of students tested also increased. The number of students tested increased from last year from 116 to 141 students, and yet the overall percent of proficient students did not waver and remained at 88%. Therefore, the jump of test scores last year of over 30% was sustained.

English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 through 2008-09 and a Scale Score of 650 in 2009-10									
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	79.30%	29	69.00%	29	61.40%	44	88.27%	51	91.67%	60
4	50.00%	26	80.00%	30	51.90%	27	82.20%	45	91.30%	46
5	50.00%	28	61.50%	26	47.80%	23	95.00%	20	80.00%	35
6	33.30%	12	48.00%	25	54.50%	22	*	*	*	*
All	56.80%	95	65.50%	110	53.90%	116	88.47%	116	87.66%	141

Source: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/AmberFinalVisitReport-8Yr-9.12.08.pdf>
<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/Amber7thYrRpt.pdf>

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State English language arts exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.

Method

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards all students being proficient by the year 2013-14. As a result, the state sets an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that 100 percent of students will ultimately be proficient in the state’s learning standards in English Language Arts. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Index (PI) value that equals or exceeds this year’s English language arts AMO, which for 2009-10 is 155.¹ The PI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 200.

Results

In level 3 and 4 a total of 48% of Amber students tested at performance level. In Level 2 48% of Amber students scored and 4% scored at level 1.

¹ With the change in Proficiency Scores, the State Education Department is currently reviewing the current Annual Measurable Objectives in English language arts and mathematics.

Calculation of 2009-10 English Language Arts Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3-5	3.97%	48.32%	40.25%	7.46%	141

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 48.32 + 40.25 + 7.56 = 96.13 \\
 &+ 40.25 + 7.56 = 47.81 \\
 \text{PI} &= \mathbf{143.94}
 \end{aligned}$$

Evaluation

Amber did not reach the Performance Index needed to meet the Annual Measurable Objective.

Additional Evidence

For three years in a row none of Amber students scored at the lowest level (1) until this year when 4% of the students scored at that level. The rest of the student body scored between level 2 and level 3. Seven percent of the students scored at the highest level 4. In Amber’s history, since 2003, the school has always reached the performance index to meet the AMO in English Language Arts. This is the first year Amber has not met AMO in ELA.

English Language Arts Performance Index (PI) and Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) by School Year

Year	Grades	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				PI	AMO
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2009-10	3-5	141	3.97%	48.32%	40.25%	7.46%	143.9	155
2008-09	3-5	116	0.00%	11.50%	86.17%	2.33%	188.5	144
2007-08	3-6	125	0.0%	45.9%	52.1%	2.0%	154	133
2006-07	3-6	119	0.0%	35.0%	63.0%	2.0%	166	122
2005-06	3-6	125	7.3%	44.2%	47.3%	1.2%	144	122
2004-05	4-5	54	4.0%	46.0%	43.0%	7.0%	147	131
2003-04	4	64					124	123

Source: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/AmberFinalVisitReport-8Yr-9.12.08.pdf>
<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/Amber7thYrRpt.pdf>

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

Method

Tested students who were enrolled in at least their second year are compared to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students and the results for the respective grades in the local school district, as well as between the total result of 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.

Results

In District 5, 33% of 3rd graders scored proficient while 57% of Amber’s 3rd graders scored proficient in the NYS ELA exam. In 4th grade 28% of the students in District 5 were proficient compared to 52% at Amber. In 5th grade 27% of the students in District 5 were proficient while 34% at Amber scored proficient.

**2009-10 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	56.67%	60	32.90%	987
4	52.17%	46	27.80%	1023
5	34.29%	35	27.20%	945
6				
All	47.71%	141	29.30%	2955

Source: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>

Evaluation

Amber students did better than the students in District 5 at every grade level. Amber students in third and fourth grades scored 24% higher than their counterparts in District 5. Amber’s fifth graders did 7% better than their counterparts in District 5. Amber students surpassed the students in District 5 by 18%.

Additional Evidence

Amber Charter School draws students from both Community School District (CSD) 4 and 5. Therefore, our comparison is with both community school districts. Amber has consistently out-performed both District 4 and 5 on the NYS ELA Exam in grade 3. Last year Amber out-performed both districts in every grade. This year Amber out-performed both District 4 and 5 in grades 3 and 4.

District 4 had 44% of their third graders proficient, while Amber had 57%, a difference of 13%. District 5 had 33% of their third graders proficient, while Amber’s third graders did 24% better. The 4th graders in District 4 scored 44% proficient, while 52% of Amber’s 4th graders scored proficient, a difference of 8%. In 5th grade only District 4 did better than Amber. While District 5 had 27% of their 5th graders score proficient and Amber had 34%, a 7% difference.

**English Language Performance of Charter School and Local District
by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year and All District Students at Levels 3 and 4											
	2006-07			2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5
3	69.00%	49.80%	40.10%	61.40%	53.90%	43.00%	88.30%	66.60%	56.00%	56.67%	44.40%	32.90%
4	80.00%	46.60%	40.80%	51.90%	54.00%	45.60%	82.20%	64.20%	53.50%	52.17%	43.50%	27.80%
5	61.50%	49.00%	38.90%	47.80%	66.70%	55.20%	95.00%	72.10%	62.80%	34.29%	42.40%	27.20%
6	48.00%	35.00%	38.40%	54.50%	44.00%	47.80%	*	*	*	*	*	*
All	65.50%	45.10%	39.50%	53.90%	53.90%	47.90%	88.50%	67.63%	57.43%	47.71%	43.43%	29.30%

Source: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/YearlyTesting/TestResults/default.htm>

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.

Method

The Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school’s performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. Regression analysis is used to control for the percentage of students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State. The school’s actual performance is then compared to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar free lunch percentage. The difference between the school’s actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar free lunch statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3 is considered performing higher than expected to a small degree, which is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Results

Given the timing of the state’s release of poverty data, the 2009-10 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2008-09 results, the most recent ones available.

In 2008-2009 the effect size was higher than expected to a large degree.

2008-9 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Free Lunch Eligible Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3		51	88.3	64.5	23.8	1.65
4		45	82.2	65.5	16.7	1.24
5		20	95.0	72.2	22.8	1.81
6		*	*	*	*	*
All	74.9	116	87.1	66.2	63.3	1.52

Given the timing of the state’s release of poverty data, these values are not yet available.

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
Higher than expected to a large degree.

Evaluation

The large jump in students’ scores during 2008-2009 resulted in a higher than expected effect size. The effect size goal was met by Amber.

Additional Evidence

Amber has met the effect size three out of four years, in 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2008-09.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2009-10	3-5	#	141	47.71	#	#
2008-09	3-5	74.90	116	87.1	66.2	1.52
2007-08	3-6	71.12	124	55.63	58.34	-0.19
2006-07	3-6	73.90	119	66.40	50.70	1.06
2005-06	4	69.70	58	50.00	59.50	-0.54

Given the timing of the state’s release of poverty data, these values are not yet available.

Goal 1: Growth Measure

Each year through 2008-09, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s state English language arts exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year’s state English language arts exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

In 2009-10, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent of students at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2008-09 state exam and 75 percent of students at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2009-10 state exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 in 2008-09, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the percentage in 2009-10.

Method

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and in 2009-10 the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above a Scale Score of 650. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2009-10 and also have a state exam score in 2008-09. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade should be included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the aggregate of all cohorts is examined to determine the growth of all students who took a state exam in both years.

Results

The third grade students in 2008-09 are now counted in the 4th grade cohort for 2009-10, 91% scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 in both years. The fourth graders in 2008-09 who are now counted in the 5th grade cohort for 2009-10, 80% scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 in both years.

$$\text{Target} = 75\% + \left(\frac{(\% \text{ at or above } 650 \text{ in } 2008 - 09) - 75\%}{2} \right)$$

Cohort Growth on State English Language Arts Exam from 2008-09 to 2009-10

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent at or above 650			Target Achieved
		2008-09	Target	2009-10	
4	46	91.30%	83.15%	91.30%	YES
5	35	80.00%	77.50%	80.00%	YES
6	*	*	*	*	*
All	81	85.65%	80.33%	85.65%	YES

Evaluation

Every cohort met its target growth. The 4th graders were able to maintain the large gain from the previous year as did the 5th graders.

Additional Evidence

In three of the last four years, an Amber grade cohort has met the target growth. Last year and this year all grades met the target growth.

Cohort Performance on State English Language Arts Exam Since the Advent of the Grades 3-8 Testing Program by School Year

School Year	Cohort Grades	Number of Cohorts Meeting Target	Number of Cohorts
2009-10	3-5	2	2
2008-09	3-5	2	2
2007-08	3-6	0	3
2006-07	3-6	1	3

Goal 1: Optional Measure

Each year, grade level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between their average NCE in the previous Spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed reading test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e. grade level) in the current Spring. If a grade level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

Method

As per Charter Schools Institute: “If the plan contains a gap-closing outcome as a value-added measure, the results should be expressed as the extent to which cohorts are narrowing the difference between their scores in the previous spring and grade-level performance in the current spring. The school is expected to enable the cohorts to reduce the difference between the first

year’s average NCE score and average NCE of 50, or above grade second year. (As per CSI guidelines, if a cohort scores above an NCE of 50 or above grade level in the first year, then it need only show *some* gain in the second year.)” The formula used to determine threshold is as follows:

$$\text{Target} = 50 + \left(\frac{(\text{2008 - 09 Average NCE}) - 50}{2} \right)$$

Results

**Cohort Growth on Terra Nova Reading
NCE Test from Spring 2009 to Spring 2010**

Grade	Cohort Size	Average NCE			Target Achieved
		2008-09	Target	2009-10	
K	96	*	50.0	54.4	YES
1	81	62.0	56.0	56.4	YES
2	74	53.3	51.7	60.2	YES
3	60	58.2	54.1	52.0	NO
4	46	51.5	50.8	59.0	YES
5	*	*	*	*	*
All	357	56.3	52.5	56.4	YES

Evaluation

Every grade from K-5 scored at or above the average NCE of 50. Only grade 3 did not meet its growth target but the students did score at grade level. These scores confirm the upward trend of student’s scores in ELA at Amber.

Additional Evidence

**Terra Nova Reading
Grade Equivalent (GE)**

Grade	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr
0 - K	*	*	1.4	*	1.1	-0.3	1	-0.1	1.0	0.0
K - 1	*	*	2.3	*	2.1	-0.2	2	-0.1	2.4	0.4
1-2	1.7	*	2.9	1.2	3.4	0.5	3.6	0.2	4.4	0.8
2-3	2.6	0.2	5.6	3	3.6	-2	4.3	0.7	4.3	0.0
3-4	4.1	1.2	5.9	1.8	3.9	-2	6	2.1	6.4	0.4
4-5	4.8	1.3	6.9	2.1	5.5	-1.4	7.6	2.1	*	*
5-6	5.3	-0.4	6.8	1.5	5.8	-1	*	*	*	*
Graduates	5.4	-1.6	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Amber met its goal of 75% of all students tested performing at or above a Scale Score of 650. Amber did not meet its Annual Measurable Objective for the first time in Amber’s history. Amber’s students once again outperformed the students in both CS District 4 and CS District 5. Last year, 2008-09, Amber exceeded its predicted level of performance by a high degree. The results for this past year are not available. Amber students met the growth target in the Terra Nova Reading test.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Did Not Achieve
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	TBD
Growth	Each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2008-09 state exam and 75 percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2009-10 state exam.	Achieved
Growth	Each year, grade level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed reading test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e. grade-level) in the current spring. If a grade level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.	Achieved

Action Plan

The fact that the students who scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 last year and this year remains the same indicates that the large jump in scores for Amber students last year, an increase of over 30%, was not an anomaly, but the result of all the changes and initiatives implemented and strengthen this year. It is evidence that Amber has instituted an effective methodology in the teaching of English Language Arts.

A focus in the coming year will be to strengthen the humanities work conducted this past year. An exemplar binder of writing pieces will be created to support the teacher’s work and raise academic rigor. Publishing parties will again be conducted to celebrate student writing and exceptional pieces will be published in the student newsletter. Professional development in the teaching of writing will continue.

The use of the SFA Member Center will be initiated to facilitate the regrouping of students and monitor individual students progress. The Member Center is a digital repository of student data available to SFA schools.

In our continuing partnership with the Vanderbilt YMCA, they will now run Amber’s after school program. A more focused and intense after school academic program is planned. The Educational Coordinator of the after school program will be Amber’s Staff Developer, linking the day school

intimately with the after school. Actual lesson plans will be required of the after school teachers which should reflect the academic intervention conducted. Project-base planning will provide a variety of learning experiences and student focused activities.

Amber plans to continue to use SFA as its reading curriculum and the strategies that have proven effective. Reading will continue to be taught through ability groupings that are regrouped every eight weeks. Academic Intervention will continue to be provided through Title One Reading Specialist, the SETTS teacher, strategy groups, differentiated homework, simulation tests, item analysis and the Saturday Academy. Part-time tutors will again be used in the upper grades to assist with strategy groups and lower teacher student ratio. Sylvan Learning Center will be hired to conduct a six week test prep course with the third graders because it is their first experience taking the state exam.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

All students at Amber Charter School will become proficient in math and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of mathematical skills.

Background

The mathematics program at Amber continues to be the TERC Investigations series for grades K to 5, supplemented by the Saxon Math morning meeting portion. The Saxon Math morning meeting has the students review and repeat math facts daily in a fun and engaging manner.

A new per grade pacing calendar was created by the teachers that connected the math assessments to the new Amber standards based report card. These assessments were linked directly to the standard addressed. For example, if a unit test covered geometry and problem solving then this assessment would produce a grade for those math strands in the standard based report card. This is radically different from the former report card which only gave a general math grade, lumping all the content and process math strands together into one score/grade.

Trimester tests in math were developed and implemented this year to serve as a pulse taker of how the student body was progressing in math. These tests helped the instructional leadership identify earlier in the school year any gaps or problems per grade, class, and student. After the first trimester test, instructional leadership became aware of the need to provide professional development on the crafting of student friendly assessments. This training was provided by the Principal and Assistant Principal to every grade team with the assistance of the Math consultant. The trimester tests became for teachers another tool, along with the interim assessments, to verify the students in need of academic intervention.

Key professional development was conducted through the staff developers, and the consulting group from Lehman College Math Center. The consultant focused on helping teachers pace the curriculum to cover all performance indicators required, especially with the shift in testing dates this past year. In addition, the consultant helped teachers plan the work conducted during strategy groups in response to the item analysis conducted after every math simulation test. The consultant met with teachers and instructional leadership at least twice monthly.

For the second year, a Multiplication Marathon was conducted with students in grades 2-5. During this contest the student who can successfully recite the multiplication tables from 2 - 12 without error wins a prize. The students study hard to be the grade winner and it promotes memorizing important basic math facts.

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year through 2008-09, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State mathematics examination.

In 2009-10, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the New York State mathematics examination.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in 3 through 5 grade in May 2010. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. Through 200809 the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score of 650 or above.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year’s test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have been enrolled for less than one year.

**2009-10 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	59	0	0	1	60
4	44	0	0	2	46
5	35	0	0	0	35
6	*	*	*	*	*
All	138	0	0	3	141

Results

Amber students continued the upward trend begun last year. One hundred percent of the 3rd graders scored at or above the Scale Score of 650. The 4th graders, 95% scored at or above the Scale Score of 650, and 97% of the 5th graders scored at or above the Scale Score of 650. Therefore, 97% of the tested students in grades 3-5 scored at or above the Scale Score of 650.

**Charter School Performance on 2009-10 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above 650	Number Tested
3	All Students	100.00%	59
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	100.00%	59
4	All Students	95.45%	44
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	95.45%	44
5	All Students	97.14%	35
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97.14%	35
All	All Students	97.53%	138
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97.53%	138

Evaluation

Amber exceeded the goals set. Most notable was third grade with 100% scoring at or above the Scale Score of 650. This is a wonderful achievement. It is also gratifying to see that the 4th and 5th graders performed very well, in that 95% and 97% respectively scored at or above the Scale Score of 650.

Additional Evidence

Amber’s 3rd grade scored at 98% proficient last year and this year reached 100% at or above the Scale Score of 650, an increase of 2%. The fourth grade scored 95% proficient last year and this year they maintained the same level with 95% at or above the Scale Score of 650. The 5th grade scored 100% proficient last year and this year they dropped 2% with 98% at or above the Scale Score of 650. The school was able to maintain for two years in a row a 97% of tested students at or above the Scale Score of 650. Therefore, the jump in scores last year of over 30% was sustained.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 through 2008-09 and a Scale Score of 650 in 2009-10									
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	61.30%	31	93.10%	29	84.10%	44	98.04%	51	100.00%	59
4	57.70%	26	60.70%	28	59.30%	27	95.56%	45	95.45%	44
5	35.70%	28	44.80%	29	56.50%	23	100.00%	20	97.14%	35
6	7.70%	13	60.00%	25	59.10%	22			*	*
All	40.60%	98	64.65%	111	64.75%	116	97.86%	116	97.53%	138

Source: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/AmberFinalVisitReport-8Yr-9.12.08.pdf>
<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/Amber7thYrRpt.pdf>

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State mathematics exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.

Method

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards all students being proficient by the year 2013-14. As a result, the state sets an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that 100 percent of students will ultimately be proficient in the state’s learning standards in Mathematics. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Index (PI) value that equals or exceeds this year’s Mathematics AMO, which for 2009-10 is 135².

² With the change in Proficiency Scores, the State Education Department is currently reviewing the current Annual Measurable Objectives in English language arts and mathematics.

The PI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 200.

Results

Calculation of 2009-10 Mathematics Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3-5	1.13%	32.40%	46.97%	19.49%	138

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 32.40 + 46.97 + 19.49 = 98.86 \\
 &+ 46.97 + 19.49 = 66.46 \\
 \text{PI} &= 165.32
 \end{aligned}$$

Evaluation

Amber reached the Performance Index necessary to meet the Annual Measurable Objective.

Additional Evidence

Amber has reached the Performance Index to meet the Annual Measurable Objective every year except one in the last seven years.

Mathematics Performance Index (PI) and Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) by School Year

Year	Grades	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				PI	AMO
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2009-10	3-5	138	1.13%	32.40%	46.97%	19.49%	165	135
2008-09	3-5	116	0.00%	2.14%	75.11%	22.76%	197	119
2007-08	3-6	125	5.60%	31.00%	62.10%	2.60%	125	133
2006-07	3-6	119	4%	32%	54%	9%	163	122
2005-06	3-6	123	18%	37%	39%	5%	144	122
2004-05	3-5	59					164	142
2003-04	3-4	17	15%	44%	33%	7%	165	136

Source: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/AmberFinalVisitReport-8Yr-9.12.08.pdf>
<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/Amber7thYrRpt.pdf>

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

Method

Tested students who were enrolled in at least their second year are compared to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students and the results for the respective grades in the local school district, as well as between the total result of students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for the corresponding grades in the school district.

Results

Once again Amber students out-performed the students in CS District 5. At Amber 62% of 3rd graders were proficient while 38% third graders of CSD 5 were proficient. At Amber 80% of 4th graders were proficient while 38% fourth graders of CSD 5 were proficient. At Amber 57% of 5th graders scored proficient while 38% fifth graders of CSD 5 scored proficient.

**2009-10 State Mathematics Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	62.71%	59	38.70%	1005
4	79.55%	44	38.10%	1048
5	57.14%	35	38.50%	980
6	*	*	*	*
All	66.47%	138	38.43%	3033

Source: http://schools.nyc.gov/accountability/Reports/Data/TestResults/2009/ELA/ELA_2006-2009_AllStudents_byDistrict_FINAL.xls

Evaluation

Amber’s 3rd graders scored 24% higher than CSD 5 third graders. Amber’s 4th graders scored 30% higher than CSD 5 fourth graders, and Amber’s 5th graders scored 19% higher than CSD 5 fifth graders. Overall, Amber’s students scored 28% higher than the students from CSD 5.

Additional Evidence

Amber students have consistently out-performed the third graders in CSD 4 and 5. The fourth graders at Amber out-performed the 4th graders of CSD 5 every year except 2007-08. Amber’s 4th graders lagged behind the 4th graders of CSD 4 except for the last two years, where Amber has out-performed them. The same holds true for Amber’s 5th graders. They lagged behind not just CSD 4 but also CSD 5 fifth graders, until last year when the trend turned around, and Amber’s fifth graders out-performed both CSD 4 & 5 fifth graders. That trend continued this year with Amber’s fifth graders out-performing both CSD 4 & 5 fifth graders by 3 – 20%. Overall, Amber students scored higher than CSD 4 students by 13% and CSD 5 students by 28%.

**Mathematics Performance of Charter School and Local District
by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year and All District Students at Levels 3 and 4											
	2006-07			2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5	Amber	CSD4	CSD5
3	93.10%	77.90%	69.30%	84.10%	84.18%	76.13%	98.00%	92.4%	81.6%	62.71%	49.1%	38.7%
4	60.70%	64.50%	58.40%	59.30%	74.68%	66.94%	95.60%	92.4%	68.6%	79.55%	55.6%	38.1%
5	44.80%	64.80%	58.10%	56.50%	73.65%	61.05%	100.00%	83.1%	75.5%	57.14%	54.9%	38.5%
6	60.00%	49.30%	55.30%	59.10%	62.86%	65.62%	*	*	*	*	*	*
All	64.65%	64.13%	60.28%	64.75%	73.84%	67.44%	97.87%	89.30%	75.23%	66.47%	53.20%	38.43%

Source: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/YearlyTesting/TestResults/default.htm>

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.

Method

The Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school’s performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. Regression analysis is used to control for the percentage of students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State. The school’s actual performance is then compared to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar free lunch percentage. The difference between the school’s actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar free lunch statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3 is considered performing higher than expected to a small degree, which is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Results

Given the timing of the state’s release of poverty data, the 2009-10 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2008-09 results, the most recent ones available.

2008-09 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Free Lunch Eligible Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	0	51	98.0	89.1	8.9	0.99
4	0	45	95.6	81.1	14.5	1.14
5	0	20	100	81.6	18.4	1.45
All	74.9	116	97.4	84.7	12.7	1.12

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Higher than expected to a large degree.</i>

Evaluation

It is gratifying to see that Amber performed higher than expected to a large degree in 2008-09.

Additional Evidence

In the last two years of reported information Amber has met the effect size.

*Given the timing of the state’s release of poverty data, the 2009-10 analysis is not yet available.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2009-10	3-5	*	138	66.47	*	*
2008-09	3-5	74.9	116	97.4	84.7	1.12
2007-08	3-6	71.12	124	66.42	77.65	-0.75
2006-07	3-6	73.90	119	64.70	67.60	-0.12
2005-06	4	69.70	59	62.80	79.10	-1.23

Goal 2: Growth Measure

Each year through 2008-09, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s state mathematics exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year’s state mathematics exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

In 2009-10, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent of students at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2008-09 state exam and 75 percent of students at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2009-10 state exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 in 2008-09, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the percentage in 2009-10

Method

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and in 2009-10 the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above a Scale Score of 650. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2009-10 and also have a state exam score in 2008-09. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade should be included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the aggregate of all cohorts is examined to determine the growth of all students who took a state exam in both years.

Results

The 2008-09 third grade students are now counted in the 4th grade cohort for 2009-10, 100% scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 in 2008-09 and 93% in 2009-10. The 2008-09 fourth graders are now counted in the 5th grade cohort for 2009-10, 97% scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 in 2008-09, and 97% in 2009-10.

$$\text{Target} = 75\% + \left(\frac{(\% \text{ at or above } 650 \text{ in } 2008 - 09) - 75\%}{2} \right)$$

Cohort Growth on State Mathematics Exam from 2008-09 to 2009-10

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent at or above 650			Target Achieved
		2008-09	Target	2009-10	
4	46	100.00%	87.50%	93.48%	YES
5	35	97.14%	86.07%	97.14%	YES
6	*	*	*	*	*
All	81	98.57%	86.79%	95.31%	YES

Evaluation

Every cohort met its target growth. The 4th graders drop 3% but a large majority still scored at or above the Scale Score of 650. The 5th graders were able to maintain the large gain from the previous year.

Additional Evidence

In the last two years every cohort has met its growth target.

**Cohort Performance on Mathematics Exam
Since the Advent of the Grades 3-8 Testing Program by School Year**

School Year	Cohort Grades	Number of Cohorts Meeting Target	Number of Cohorts
2009-10	3-5	2	2
2008-09	3-5	2	2
2007-08	3-6	0	3
2006-07	3-6	1	3

Goal 1: Optional Measure

Each year, grade level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between their average NCE in the previous Spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed math test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e. grade level) in the current Spring. If a grade level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

Method

As per Charter Schools Institute: “If the plan contains a gap-closing outcome as a value-added measure, the results should be expressed as the extent to which cohorts are narrowing the difference between their scores in the previous spring and grade-level performance in the current spring. The school is expected to enable the cohorts to reduce the difference between the first year’s average NCE score and average NCE of 50, or above grade second year. (As per CSI guidelines, if a cohort scores above an NCE of 50 or above grade level in the first year, then it need only show *some* gain in the second year.)” The formula used to determine threshold is as follows:

$$\text{Target} = 50 + \left(\frac{(\text{2008} - \text{09 Average NCE}) - 50}{2} \right)$$

Results

**Cohort Growth on Terra Nova Math
NCE from Spring 2009 to Spring 2010**

Grade	Cohort Size	Average NCE			Target Achieved
		2008-09	Target	2009-10	
K	96	*	50.0	64.9	YES
1	81	56.5	53.3	57.9	YES
2	74	57.0	53.5	66.3	YES
3	60	56.9	53.5	48.9	NO
4	46	54.2	52.1	60.0	YES
5	*	*	*	*	*
All	357	56.2	52.5	59.6	YES

Evaluation

Every grade from K-5 scored at or above the average NCE of 50, except third grade. Only grade 3 did not meet its growth target nor score at the average 50 NCE. In third grade two out of the three classes scored below the 50 NCE. In the other grades the scores confirm the upward trend of students' scores in Math at Amber.

Additional Evidence

**Terra Nova Math
Grade Equivalent (GE)**

Grade	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr	GE	Growth Prev. Yr
0 - K	*	*	1.4	*	1.3	-0.1	1	-0.3	1.4	0.4
K - 1	*	*	1.6	*	1.7	0.1	2.1	0.4	2.3	0.2
1-2	1.3	*	3.1	1.8	3.2	0.1	3	-0.2	3.9	0.9
2-3	3.2	1	4.9	1.7	3.5	-1.4	4.1	0.6	3.9	-0.2
3-4	3.9	1.3	6.8	2.9	4	-2.8	6.4	2.4	6.1	-0.3
4-5	4.6	1	5.7	1.1	5.4	-0.3	6.5	1.1	*	*
5-6	5.3	0.5	7	1.7	6.3	-0.7	*	*	*	*
Graduates	5.7	-0.3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Amber met all of its accountability measures in 2009-10. It achieved its absolute measure of 75 percent of all tested students performed at or above a Scale Score of 650 with 98%. Amber’s performance index of 165 met the Annual Measurable Objective of 135. In the comparative measure Amber’s students surpassed both CSD 4 and CSD 5 students. In both growth measures Amber met its goals. Each cohort met the target and often surpassed it. The comparative measure for effect size is not known yet. Overall, Amber sustained the gains made last year.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	TBD
Growth	Each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2008-09 state exam and 75 percent at or above a Scale Score of 650 on the 2009-10 state exam.	Achieved
Growth	Each year, grade level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally-normed math test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e. grade-level) in the current spring. If a grade level cohort exceeds an NCE of 50 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.	Achieved

Action Plan

The fact that the percent of students who scored at or above the Scale Score of 650 last year and this year remains the same and even increased, indicates that the large jump in scores for Amber students last year, an increase of over 30%, was not an anomaly, but the result of all the changes and initiatives implemented last year and strengthen this year. It is evidence that Amber has instituted an effective methodology in the teaching of mathematics.

The new initiatives implemented this past year in creating and implementing trimester test, linking all math assessments to the new report cards, and using Pearson’s Web Gradebook to record and monitor student progress will be strengthened. The math consultant from Lehman College will continue to provide professional development to the teachers in their execution of lessons and differentiation of instruction especially during strategy groups. A special focus will be given to the teachers in third grade to support their teaching of math.

Amber plans to continue to use TERC Investigations supplemented by Saxon Math morning meeting portion as its math curriculum. Academic Intervention will continue to be provided through the SETTS teacher, strategy groups, differentiated homework, simulation tests and item analysis, and Saturday Academy. Part-time tutors will again be used in the upper grades to assist with strategy groups and lower teacher student ratio.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

All students at Amber Charter will become proficient in science and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of scientific skills.

Background

Amber continued to use Scott Foresman for grades 4 and 5, and K12 Solutions for grades K to 3. This past year, vertical alignment conversations with each grade team were conducted. During these meetings, the teachers of each grade met with the teachers of the grade above and below. At the meetings teachers examined the science curriculum for each grade, how it aligned to the NYS Standards and how it was implemented. Teachers shared their views on the preparedness of the students they received from the previous grade and what areas did they view needed strengthening. An analysis of the whole science curriculum from grades K to 5 was conducted with the teachers to identify gaps. As a result, modifications were made to the science scope and sequence.

In the work regarding the creation of a new report card, pacing calendars were created for Science by every grade. In these pacing calendars the assessments to be conducted were identified and linked to the specific Science standard strand in the report card. Thus aligning instruction, assessment and reporting coherently.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State science examination.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th grade in spring 2010. Each student's raw score has been converted to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4.

Results

Amber's 4th grade students did very well on the NYS Science exam. Ninety-five percent of them scored at a proficient level. Again, a higher percent scored at the highest level of proficiency, level four, 67%, than at level three, 28%.

**Charter School Performance on 2009-10 State Science Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent at Each Performance Level					Number Tested
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3/4	
4	All Students	0.00%	4.35%	28.26%	67.39%	95.65%	46
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.00%	4.35%	28.26%	67.39%	95.65%	46
All	All Students	0.00%	4.35%	28.26%	67.39%	95.65%	46
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.00%	4.35%	28.26%	67.39%	95.65%	46

Evaluation

These test scores for the NYS Science exam are the best in Amber’s history. The majority of the students 67% scored at the highest level 4, and 95% of the 4th graders scored proficient.

Additional Evidence

It is gratifying to see that the large increase in scores last year was not only maintained but improved. Last year, 89% of the 4th graders were proficient. This year that percentage grew to 95%, an increase of 6%.

**Science Performance
by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year at Levels 3 and 4											
	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	75.90%	54	70.80%	24	85.20%	27	70.40%	27	88.89%	44	95.65%	46
8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
All	75.90%	54	70.80%	24	85.20%	27	70.40%	27	88.89%	44	95.65%	46

Goal 3: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State science exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

Method

Tested students who were enrolled in at least their second year are compared to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students and the results for the respective grades in the local school district.

Results

*The results of the NYS Science exam in the local public school district are not available to us therefore it is impossible to compare Amber to the district.

**2009-10 State Science Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	95.65%	46	*	*
All	95.65%	46	*	*

Evaluation

The results of the NYS Science exam in the local public school district are not available to us therefore it is difficult to compare Amber to the district.

Summary

The percentage of students attaining level proficiency was 95 percent, above the required 75% benchmark, thus we achieved our goal for the 2009-10 school year. The absence of reported scores for the local public school district prevent us from comparing the school to the local district.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	TBD

Action Plan

The fact that the students' increase in scores last year were sustained, and even improved this year is evidence that Amber's curriculum and instruction is effective in Science. The continued review and revision of this curriculum can only strengthen its effectiveness.

To build on the alignment and analysis work conducted this past year with the Science scope and sequence, supplemental science materials will be used to target the gaps identified. FOSS Science kits, trade books, and other resources will be used by the teachers to teach the units of study not covered by the Scott Foresman and K12 curricula. The in-house staff developer will continue to provide guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum, and supplemental resources.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Goal 4: Social Studies

All students at Amber Charter School will become proficient in social studies and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of social studies skills.

Background

This past year the integrating of social studies content areas with the writing curriculum was conducted. This initiative was titled, Humanities, because of the integration of literacy and social science. The teachers identified content areas where students developed publishable writing pieces. The writing genres taught were: personal narrative, fiction/poetry, persuasive, and research. The teachers taught the social studies content area, and then created a writing project for the students where they would demonstrate the knowledge they had gained. For example, in 3rd grade, the students studied the idea of scarcity in different African countries for social studies. The students then wrote persuasive letters to Amber's board members asking them to contribute one dollar to a charity that addressed an area of scarcity in Africa. In 2nd grade, the students studied the idea of needs and wants, and then wrote poems about things they wanted and things they actually needed. In 1st grade students learned about their community, and then researched to create a brochure that would highlight the benefits of living in East Harlem. Through this work teachers examined the social studies curriculum and identified areas in need of revision or additional resources.

One of the areas identified was the need for a resource to support the teaching of writing. Therefore, a handbook, *Write Source*, was purchased for students to use in the classroom as a resource. Training was provided by the publisher to all the teachers in the use of the different components of this resource.

Amber Charter School's social studies curriculum is aligned with the New York State standards. The social studies curriculum integrates the language arts and provides students the opportunity to learn about the world by simulating and investigating real-world problems and situations. In the social studies units, students investigate important themes and topics, connecting what they learn about the past with their own lives, and present their findings in various forms including writing.

Goal 4: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State social studies examination.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program social studies assessment to students in 5th grade in November 2009. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4.

Results

Amber’s 5th grade students did well on the NYS Social Studies exam, 97% proficient.

**Charter School Performance on 2009-10 State Social Studies Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent at Each Performance Level					Number Tested
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3/4	
5	All Students	0.00%	2.86%	62.86%	34.29%	97.14%	35
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.00%	2.86%	62.86%	34.29%	97.14%	35
All	All Students	0.00%	2.86%	62.86%	34.29%	97.14%	35
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.00%	2.86%	62.86%	34.29%	97.14%	35

Evaluation

It is gratifying to see, yet again, an increase in the performance of Amber students on the NYS Social Studies exam. Only one student did not score proficient this year.

Additional Evidence

The huge gain last year of 20% was sustained and increased this year, with 97% of the students reaching proficiency, an increase of 7%.

**Social Studies Performance
by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year at Levels 3 and 4											
	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
5	66.70%	12	80.50%	41	71.00%	31	70.40%	24	90.00%	20	97.14%	35
8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
All	66.70%	12	80.50%	41	71.00%	31	70.40%	24	90.00%	20	97.14%	35

Goal 4: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State social studies exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

Method

Tested students who were enrolled in at least their second year are compared to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students and the results for the respective grades in the local school district.

Results

*The results of the state social studies exam in the local public school district are not available to us therefore it is impossible to compare Amber to the district.

**2009-10 State Social Studies Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
5	97.14%	35	*	*
All	97.14%	35	*	*

Evaluation

No evaluation is possible given the lack of district scores for this measure.

Summary

Amber achieved the absolute measure for social studies with 97% of students reaching proficiency. Due to a lack of reported results for the local community school district, we cannot determine whether we achieved or did not achieve the comparative measure.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	TBD

Action Plan

The fact that the students’ increase in scores last year were sustained, and even improved this year is evidence that Amber’s curriculum and instruction is effective in Social Studies. The continued review and revision of this curriculum can only strengthen its effectiveness.

NCLB

Goal 5: NCLB

Goal 5: Absolute Measure
 Under the state’s NCLB accountability system, the school’s Accountability Status will be “Good Standing” each year.

Method

Since *all* students are expected to meet the state's learning standards, the federal No Child Left Behind legislation 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. New York, like all states, established a system for making these determinations for its public schools. Each year the state issues School Report Cards which indicate each school’s status under the state’s NCLB accountability system. For a school’s status to be “Good Standing” it must not have failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years.

Results

Amber Charter School is a "School In Good Standing" as per the New York State Department of Education for the school year 2009-10. Amber has held this designation since its inception in 2000. This is in compliance with NYSED/Title 1 requirements to make public our status.

Evaluation

Amber has held this designation since its inception in 2000. We make certain to publicize this message on our school’s web site and written communication is in compliance with the New York State Education Department/Title 1 requirements to make public our status.

Additional Evidence

Amber Charter School has been designated a **school in good standing** since its inception in the year 2000.

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2005-06	Good Standing
2006-07	Good Standing
2007-08	Good Standing
2008-09	Good Standing
2009-10	Good Standing

APPENDIX B: OPTIONAL GOALS

The following sections are for optional goals; data tables are provided for commonly used optional measures.

Goal 6: Parent Satisfaction
 Amber will maintain strong enrollment and strong parent interest.

Goal 6: Absolute Measure
 Each year two-thirds of parents will demonstrate satisfaction with the school’s program based on a parent satisfaction survey.

Method

In the spring of 2010 a parent survey was distributed to all parents at Amber. This survey was the same survey used last year.

Results

More than two-thirds of the parents responded to the in-house survey with a total of 77 percent.

2009-10 Parent Satisfaction Survey Responses

Number of Responses	Number of Families	Response Rate
307	394	78%

2009-10 Parent Satisfaction on Key Survey Results

Item		% Great & Good
Q1	Communication with my child's teacher is:	98
Q2	Communication with administration is:	86
Q3	My child's academic progress has been	95
Q4	My child's homework is	96
Q5	How the school keeps parents informed is	98
Q6	How my child feels about the school is	95
Q7	The After-school program is	93
Q8	Saturday Academy is	100
Q9	The school's website is	93
Q10	Extended days are	97
Q11	My child's safety at Amber	100
Q12	The school's special activities (Book Fair, Olympic Day, Assemblies, Spelling Bee, Trips, Wacky Week, Student Council, Science Fair, Basketball, Concerts, etc.) are:	99
Q13a	Reading Curriculum is	97
Q13b	Math Curriculum is	99
Q13c	Social Studies Curriculum is	98

Q13d	Science Curriculum is	99
Q13e	Art Curriculum is	99
Q13f	Music Curriculum is	97
Q13g	Technology Curriculum is	97
Q13h	Physical Education Curriculum is	97
Q13i	The Spanish Curriculum is	97

Evaluation

Every area is above the 90% except for communication with administration. In further examination of the parent survey results regarding the question of parents’ communication with administration it became evident that the third grade parents (7%) were the most unsatisfied, with 10% marking a not applicable response. A concerted effort will be made to reach out to these parents when they return as parents of 4th graders.

Additional Evidence

In 2007-2008, the NYC DOE Learning Survey was administered to Amber parents for the first time. It was again administered in 2008-09 and 2009-10. Below are the results of these parent surveys.

Parent Satisfaction on Key Survey Results of DOE Learning Survey

Item	Percent of Respondents Satisfied 2007-08	Percent of Respondents Satisfied 2008-09	Percent of Respondents Satisfied 2009-10
Academic Expectations	92	97	99
Communication	92	95	98
Engagement	95	98	98
Safety and Respect	97	98	98

The above Table indicates continued satisfaction by parents with Amber in the 2009-10 survey results. Academic expectations and communication increased in satisfaction between 2008-09 and 2009-10. Student engagement and safety and respect maintained the high rating of 98% satisfaction. In 2007-08, 66 percent of the parents responded to the DOE learning survey. This rate of response increased to 79 percent in 2008-09. Unfortunately, in 2009-10 the rate of parent response dropped to 54%. We believe this drop may have been affected by the focus on helping parents understand the new report card format at Amber, and not enough focus during parent teacher conferences on helping parents understand the importance of completing the survey. In the coming year this will be improved. Although, Amber’s parent response rate this year was lower than we are accustomed it was still higher than the city average of 49 percent.

Goal 6: Absolute Measure

Each year, 90 percent of all students enrolled during the course of the year return the following September.

Method

All Amber parents receive the “Intent to Return Form” in January, that they complete informing us of their plans for the coming school year as it relates to their child. These forms are collected and tabulated to ascertain the projected number of students per class and per grade. Based on these numbers the data for the chart below was determined.

Results

2009-10 Student Retention Rate

2008-09 Enrollment	Number of Students Who Graduated in 2008-09	Number of Students Who Returned in 2009-10	Retention Rate 2009-10 Re-enrollment ÷ (2008-09 Enrollment – Graduates)
351	20	284	86%

Evaluation

Amber did not meet a 90% retention rate of students this year. Many fifth graders did not return to Amber because they had been accepted to charter middle schools that begin in 5th grade. There were also some students in kindergarten and first grade that did not return because they were hold-overs. Parents of these students opted to remove them from Amber rather than have the child repeat the grade.

Additional Evidence

Year	Retention Rate
2005-06	86%
2006-07	80%
2007-08	91%
2008-09	86%
2009-10	86%

Goal 6: Absolute Measure

Each year the school will have a daily attendance rate of at least 95 percent.

Method

In 2008-09, the PowerSchool data management software was implemented. This software helps Amber keep accurate records of student attendance and other student data.

Results

2009-10 Attendance

Grade	Average Daily Attendance Rate
1	91%
2	94%
3	93%
4	94%
5	93%
Overall	93%

Evaluation

Amber came close to meeting its goal of 95% by having 93% attendance rate. The lowest rate was in the first grade with a 91% attendance rate.

Additional Evidence

Year	Average Daily Attendance Rate
2005-06	90%
2006-07	89%
2007-08	92%
2008-09	94%
2009-10	93%

Legal Compliance

Goal: Amber will be in legal compliance

Measure:

Each year, the school will generally and substantially comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, the New York Charter Schools Act, the New York Freedom of Information Law, the New York Open Meetings Law, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and the provisions of its by-laws and charter.

Amber has complied with all federal, state, and municipal rules and regulations. Amber has posted meeting dates, time, and location on its web site, in mailings to parents, and staff have participated in appropriate workshops (e.g., Individuals with Disability Education Act training) to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. We received one request under the New York Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).

Measure:

Each year, the school will have in place and maintain effective systems, policies, procedures and other controls for ensuring that legal and charter requirements are met.

Amber has established, and refined effective systems, policies, and procedures ensuring that all legal and charter requirements are met. Amber board members meet bi-months or monthly as needed, document all board meetings, and take an active role in creating and enforcing policies.

Measure:

Each year the school will maintain a relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, incidents and makes recommendations as needed, and in proportion to the legal expertise on the board of trustees, if any.

Amber has maintained a relationship with independent legal counsel Michael Stolper, Esq. Mr. Stolper and his firm have contributed hundreds of hours *pro bono* in reviewing relevant policies, documents, incidents and have designed and made recommendations as needed. In addition to serving as counsel to Amber, Mr. Stolper also serves as the board vice chairman. In the rare absence of Amber's board chair, Mr. Stolper takes a leadership role at board meetings, works closely with the school's leadership team, and negotiates contracts on the school's behalf.

Fiscal Soundness

Goal: Amber will make sound decisions, effective, and responsible use of financial resources to maximize student learning.

Measure—Budgeting: Each year, the school will operate on a balanced budget meaning actual revenues will equal or exceed actual expenses.

On a monthly basis, Amber's fiscal office produces a balance sheet for the current fiscal year. The balance sheet is reviewed by the board treasurer and additional members of the board who serve on the finance committee. The balance sheet is filed quarterly with the Charter Schools Institute as well as additional agencies that oversee Amber's fiscal matters, including La Raza Development Fund, which holds the mortgage for Amber's building. In the year ending June 30, 2010 representing the 2009-10 fiscal and school year, Amber demonstrates a balance between resources and expenses. Total revenue for 2009-2010 was \$5,891,860.92, with total expenses at \$5,117,095.31. The resulting \$774,765.61 was added to our net assets. Net assets include revenue that will support operations in the subsequent fiscal year.

Amber continues to abide by GAAP, engages an external auditing firm to review its books, materials, resources, and procedures. An audit was conducted, completed and approved in 2009. This audit was delivered to the Charter School Institute.

Measure—Financial Condition:

Beginning with the school's first operating year, at the end of each fiscal year, unrestricted net assets will be equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

Amber's unrestricted net assets were equal to two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

Measure—Internal Controls and Compliance

Each year the school will take corrective action, if needed, in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, SED, or the Institute.

No corrective actions were needed to address internal controls or compliance deficiency.