

Accountability Plan Progress Reports for the 2005-06 School Year

Reader's Guide

SUNY Authorized Charter Schools and Accountability

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 State University 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 State University Board of Trustees authorizes is required to enter into an accountability agreement, known as the 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 their annual reporting requirements **all SUNY authorized charter schools must submit an Accountability Plan Progress Report which, from their vantage point, addresses each of the goals and outcome measures contained in their Accountability Plans**. 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 exam. Each year the state administers ELA and math tests to grades 3-8, science tests to grades 4 and 8, and social studies tests to grades 5 and 8.

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.

Bronx Better Learning Charter School

ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2005-06

Section IV: Accountability Progress Report/Progress Toward Goals

Goal 1: Students will become proficient readers and writers of the English language.

A. Findings

1. Outcome Measure

Each year, 75 percent of 3rd through 5th graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination.

a. Method

On January 10 and 11, 2006, the New York State English/Language Arts Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All but one child were tested (53 of 54), as that child was absent on the testing dates and did not return, due to enrollment in an out-of-state school.

b. Results

Of the 53 students tested, 45 were enrolled in at least their second year. As noted on the second chart below, of those 45 students, 29 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination, which represents an attained percent of 64.4%.

3rd Grade ELA Results: All Students Tested (N=53)					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Levels 3 + 4	
N	N	N	N	N	%
4	15	32	2	34	64.2

3rd Grade ELA Results: Only Students Enrolled in at Least Their Second Year (N=45)					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Levels 3 + 4	
N	N	N	N	N	%
3	13	27	2	29	64.4

c. Evaluation

Since the attained percent for students enrolled in at least their second year is below 75%, we did not meet our objective for this outcome measure.

2. Outcome Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index on the State ELA exam will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.

a. Method

On January 10 and 11, 2006, the New York State English/Language Arts Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All but one child were tested (53 of 54), as that child was absent on the testing dates and did not return, due to enrollment in an out-of-state school.

b. Results

Of the 53 students tested, 4 performed at Level 1, 15 performed at Level 2, 32 performed at Level 3 and 2 performed at Level 4. As noted on the chart below, the attained aggregate Performance Index on the test was 156.7.

Grade 3 ELA Results for Calculating PI						
Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Totals
N	%	N	%	N	%	%
15	28.3	32	60.4	2	3.8	92.5
			60.4		3.8	64.2
Attained Aggregate Performance Index Value:						156.7

c. Evaluation

New York State’s NCLB 2005-06 target Annual Measurable Objective for 3rd grade ELA is 122. Since our attained aggregate performance index value was 156.7, we have met our objective for this outcome measure.

3. Outcome Measure

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

a. Method

On January 10 and 11, 2006, the New York State English/Language Arts Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All but one child were tested (53 of 54), as that child was absent on the testing dates and did not return, due to enrollment in an out-of-state school.

b. Results

Of the 53 students tested, 45 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 45 students, 29 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination, which represents an attained percent of 64%. 56.8% of the third grade students who were tested in New York City District 11 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination.

c. Evaluation

Since the percent of students at or above Level 3 who were enrolled in our school in at least their second year was higher than the percent of student at or above Level 3 in District 11, we met our objective for this outcome measure.

4. Outcome Measure (Note: The Institute will calculate the results)

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

5. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 5 becomes effective in 2006-07)

Each year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

6. Outcome 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 TerraNova, a nationally-normed reading test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e., grade-level) in the current spring. Starting in Grade 3, 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.

a. Method

During the week of June 12th, the TerraNova, Level 13, standardized assessment in Reading was administered to all of our third graders, in strict accord with test administration procedures developed by the publisher.

b. Results

The attained mean normal curve equivalent (MNCE) was 56. The MNCE reported is for the cohort that took the TerraNova standardized assessment in Reading both in June 2005 and in June 2006, ensuring the validity of this value-added measure of progress.

c. Evaluation

Since the MNCE for the cohort was above 50 in June 2005 (52), the school has met the goal of the outcome measure.

d. Further Evidence

We are gratified that we have attained a mean NCE increase of 4 for our third graders, reflecting meaningful progress.

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Reading: Grade 3
Matched Cohort Data**

June '05	June '06	Targeted Level	Targeted Gain	Actual Gain
52	56	53	1	4

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=43). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

While Outcome Measure #6, above, targets third grade, we have TerraNova achievement test results for grades 1 and 2, as well. The first grade scores reflect modest, but positive growth between September and June for the matched cohort. The second grade June 2006 matched cohort scores reflect a decrease from the previous June, which was not unexpected, due to the unusually high jump in that cohort's Fall vs. Spring reading test scores during the 2004-2005 school year (MNCE of 30 vs. 56, respectively).

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Reading: Grade 1
Matched Cohort Data**

Sept '05	June '06
34	42

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=50). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Reading: Grade 2
Matched Cohort Data**

June '05	June '06
56	50

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=48). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

B. Summary

We have information sufficient to evaluate our achievement for four of the six ELA outcome measures in our Accountability Plan. We have reached the targets set for three of those four objectives. The evidence we have thus far suggests that our instructional program is beginning to produce student achievement results that are consistent with our long term goal in literacy, which is that our students become proficient readers and writers of the English language.

We have taken note of two additional facts: (1) the growth in our first grade Fall vs. Spring matched cohort reading test scores is not dramatic, as it had been previously; (2) we have for a second year experienced a decrease in our second grade, June reading test scores, compared to matched cohort, June first grade scores.

Our students' academic progress in English Language Arts, as reflected in our third grade TerraNova reading test scores, in our exceeding the state's ELA Annual Measurable Objective and in the positive difference between our 3rd grade state ELA test scores and those of New York City's District 11, provides important evidence that we are making meaningful and consistent progress. At the same time, we fully realize that the daily instruction provided by our classroom teachers varies in its effectiveness, in direct relation to the extent to which our teachers have progressed in developing expertise in our pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning. That variation was a notable finding in our school's 3rd Year Monitoring Report, conducted by SchoolWorks, LLC, in consultation with the Charter Schools Institute. Their finding conforms to what we have

observed through our own ongoing, extensive process of formal and informal classroom visits. Given our conviction that student achievement is tied directly to the quality of daily instruction by the classroom teacher, we are taking further steps to bolster our teachers' pedagogical skills.

C. Action Plan

The planned actions to bring about further improvement in the quality of the instruction we provide involve primarily the enhancement of our already very substantial professional development efforts. In that regard, there are five additional steps we are taking during the 2006-07 school year:

- We are hiring three “co-teachers,” who will be assigned to work alongside three of our more veteran teachers. They are being hired “on scale,” under the same job description as all of our other classroom teachers. They are not experienced, but show great promise (each is a Teach for America corps member). While they will be responsible directly for the ELA and mathematics achievement of a subgroup of students in the class to which they are assigned, they will have the opportunity to develop pedagogical skills under the tutelage of a teacher more advanced in the implementation of our instructional approach (the subordination of teaching to learning). Their presence will at the same time permit more frequent participation of all of our classroom teachers in routine “lesson studies.” Those studies involve teachers on a grade level in joint pre-observation, observation and post-observation classroom lesson activities, usually with the assistance of an outside consultant or an in-house professional development staff member.
- We have created a new part-time professional development specialist position to add to the two full-time persons already on staff to provide such support. We are seeking to fill the position with a professional, possibly a contracted consultant, who has demonstrated expertise in classroom management techniques, ideally those connected with the “Responsive Classroom” approach, for which our faculty has already undergone initial training.
- We have created a new full-time position for a Basic Skills Teacher. Besides allowing for additional direct, remedial assistance to students whose standardized or state test scores reflect sub-par academic achievement, filling this new position will benefit our professional development program in two ways: (1) a substantial amount of the instruction the person will provide will be “push-in,” thereby affording the classroom teacher an opportunity to witness and participate jointly in remedial efforts; (2) the two persons who previously had been providing remedial help to targeted students, our two full-time professional development support staff members, Dr. Ballard and Dr. Hajar, will be freed up for more concentrated

inservice activities with the classroom teachers, including additional lesson studies and more time in classrooms for observations, demonstration lessons and team teaching.

- We are increasing prep time for the teachers. In that way, we can avoid further eroding the time for our mid-day seminars, which occurs when teachers need time to address such routine issues as contacting parents, preparing instructional material or just getting organized for afternoon classes. The increase will also permit additional joint planning within grades.
- Partly to provide direct service to students and partly to support increased professional development to teachers, we have budgeted for a part-time psychologist/counselor and a part-time instructional technology specialist, both of whom will be scheduled to devote time with our teachers, in and out of the classroom, on inservice matters relevant to their areas of expertise.

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate mastery of grade level mathematical concepts.

A. Findings

1. Outcome Measure

Each year, 75 percent of 3rd through 5th graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Mathematics examination.

a. Method

On March 7 and 8, 2006, the New York State Mathematics Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All 54 students on register were tested.

b. Results

Of the 54 students tested, 45 were enrolled in at least their second year. As noted on the second chart below, of those 45 students, 36 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination, which represents an attained percent of 80.0%.

3rd Grade Mathematics Results: All Students Tested					
(N=54)					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Levels 3 + 4	
N	N	N	N	N	%
1	9	37	7	54	81.5

3rd Grade Mathematics Results: Only Students Enrolled in at Least Their 2nd Year					
(N=45)					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Levels 3 + 4	
N	N	N	N	N	%
1	8	29	7	36	80.0

c. Evaluation

Since the attained percent for students enrolled in at least their second year is above 75%, we have met our objective for this outcome measure.

2. Outcome Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index on the State Mathematics exam will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.

a. Method

On March 7 and 8, 2006, the New York State Mathematics Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All 54 students who were on register were tested.

b. Results

Of the 54 students tested, 1 performed at Level 1, 9 performed at Level 2, 37 performed at Level 3 and 7 performed at Level 4. As noted on the chart below, the attained aggregate Performance Index on the test was 179.6.

Grade 3 Mathematics Results for Calculating PI						
Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Totals
N	%	N	%	N	%	%
9	16.6	37	68.5	7	13	98.1
		37	68.5	7	13	81.5
Attained Aggregate Performance Index Value:						179.6

c. Evaluation

New York State's NCLB 2005-06 target Annual Measurable Objective for 3rd grade Mathematics is 86. Since our attained aggregate performance index value was 179.6, we have met our objective for this outcome measure.

3. Outcome Measure

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

a. Method

On March 7 and 8, 2006, the New York State Mathematics Assessment was administered to our third graders in strict accord with all test administration procedures. All 54 students who were on register were tested.

b. Results

Of the 54 students tested, 45 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 45, 36 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination, which represents an attained percent of 80.0%. 76.5% of the third grade students who were tested in New York City District 11 performed at or above Level 3 on the examination.

c. Evaluation

Since the percent of students at or above Level 3 who were enrolled in our school in at least their second year was higher than the percent of students at or above Level 3 in District 11, we met our objective for this outcome measure.

4. Outcome Measure (Note: The Institute will calculate the results)

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

5. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 5 becomes effective in 2006-07)

Each year, grade-level cohorts of students 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, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

6. Outcome 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 TerraNova, a nationally-normed mathematics test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e., grade-level) in the current spring. Starting in Grade 3, 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.

a. Method

During the week of June 12th, the TerraNova, Level 13, standardized assessment in mathematics was administered to all of our third graders, in strict accord with test administration procedures developed by the publisher.

b. Results

The attained mean normal curve equivalent (MNCE) was 57. The MNCE reported is for the cohort that took the TerraNova standardized assessment in mathematics both in June 2005 and in June 2006, ensuring the validity of this value-added measure of progress.

c. Evaluation

Since the MNCE for the cohort was below 50 in June 2005 (49), the school has met the goal of the outcome measure.

d. Further Evidence

We are gratified that we have attained a mean NCE increase of 8 for our third graders, reflecting meaningful progress.

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Mathematics: Grade 3
Matched Cohort Data**

June '05	June '06	Targeted Level	Targeted Gain	Actual Gain
49	57	50	1	8

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=43). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

While Outcome Measure #6, above, targets third grade, we have TerraNova achievement test results for grades 1 and 2, as well. As with the reading scores, the first grade mathematics scores reflect modest, but positive growth between September and June for the matched cohort. Again, similar to the results in reading, the second grade June 2006 matched cohort mathematics scores reflect a decrease from the previous June, which again was not unexpected, due to the unusually high jump in that cohort's Fall vs. Spring mathematics test scores during the 2004-2005 school year (MNCE of 24 vs. 50, respectively).

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Mathematics: Grade 1
Matched Cohort Data**

Sept '05	June '06
30	34

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=50). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

**TerraNova Achievement Test Scores in Mathematics: Grade 2
Matched Cohort Data**

June '05	June '06
50	46

Reported scores are rounded Mean Normal Curve Equivalents obtained on the TerraNova Standardized Test. The MNCE's are based only on those students who participated in the pre- and post-test sessions (N=48). All students who were on register on the specified dates were tested; none were exempted.

B. Summary

On the basis of our successfully attaining the target in Outcome Measures #1, #2, #3 and #6, we find our instructional program to be producing student achievement results that are consistent with our long term goal in mathematics, which is that our students demonstrate mastery of grade level

mathematical concepts. (This conclusion must be considered tentative, as we do not yet have sufficient information to assess our progress in the remaining two outcome measures.)

At the same time, we notice, as we did regarding our first and second grade Terra Nova reading scores: (1) the growth in our first grade Fall vs. Spring matched cohort mathematics test scores is not dramatic, as it had been previously; (2) we have for a second year experienced a decrease in our second grade, June mathematics test scores, compared to matched cohort, June first grade scores.

Taking into account all of the currently available standardized and New York State testing information, we believe that we are making meaningful and consistent progress in mathematics, especially in light of the fact that the passing rate for all 54 of our students tested was 81.5%, which exceeded the statewide 3rd grade percentage of 80.5%.

We nevertheless reiterate the conclusion expressed earlier, regarding our reading goal: we fully realize that the daily instruction provided by our classroom teachers varies in its effectiveness, in direct relation to the extent to which our teachers have progressed in developing expertise in our pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning, and we are therefore taking further steps to bolster our teachers' pedagogical skills in mathematics.

C. Action Plan

Our plan in mathematics matches that presented earlier for reading: give even more direct support to the teachers, new and returning. The same five-step plan applies.

Goal 3: Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

A. Findings

1. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 1 becomes effective in 2006-07)

Each year, 75 percent of fourth graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.

2. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 2 becomes effective in 2006-07)

Each year, the percent of 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 the local school district

Goal 4: Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of social studies concepts.

A. Findings

1. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 1 becomes effective in 2007-08)

Each year, 75 percent of fifth graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Social Studies examination.

2. Outcome Measure (Note: Measure 2 becomes effective in 2007-08)

Each year, the percent of 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 the local school district

Goal 5: Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.

The school's 2005-06 Accountability Status was:

Charter School In Good Standing