



BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL FOR BETTER LEARNING

2008-09 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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Mr. Jason Sarsfield prepared this 2008-09 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees:

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York approved the application for the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning (Bronx Better Learning) on February 23, 2003; it was subsequently approved by the Board of Regents on March 25, 2003. Bronx Better Learning opened in the fall of 2003 with an enrollment of 50 students in Grade 1, added one grade each year thereafter, and enrolled 285 students in Grades 1 – 5 in the fall of 2007, the final year of its original charter term. On January 15, 2008 the State University Trustees granted Bronx Better Learning a full-term charter renewal for a period of 5 years, authorizing the school to provide instruction in Grades K – 5 through the 2012-13 school year. Bronx Better Learning added a Kindergarten program in the fall of 2008 and enrolled 345 students in grades K – 5.

Bronx Better Learning was originally located at a facility leased from the Bronx Bethany Church of the Nazarene at 971 East 227th Street in the Bronx. Following the first year of operation, a shared space agreement was reached with the New York City Department of Education in which Bronx Better Learning was granted permission to locate the school in the annex portion of P.S. 111 (Seton Falls Elementary School) at 3740 Baychester Avenue in the Bronx. In addition, the school used 3 classrooms and an office in the main building of P.S. 111 for the first time in 2008-09 to accommodate their newly implemented Kindergarten program.

The mission of the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning is as follows:

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning provides its students with a solid foundation for academic success, through achievement that exceeds citywide averages and meets or exceeds New York State standards and national norms in all curriculum areas tested, especially in mathematics and language arts. Our teaching constantly adjusts to the needs of our students, leading to independence, autonomy, responsibility and a sustained love of learning, all of which contribute directly to high academic achievement.

To fulfill its mission, the school’s teachers endeavor to practice *the subordination of teaching to learning*, an instructional approach that does not dominate learning, but rather is guided by it. Implementing the approach involves: getting students actively and mentally engaged in lessons; assisting students to go beyond rote memorization, wherever the subject matter allows, and to develop criteria for understanding; recognizing every child’s high intellectual capacity and, thereby, welcoming errors in students’ work as guides to help them harness that capacity; promoting students’ use of what they know to master new content; encouraging student initiative and self-sufficiency.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2003-04		50												50
2004-05		51	51											102
2005-06		54	54	54										162
2006-07		57	57	57	58									229
2007-08		60	59	57	58	51								285
2008-09	60	59	60	59	55	52								345

2008-09 Characteristics of Student Population

Characteristic	Percent	Number
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.0	0 (345)
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.6	2 (345)
Black	93.3	322 (345)
White	0.0	0 (345)
Hispanic or Latino	5.2	18 (345)
Multi-Racial	0.6	2 (345)
Economically Disadvantaged	68.1	235 (345)
Special Education	5.2	18 (345)
Limited English Proficient	0.0	0 (345)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

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

Background

The school’s English Language Arts curriculum is very closely aligned to the New York State Core Curriculum Standards. Bronx Better Learning’s pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*, incorporates, especially in the early grades, materials and techniques that constitute the “Words in Color” program, for instruction in English language arts. That program addresses all five elements of scientifically-based approaches to reading and writing instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. As students progress through the grades, more traditional materials, including, for example, Junior Great Books and “Portals to Reading,” along with instructional programs supportive of the school’s pedagogical approach, most notably, Writing Workshop, are incorporated into instructional activities to ensure that students are (1) able to read effectively and efficiently in all genres and subjects, (2) afforded sufficient practice in refining their skills, including demonstrating those skills on New York State examinations and standardized tests of academic achievement, and (3) exposed to a wide range of activities that will prepare them for continued academic success in more conventional school settings. Regardless of the materials used, Bronx Better Learning teachers are expected to implement the school’s pedagogical approach; therefore, extensive and intensive professional development is provided to them, including available daily in-class support.

Goal 1, Measure 1: Absolute Proficiency

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.

Method

New York State administers an annual English language arts (ELA) examination to students in Grades 3 – 8. That examination is a cumulative assessment measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge at each grade level, as determined by the New York State ELA Standards. Individual student performance is reported as a scaled score and a performance level is determined by the state. Performance levels range from 1 to 4, with Level 3 being proficient and Level 4 being advanced. Evaluation of this outcome measure is based on the percentage of students who are enrolled in at least their second year, that is, students who have been enrolled since at least BEDS day of the previous school year (first Wednesday in October) and score at Levels 3 and 4. During the week of January 12 – 16, 2009, Bronx Better Learning’s 3rd – 5th grade teachers administered the New York State English Language Arts Assessment to all of its 3rd – 5th graders, in strict accord with all test administration procedures. No students identified as English language learners (ELL) or students with disabilities were exempted from taking this ELA examination.

**2008-09 State ELA Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ¹			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	59	0	0	0	59
4	55	0	0	0	55
5	52	0	0	0	52
All	166	0	0	0	166

Results

The following table presents the New York State ELA examination results for all students tested and for those students enrolled in at least their second year. Of the 59 students tested in Grade 3, 56 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 56 continuously enrolled 3rd graders, 78.6% (44 of 56) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination. Of the 55 students tested in Grade 4, 52 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 52 continuously enrolled 4th graders, 75.0% (39 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination. All of the 52 students tested in Grade 5 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of these 52 5th graders, 78.8% (41 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination. In total, 160 of the 166 students tested in Grades 3- 5 were enrolled in at least their second year and, of those, 77.5% (124 of 160) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination.

¹ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam

**Charter School Performance on 2008-09 State ELA 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	
3	All Students	1.7	20.3	74.6	3.4	78.0	59
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.8	19.6	75.0	3.6	78.6	56
4	All Students	1.8	23.6	72.7	1.8	74.5	55
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.9	23.1	73.1	1.9	75.0	52
5	All Students	0.0	21.2	71.2	7.7	78.8	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.0	21.2	71.2	7.7	78.8	52
All	All Students	1.2	22.9	72.3	4.2	76.5	166
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.9	27.5	71.3	4.4	77.5	160

Evaluation

Since the attained percent for all students enrolled in at least their second year in Grades 3 – 5 is above 75%, Bronx Better Learning met its objective for this outcome measure. The overall margin in which the school exceeded this measure is 2.5 percentage points. Furthermore, each grade level met this measure, with Grade 3 exceeding the target by 3.6 percentage points, and Grade 5 exceeding the target by 3.8 percentage points. Grade 4 met the target exactly, with 75.0 percent proficient.

Additional Evidence

As the chart below indicates, there are four years' worth of state examination data available, and three grade levels with the possibility of a year-to-year absolute measure comparison. Noticeable increases occurred at each grade tested between 2007-08 and 2008-09 (11.9 in Grade 3, 4.2 in Grade 4, and 3.3 in Grade 5). Furthermore, when all continuously enrolled students at the school are taken into account, a 6.6 percentage point increase has occurred between 2007-08 and 2008-09, which, together with the steady improvement over the last three years, suggests that the overall effectiveness of the Bronx Better Learning instructional program for English language arts is increasing over time.

**ELA Performance
by Grade Level and School Year²**

Grade	Percent of Students, at Levels 3 and 4							
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3 (All tested)	64.2	53	66.7	57	65.5	58	78.0	59
3 (2+ years)	64.4	45	63.3	49	66.7	51	78.6	56
4 (All tested)			59.6	57	67.2	58	74.5	55
4 (2+ years)			59.1	44	70.8	48	75.0	52
5 (All tested)					75.5	49	78.8	52
5 (2+ years)					75.5	49	78.8	52
Total (All tested)	64.2	53	63.2	114	69.1	165	76.5	166
Total (2+ years)	64.4	45	61.3	93	70.9	148	77.5	160

Goal 1, Measure 2: Absolute Proficiency

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

Method

Under federal “No Child Left Behind” legislation, the New York State Education Department sets an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that 100 percent of students will be proficient in the state’s learning standards in ELA by 2013-2014. To meet the standard of progress toward that goal, all tested students in a school must have a Performance Index (PI) value that equals or exceeds the year’s established AMO in ELA. The PI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of students at Level 2 and above with the sum of the percent of students at Level 3 and above.

Results

Of the 166 students tested, 22.9% attained Level 2, 72.3% attained Level 3 and 4.2% attained Level 4. The attained aggregate Performance Index on the ELA exam in 2007-08 was 175.9.

Calculation of 2008-09 ELA Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3 – 5	1.2	22.9	72.3	4.2	166

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 22.9 + 72.3 + 4.2 = \\
 &+ 72.3 + 4.2 = \mathbf{175.9}
 \end{aligned}$$

² Note: caution should be used in comparing year to year results because each grade is a different group of students each year and overall results may include different grade levels from year to year.

Evaluation

New York State’s NCLB 2008-09 target Annual ELA Measurable Objective for Grades 3 – 8 was 144. Since the Bronx Better Learning attained aggregate performance index value was 175.9, the school met the objective for this outcome measure, by a wide margin of 32.9 points.

Additional Evidence

Given the limited amount of comparative data presented in the chart below, there is consistency in the distinctly positive aggregate levels of performance over the first four years that the ELA test has been administered, with a small increase in each year (+ 2.0 point increase from 2005-06 to 2006-07, + 6.9 point increase from 2006-07 to 2007-08, and + 10.0 point increase from 2007-08 to 2008-09).

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

Year	Grades	Total N Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			PI	AMO
			Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2003-04							
2004-05							
2005-06	3	54	28.3	60.4	3.8	157	122
2006-07	3 and 4	114	32.5	57.9	5.3	159	122
2007-08	3-5	165	27.9	64.2	4.8	165.9	133
2008-09	3 – 5	166	22.9	72.3	4.2	175.9	144

Goal 1, Measure 3: Comparative Proficiency

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 grade tested will be greater than that of the local school district.

Method

An analysis was conducted, comparing the percent of students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 enrolled in at least their second year at Bronx Better Learning, who achieved a minimum of Level 3 on the State ELA examination, with the percent of total students tested in those grades in New York City School District 11 who achieved a minimum of Level 3 on the State ELA assessment. Aggregate results were also analyzed, comparing Bronx Better Learning’s combined Grades 3 - 5 results with those of District 11.

Results

The following table presents the results for Grades 3, 4, and 5 separately, along with the aggregate comparative data. The percentage of students enrolled in at least their second year at Bronx Better Learning who performed at Level 3 or higher on the New York State ELA examination in Grades 3, 4, and 5 individually, were 78.6%, 75.0% and 78.8%, respectively. The matching results for District 11 were: 65.7%, 67.0% and 71.9%. The aggregate percentage of students enrolled in at least their

second year at Bronx Better Learning in Grades 3 – 5 who performed at Level 3 or higher was 78.1%, compared to 68.2 percent of all students within these same grades in New York City District 11.

**2008-09 State ELA 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 11 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	78.6	56	65.7	3173
4	75.0	52	67.0	3169
5	78.8	52	71.9	3263
All	78.1	160	68.2	9605

Evaluation

Since the percentages of continuously enrolled Bronx Better Learning students at or above Level 3 at each grade level tested and in the aggregate exceeded the corresponding percentages for all students enrolled in those grades in District 11, Bronx Better Learning met its objective for this outcome measure. Bronx Better Learning surpassed District 11 on the ELA exam by 12.9 percentage points in Grade 3, 8.0 percentage points in Grade 4, and 6.9 percentage points in Grade 5, and by an aggregate difference of 9.9 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

While year-to-year comparative data are limited, it is evident in the table below that the results are consistent over the first four years that Bronx Better Learning administered the State ELA examination. The school experienced a small improvement in the percentage difference between its aggregate scores and District 11's in each of the first three years of the comparison, as follows: a disparity of plus 7.2 percentage points in 2005-06, plus 9.2 in 2006-07, and plus 10.2 in 2007-08. An insignificant decrease of 0.3 percentage points occurred from 2007-08 to 2008-09, representing improved achievement in District 11 rather than any decreases in performance on the part of Bronx Better Learning. This evidence suggests that Bronx Better Learning continues to consistently outperform their New York City District 11 counterparts as measured by the state ELA examination.

**2008-09 ELA Performance of Charter School and Local District
by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Compared to All District Students in the Same Tested Grades							
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Bronx Better Learning	NYC District 11	Bronx Better Learning	NYC District 11	Bronx Better Learning	NYC District 11	Bronx Better Learning	NYC District 11
3	64.0	56.8	63.3	51.9	66.7	58.3	78.6	65.7
4			59.1	52.4	70.8	57.3	75.0	67.0
5					75.5	65.3	78.8	71.9
All	64.0	56.8	61.3	52.1	70.9	60.3	78.1	68.2

Goal 1, Measure 4: Comparative Proficiency

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State ELA 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

To address this measure, the Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis which is sent to schools it has authorized. In it, a regression analysis is conducted to determine the predicted percentage of students scoring at Levels 3 and 4 on the state ELA examination, controlling for the percent of students eligible for free lunch in all public schools statewide. Each charter school’s actual performance is compared to the level of performance predicted for a school with that particular level of poverty. An Effect Size is then determined by dividing the difference between the predicted and actual level of performance by the standard deviation. An Effect Size is calculated for each grade level and then an aggregate Effect Size is computed for the overall performance of the school. It is the aggregate Effect Size that pertains directly to this outcome measure. This measure is met if a school’s Effect Size is equal to or greater than 0.3, which is considered performing higher than expected to a small degree. Since the regression analysis for 2008-09 was not available at the time of the preparation of this report, the previous year’s (2007-08) results are presented.

Results

As noted in the following table, the obtained Effect Size for ELA in the 2007-08 school year, for Grades 3, 4, and 5 were -0.09, -0.02, and 0.09, respectively. The aggregate Effect Size for both grades combined was -0.01.

2008-09 ELA Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	NA	58	65.50	66.60	-1.10	-0.09
4	NA	58	67.30	67.53	-0.23	-0.02
5	NA	49	75.50	74.63	0.87	0.09
All	48.0	165	69.10	69.31	-0.21	-0.01

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
About the Same as Expected

Evaluation

Since the attained Effect Size for Grades 3, 4, and 5 in 2007-08, was -0.09, -0.02, and 0.09 respectively, and the aggregate Effect Size for all grades was -0.01, Bronx Better Learning did not meet its objective for this outcome measure.

Additional Evidence

As evident in the following table, there are currently three years of data available, relevant to this outcome measure. While the objective was not met in 2006-07 and 2007-08, and only missed by a mere difference of .05 in the first year of the comparison, overall achievement has not declined. Rather, the percentage of the school’s students eligible for Free Lunch continues to slightly decline each year, thus increasing the school’s predicted level of achievement.

ELA Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2003-04						
2004-05						
2005-06	3	58.6	53	64.2	59.4	.25
2006-07	3 and 4	48.0	114	63.2	64.1	-0.07
2007-08	3 – 5	49.3	165	69.10	69.31	-0.01

Goal 1, Measure 5: Value Added

Each year, 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 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, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

Method

A value added analysis was conducted, utilizing data only for the cohort of students who took the New York State ELA examination while on the register of Bronx Better Learning for both the January 2008 and the January 2009 administrations of the examination. With a value added measure, the outcome is expressed as the year-to-year difference (i.e., change) between pre-test and post-test scores of the same students. To show added value requires giving tests on two occasions and looking at the progress of the same group (or grade-level cohort) of students from one administration of the test to another.

There were two cohorts available for a value added analysis of the state ELA examination results in 2008-09. Since the percent of both applicable cohorts (4th and 5th graders in 2008-09) during the 2007-08 school year was below the 75% absolute proficiency threshold, the target required reducing by one-half the gap between this threshold and performance in 2006-07. Therefore, the targets for the two cohorts were 71.45% and 72.1% for the 4th and 5th grade cohorts respectively, while the aggregate target was 71.8%.

Results

The percentage of students in the Grade 4 cohort that performed at Level 3 or above in 2008-09 increased by 5.7 percentage points (67.9% to 73.6%), which surpassed their established target. The percentage of students in the Grade 5 cohort that performed at Level 3 or above in 2008-09 increased

by 9.6 percentage points (69.2% to 78.8%) from 2007-08, which surpassed the target. The aggregate percentage of students that performed at Level 3 or above for both cohorts increased by 7.6 percentage points (68.6% to 76.2%), which also surpassed the established target.

Cohort Growth on State ELA Exam from 2007-08 to 2008-09

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent at Levels 3 and 4			Change	Target Achieved
		2007-08	Target	2008-09		
4	53	67.9	71.45	73.6	5.7	YES
5	52	69.2	72.1	78.8	9.6	YES
All	105	68.6	71.8	76.2	7.6	YES

Evaluation

Since both of the two available cohorts met the established growth target, as well as all students combined enrolled in at least their second year, Bronx Better Learning met its objective for this outcome measure. The school exceeded its target by a margin of 2.15 percentage points for the 2008-09 Grade 4 cohort, 6.7 percentage points for the Grade 5 cohort, and 4.4 percentage points in the aggregate.

Additional Evidence

As the table below indicates, three year trend data demonstrate consistent progress toward meeting this outcome measure. In 2006-07, the single cohort under analysis experienced growth of minus 6.4 percentage points, thus not meeting the target. However, in 2007-08 one cohort (Grade 4) experienced no growth, while the other (Grade 5) experienced a positive change of 14.3 percentage points, with an aggregate growth of 7.2 percentage points. Both cohorts met their exceeded their targets from 2007-08 to 2008-09, demonstrating consistent improvement of performance against this measure.

**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
2006-07	4	0	1
2007-08	4, 5	1	2
2008-09	4, 5	2	2

SUMMARY

As delineated in the following table, during the 2008-09 school year, Bronx Better Learning met its first, second, third, and fifth measures for Goal 1, and did not meet its fourth measure (which actually represents performance in 2007-08).

Measure	Type	Description	Outcome
			2008-09
1	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.	Met
2	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.	Met
3	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.	Met
4	Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	Did Not Meet (2007-08)
5	Value Added	Each year, 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 ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam.	Met

ACTION PLAN

As a result of a careful analysis and review of the results all state examination results related to English language arts, other standardized and interim assessment measures, and teacher reflection, Bronx Better Learning will undertake the following steps to improve academic achievement in the reading and writing of the English Language, and thereby fully meet Goal 1:

1. Bronx Better Learning has developed a refined approach to supporting the needs of its teachers, referred to as the Revised Framework for Professional Development. Each teacher, in collaboration with administrators and professional development specialists, will develop an individual professional development plan. In that plan, teachers will focus on targeted, observable student performance items and teacher behaviors, which may include the teaching of reading and writing.
2. Bronx Better Learning plans to increase our cadre of on-site Professional Development Specialists by an FTE of 1.0. We will seek to fill that position with an individual who brings added expertise in the implementation of both Reading and Writing Workshop, as both of those programs support implementation of the *Subordination of Teaching to Learning*, with certain modifications. In addition, the school will continue to contract for the services of Mrs. Shakti Gattegno, an expert in the *Subordination of Teaching to Learning*, and the wife and close professional colleague of the late Dr. Caleb Gattegno, who was responsible for developing the instructional approach the school utilizes.

3. Bronx Better Learning has refined the structures in place to assist students at-risk of academic failure. The school will add two additional full-time teachers, for a total of 5 full-time teachers, to assist struggling students. More importantly, the school will use more of those teachers than ever before in co-teaching positions to better meet the needs of struggling students. Further to assist struggling students, the members of the school's leadership team will be responsible for a small subgroup of students who have been identified based on our analysis of state and standardized test scores. Those staff members will meet regularly with each identified student, providing academic and non-academic support, to ensure that the child has a personal connection and relationship in addition to that of the regular classroom teachers. Finally, the school has developed a multi-tier system of instructional support for struggling students based on assessment data, consisting of short-term support, mid-level support, and intensive long-term support.
4. In the spring of 2009, the school's leadership team conducted item and gap analysis of the state examination results for English language arts. Then members of the team guided teachers through a process of curriculum refinement. Revised curriculum maps were developed in each grade level. In addition, moving forward in 2009-10 there will be coordinated school-wide author and genre studies. A "test genre" has also been added to the curriculum, as opposed to traditional "test prep," to assist students in understanding complex questions that are presented to them in standardized and other formal tests. As a result of that work, the school's written curriculum is more cohesive with stronger grade-to-grade articulation, which should result in increased student achievement in this goal area.
5. With respect to the implementation of the revised curriculum maps, each grade level will be monitored by one of the school's administrators and/or professional development specialists to ensure the appropriate and consistent implementation of the school's written curriculum.
6. Bronx Better Learning will continue to more fully implement the Writing Workshop program in all tested grades. That practice will include more structured professional development opportunities for teachers in using the program, including teachers' assuming the role of student to improve their own writing skills. In addition, the school will begin to implement Reading Workshop in the 2009-10 school year, which together with Writing Workshop, will complement the use of Words in Color and other materials, techniques and activities associated with Gattegno's approach to literacy.
7. Bronx Better Learning will begin using the Diagnostic Reading Assessment – 2 (DRA – 2) on a more regular basis in 2009-10. Teachers will receive training in the use of the DRA – 2 and will use the instrument to better monitor the progress of their students, and to target specific interventions for struggling students.
8. To cultivate a love of reading and learning, Bronx Better Learning will continue to expand its collection of children's literature and other resources, including in-class libraries and a wider collection of appropriately leveled reading books. In addition, teachers will be provided ongoing support from professional development specialists to assist them with the strategic use of those resources within the English language arts curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will demonstrate mastery of grade level mathematical concepts.

Background

The school's Mathematics curriculum is very closely aligned to the New York State Core Curriculum Standards. Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*, incorporates, especially in the early grades, materials and techniques that constitute the "Gattegno Mathematics" program, for instruction in mathematics. That program relies heavily on the use of manipulatives, primarily Cuisenaire rods, to ensure, even in the earliest stages, that students develop models for thinking mathematically, thereby providing them with a sound basis for accomplishing two essential objectives: becoming swift and accurate in their computation skills while focusing on problem solving activities that involve practice and real world application of those skills. The approach is particularly well suited to mastery of the student proficiencies outlined in New York State's mathematics standards, since its implementation involves frequent exercises requiring students to demonstrate, not just the correct answers, but also awareness of the mathematical processes that lead to them. As students progress through the grades, more traditional materials, may be incorporated into instructional activities to ensure that students are (1) able to solve effectively and efficiently mathematical problems of all types relevant to their grade level, (2) afforded sufficient practice in refining their skills, including demonstrating those skills on New York State examinations and standardized tests of academic achievement and (3) exposed to a wide range of activities that will prepare them for continued academic success in more conventional school settings. Regardless of the materials used, Bronx Better Learning teachers are expected to implement the school's pedagogical approach; therefore, extensive and intensive professional development is provided to them, including available daily in-class support.

Goal 2, Measure 1: Absolute Proficiency

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.

Method

New York State administers an annual mathematics examination to students in Grades 3 – 8. That examination is a cumulative assessment measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge at each grade level, as determined by the New York State mathematics Standards. Individual student performance is reported as a scaled score and a performance level is determined by the state. Performance levels range from 1 to 4, with Level 3 being proficient and Level 4 being advanced. Evaluation of this outcome measure is based on the percentage of students who are enrolled in at least their second year, that is, students who have been enrolled since at least BEDS day (first Wednesday of October) of the previous school year and score at Levels 3 and 4. During the week of March 2 - 6, 2009, Bronx Better Learning's 3rd – 5th grade teachers administered the New York State Mathematics Assessment to all of its 3rd – 5th grade students, in strict accord with all test administration procedures.

**2008-09 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ³			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	59	0	0	0	59
4	55	0	0	0	55
5	52	0	0	0	52
All	166	0	0	0	166

Results

The following table presents the New York State mathematics test results for all students tested and for those students enrolled in at least their second year. Of the 59 students tested in Grade 3, 56 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 56 continuously enrolled 3rd graders, 96.4% (54 of 56) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State mathematics examination. Of the 55 students tested in Grade 4, 52 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 52 continuously enrolled 4th graders, 88.5% (46 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State mathematics examination. All of the 52 5th graders tested were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those students, 73.1% (38 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State mathematics examination. In total, 160 of the students tested in Grades 3 – 5 were enrolled in at least their second year and, of those, 86.3% (138 students) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State mathematics examination.

**Charter School Performance on 2008-09 State Mathematics 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	
3	All Students	1.7	1.7	62.7	33.9	96.6	59
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.8	1.8	62.5	33.9	96.4	56
4	All Students	1.8	10.9	67.3	20.0	87.3	55
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.9	9.6	69.2	19.2	88.5	52
5	All Students	1.9	25.0	53.8	19.2	73.1	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.9	25.0	53.8	19.2	73.1	52
All	All Students	1.2	12.0	61.5	24.7	86.2	166
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1.9	11.9	61.9	24.4	86.3	160

Evaluation

Since the attained percent for students enrolled in at least their second year is above 75%, Bronx Better Learning met its objective for this outcome measure. In fact, the school surpassed this outcome measure by 11.3 percentage points. The margin in which each grade surpassed this target declined with each successive grade (21.4 percentage points in Grade 3, 13.5 percentage points in Grade 4, and -1.9 percentage points in grade 5). This pattern correlates to a consistent pattern in New

³ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam

York State mathematics test scores statewide, which reflects a drop in percentage of students at Level 3 or above as students move to higher grade levels.

Additional Evidence

As the table below indicates, there are four years’ worth of data available, and three grade levels with the possibility of a year-to-year absolute measure comparison. Mathematics performance in Grade 3 has increased consistently during the four year comparison (80.0% in 2005-06, 83.3% in 2006-07, and 92.3% in 2007-08, and 96.4% in 2008-09). Performance also increased in Grade 4 from 2006-07 to 2007-08 (79.5% to 91.7%), yet declined from 2007-08 to 2008-09 (91.7% to 88.5%). Performance in the school’s Grade 5 also declined from 2007-08 to 2008-09 (81.3% to 73.1%). Aggregate performance of all students has increased over the first three years of administering the math exam (80.0% in 2005-06, 81.5% in 2006-07, and 88.5% in 2007-08), and remained consistent from 2007-08 to 2008-09 (0.01 percentage point increase). This evidence suggests that the school’s instructional program in Grade 3 both consistently surpasses the target, as well as continues to improve each year. The data also suggests that while the school’s upper grades mostly meet or exceed the target, performance has been somewhat inconsistent during the past two years.

**Mathematics Performance
by Grade Level and School Year⁴**

Grade	Percent of Students, at Levels 3 and 4							
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3 (All tested)	81.5	54	84.2	57	89.8	59	96.6	59
3 (2+ years)	80.0	45	83.3	48	92.3	52	96.4	56
4 (All tested)			78.9	57	86.2	58	87.3	55
4 (2+ years)			79.5	44	91.7	48	88.5	52
5 (All tested)					81.3	48	73.1	52
5 (2+ years)					81.3	48	73.1	52
Total (All tested)	81.5	54	81.6	114	86.1	165	86.2	166
Total (2+ years)	80.0	45	81.5	92	88.5	148	86.3	160

Goal 2, Measure 2: Absolute Proficiency

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

Under federal “No Child Left Behind” legislation, the New York State Education Department sets an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that 100 percent of students will be proficient in the state’s learning standards in mathematics by 2013-2014. To meet the standard of progress toward that goal, all tested students in

⁴ Note: caution should be used in comparing year to year results because each grade is a different group of students each year and overall results may include different grade levels from year to year.

a school must have a Performance Index (PI) value that equals or exceeds the year’s established AMO in mathematics. The PI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of students at Level 2 and above with the sum of the percent of students at Level 3 and above.

Results

Of the 166 students tested on the New York mathematic examination in 2008-09, 12.0% attained Level 2, 61.5% attained Level 3 and 24.7% attained Level 4. The school’s attained aggregate Performance Index on the test was 184.4.

Calculation of 2008-09 Mathematics Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3-5	1.2	12.0	61.5	24.7	166

$$\begin{array}{rcccccc}
 \text{PI} & = & 12.0 & + & 61.5 & + & 24.7 \\
 & & & & + & + & \\
 & & & & 61.5 & + & 24.7 & = & \mathbf{184.4}
 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

New York State’s NCLB 2008-09 target Annual Mathematics Measurable Objective for Grades 3 – 8 is 119. Since the Bronx Better Learning attained aggregate performance index value was 184.4, the school met the objective for this outcome measure, by a very wide margin of 65.4 points.

Additional Evidence

Given the limited amount of comparative data, there is consistency in the general positive aggregate levels of performance from the school’s first two years of administering the test, and the last two years. The school continues to exceed the established AMO in each year the mathematics exam has been administered.

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

Year	Grades	Total N Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			PI	AMO
			Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2003-04							
2004-05							
2005-06	3	54	16.6	68.5	13.0	179	86
2006-07	3 and 4	114	14.0	58.8	22.8	177	86
2007-08	3-5	165	13.9	60.6	25.5	186.1	102
2008-09	3 – 5	166	12.0	61.5	24.7	184.4	119

Goal 2, Measure 3: Comparative Proficiency

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 grade tested will be greater than that of the local school district.

Method

An analysis was conducted, comparing the percent of 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at Bronx Better Learning, who achieved a minimum of Level 3 on the State mathematics examination, with the percent of total students tested in those grades in New York City School District 11 who achieved a minimum of Level 3 on the State mathematics examination. Aggregate results were also analyzed, comparing Bronx Better Learning’s combined 3rd – 5th grade results with those of District 11.

Results

The following table presents the results for Grades 3, 4, and 5, separately, along with the aggregate data. Bronx Better Learning’s percentages for Grades 3, 4, and 5, individually, and for these three grades combined were 96.4%, 88.5%, 73.1%, and 86.3% respectively. The matching results for District 11 were: 90.4%, 82.4%, 84.6%, and 85.8%.

**2008-09 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 11 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	96.4	56	90.4	3184
4	88.5	52	82.4	3175
5	73.1	52	84.6	3268
All	86.3	160	85.8	9627

Evaluation

Since the percentages of continuously enrolled Bronx Better Learning students at or above Level 3 exceeded the corresponding percentage for all students enrolled in those grades in District 11, Bronx Better Learning met its objective for this outcome measure. Bronx Better Learning surpassed District 11 by 6.0 percentage points in Grade 3, 6.1 percentage points in Grade 4, and 0.5 percentage points overall. New York City District 11 surpassed Bronx Better Learning by 11.5 percentage points in Grade 5.

Additional Evidence

It is evident in the table below that the results are consistent over the first three years that Bronx Better Learning administered the State mathematics examination. The school experienced an improvement in the percentage difference between its aggregate scores and District 11’s in each year

as follows: plus 3.5 % percentage points in 2004-05, plus 4.5 percentage points in 2006-07, and 8.0 percentage points in 2007-08. However, this margin decreased to only 0.5 in 2008-09, which represents a substantial increase in the aggregate performance of students in Grades 3 – 5 in District 11 rather than a significant decrease in Bronx Better Learning’s performance.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Compared to All District Students in the Same Tested Grades							
	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	80.0	76.5	83.3	82.4	92.3	85.4	96.4	90.4
4			79.5	71.4	91.7	78.6	88.5	82.4
5					81.3	77.6	73.1	84.6
All	80.0	76.5	81.5	77.0	88.5	80.5	86.3	85.8

Goal 2, Measure 4: Comparative Proficiency

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

To address this measure, the Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis which is sent to schools it has authorized. In it, a regression analysis is conducted to determine the predicted percentage of students scoring at Levels 3 and 4 on the state mathematics examination, controlling for the percent of students eligible for free lunch in all public schools statewide. Each charter school’s actual performance is compared to the level of performance predicted for a school with that particular level of poverty. An Effect Size is then determined by dividing the difference between the predicted and actual level of performance by the standard deviation. An Effect Size is calculated for each grade level and then an aggregate Effect Size is computed for the overall performance of the school. It is the aggregate Effect Size that pertains directly to this outcome measure. This measure is met if a school’s Effect Size is equal to or greater than 0.3, which is considered performing higher than expected to a small degree. Since the regression analysis for 2008-09 was not available at the time of the preparation of this report, the previous year’s (2007-08) results are presented.

Results

As noted in the following table, the obtained Effect Size for mathematics in the 2007-08 school year, was 0.17 for Grade 3, 0.42 for Grade 4, 0.04 for Grade 5, and 0.22 overall.

2008-09 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	NA	59	89.80	88.40	1.40	0.17
4	NA	58	86.20	81.67	4.53	0.42
5	NA	58	81.20	80.66	0.54	0.04
All	48.0	114	86.03	83.78	2.25	0.22

School's Overall Comparative Performance:
About the Same as Expected

Evaluation

Since the attained Effect Size was 0.22 overall, the Charter Schools Institute has determined that the performance of Bronx Better Learning was “about the same as expected.” Therefore, the school did not meet this measure for 2007-08.

Additional Evidence

As evident in the following table, there are currently three years of data available, relevant to this outcome measure. The objective was met in 2005-06, and was not met in 2006-07 and 2007-08. Although actual performance remained consistent from 2005-06 to 2006-07 (only a gain of .1 percentage points) and actually increased by 4.5 percentage points in 2007-08, the percentage of students eligible for free lunch declined, thus increasing the school's predicted level of performance.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2003-04						
2004-05						
2005-06	3	58.6	54	81.5	73.0	.48
2006-07	3 and 4	48.0	114	81.6	80.2	0.11
2007-08	3 – 5	49.3	165	86.1	83.78	0.22

Goal 2, Measure 5: Value Added

Each year, 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.

Method

A value added analysis was conducted, utilizing data only for the cohorts of students who took the New York State mathematics examination while on the register of Bronx Better Learning for both the March 2008 and the March 2009 administrations of the examination. With a value added measure, the outcome is expressed as the year-to-year difference (i.e., change) between pre-test and post-test scores of the same students. To show added value requires giving tests on two occasions and looking at the progress of the same group (or grade-level cohort) of students from one year to the next.

There were only two cohorts (4th and 5th graders in 2008-09) available for a value added analysis of the state mathematics test scores, as well as an aggregate total for both grades combined. The performance of each cohort and the aggregate in the previous year (2007-08) was above the 75% absolute proficiency threshold (90.6% for the 4th grade cohort, 90.4% for the 5th grade cohort, and 90.5% in the aggregate); therefore, each target represented an increase of .1 percentage points.

Results

In 2008-09, the 4th grade cohort’s performance decreased by 3.8 percentage points (90.6% to 86.8%), failing to meet the respective target. Similarly, the performance of the school’s 5th grade cohort declined by 17.3 percentage points (90.4% to 73.1%), also failing to meet the target. The aggregate performance of both cohorts combined decreased by 10.5 percentage points (90.5 to 80.0), failing to meet the overall target.

Cohort Growth on State Mathematics Exam from 2007-08 to 2008-09

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent at Levels 3 and 4			Change	Target Achieved
		2007-08	Target	2008-09		
4	53	90.6	90.7	86.8	-3.8	NO
5	52	90.4	90.5	73.1	-17.3	NO
All	105	90.5	90.6	80.0	-10.5	NO

Evaluation

Since there was a drop of 3.8 percentage points for the 4th grade cohort in 2007-08, a drop of 17.3 percentage points for the 5th grade cohort, and an aggregate decrease of 10.5 percentage points, rather than a rise of .1 percentage points, Bronx Better Learning did not meet its objective for this outcome measure.

Additional Evidence

As the table below indicates, some progress toward this outcome measure was noted from 2006-07 to 2007-08. In the previous year, the single cohort under analysis (Grade 4) did not the target and

actually experienced a decrease in performance of 4.2 percentage points. A significant decrease in performance according to this measure was observed in 2008-09.

**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
2006-07	4	0	1
2007-08	4, 5	1	2
2008-09	3 – 5	0	2

SUMMARY

As delineated in the following table, during the 2008-09 school year, Bronx Better Learning met its first, second, and third outcome measures for Goal 2, and did not meet the fourth measure (which actually represented performance in 2007-08) and fifth measures.

Measure	Type	Description	Outcome
			2008-09
1	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.	Met
2	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.	Met
3	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.	Met
4	Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	Not Met (2007-08)
5	Value Added	Each year, 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.	Not Met

ACTION PLAN

As a result of a careful analysis and review of the results all state examination results related to Mathematics, other standardized and interim assessment measures, and teacher reflection, Bronx Better Learning will undertake the following steps to improve academic achievement in Mathematics, and thereby fully meet Goal 2:

1. Bronx Better Learning has developed a refined approach to supporting the needs of its teachers, referred to as the Revised Framework for Professional Development. Each teacher, in collaboration with administrators and professional development specialists, will develop an individual professional development plan. In that plan, teachers will focus on targeted,

observable student performance items and teacher behaviors, which may include the teaching of mathematics.

2. Bronx Better Learning plans to increase its cadre of on-site Professional Development Specialists by an FTE of 1.0. While that person's efforts will focus primarily on improving teaching in English language arts, the presence of an additional PD Specialist will serve additionally to free up time for two of our current PD Specialists to concentrate more than in the past on mathematics instruction. In addition, we will continue to retain the services of mathematics consultant Dr. Arthur Powell of Rutgers University. He will visit the school twice a month on average, training the teachers through workshops and lesson studies.
3. Bronx Better Learning has refined the structures in place to assist students at-risk of academic failure. The school will add two additional full-time teachers, for a total of 5 full-time teachers, to assist struggling students. More importantly, the school will use more of those teachers than ever before in co-teaching positions to better meet the needs of struggling students. Further to assist struggling students, the members of the school's leadership team will be responsible for a small subgroup of students who have been identified based on our analysis of state and standardized test scores. Those staff members will meet regularly with each identified student, providing academic and non-academic support, to ensure that the child has a personal connection and relationship in addition to that of the regular classroom teachers. Finally, the school has developed a multi-tier system of instructional support for struggling students based on assessment data, consisting of short-term support, mid-level support, and intensive long-term support.
4. In the spring of 2009, the school's leadership team conducted item and gap analysis of the state examination results for mathematics. Then members of the team guided teachers through a process of curriculum refinement. Revised mathematics curriculum maps were developed in each grade level. In addition, moving forward in 2009-10, additional resources particular to our pedagogical approach are being woven into the scope and sequence document to aid teachers in planning their instruction. Those resources include Gattegno Mini-tests, as well as activities developed by practitioners of the approach. Besides aiding teachers in their day-to-day practice, this effort will make the school's mathematics curriculum more cohesive, with clearer grade-to-grade articulation, in order to increase student achievement in this goal area.
5. With respect to the implementation of the revised curriculum maps, each grade level will be monitored by one of the school's administrators and/or professional development specialists to ensure their appropriate and consistent implementation.
6. In the 5th grade, where a significant decrease in student performance has been noted, as measured by the state assessment in mathematics, we are taking the following two significant steps to improve students' performance in the future: we are increasing the number of 5th grade classes from two to three, with no significant variation in the total number of students in 5th grade, and we are increasing the number of 5th grade teachers, from 3.5 FTE to 5.0 FTE. The teacher:pupil ratio in 5th grade will improve, from 14.9:1 to 10.4:1. (Note: during the 2008-09 school year, one of our two 5th grade classes had two full-teachers assigned, with a part-time Social Studies teacher for both classes; during the 2009-10 school year, two of our three 5th grade classes will each have two full-time teachers assigned.)

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

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

Background

The school's science curriculum is very closely aligned to the New York State Core Curriculum Standards. Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*, incorporates techniques and materials that foster students' active participation in lessons. For that reason, hands-on experimentation with commercially prepared science kits has been encouraged, first through the FOSS Science program and more recently with the Science 21 program.

Goal 3, Measure 1: Absolute Proficiency

Each year, 75 percent of 4th graders who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.

Method

New York State administers an annual science examination to students in Grade 4. That examination is a cumulative assessment measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge, as determined by the New York State Science Standards. Individual student performance is reported as a scale score and a performance level is determined by the state. Performance levels range from 1 to 4, with Level 3 being proficient and Level 4 being advanced. Evaluation of this outcome measure is based on the percentage of students who are enrolled in at least their second year, that is, students who have been enrolled since at least BEDS day of the previous school year and score at Levels 3 and 4. During the spring of 2009, Bronx Better Learning's 4th grade teachers administered the New York State Science Assessment to all of its 4th graders, in strict accord with all test administration procedures.

2008-09 State Science Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁵			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
4	0	8	0	0	55

Results

The following table presents the New York State science test results for all students tested and for those students enrolled in at least their second year. Of the 55 enrolled in Grade 4, 52 were enrolled in at least their second year. Of those 52 continuously enrolled 4th graders, 0.0% (0 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State science examination. While all students were tested, an administrative error occurred, resulting in the invalidation of all scores.

⁵ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam

**Charter School Performance on 2008-09 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	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0

Evaluation

Since the attained percent at Level 3 or above on the New York State science examination for students enrolled in at least their second year was below 75%, Bronx Better Learning did not meet its objective for this outcome measure.

Additional Evidence

As the table below indicates, there are three years' worth of data available, and only one grade level tested for this goal area, therefore only allowing a single year-to-year absolute measure comparison. Science performance in Grade 4 increased from 2006-07 to 2007-08 (75.0% to 87.5). However, due to the administrative error in 2008-09, accurate student performance in this area is not able to be analyzed.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year at Levels 3 and 4					
	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	75.0	44	87.5	48	0.0	0

Goal 3, Measure 2: Comparative Proficiency

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.

Note: Statewide New York State Science examination results were not available at the time of the submission of this report; therefore, compared proficiency with the local school district could not be determined.

SUMMARY

As delineated in the following table, Bronx Better Learning did not meet the first measure within this goal area, while data was not available at the time of the issuance of this report to determine progress toward the second measure.

Measure	Type	Description	Outcome
			2008-09
1	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.	Not Met
2	Comparative	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.	N/A

ACTION PLAN

As a result of a careful analysis and review of the results all state examination results related to science, and teacher reflection, the Bronx Better Learning will undertake the following steps to improve academic achievement in social studies, and thereby continue to fully meet Goal 3:

1. Bronx Better Learning has developed a refined approach to supporting needs of its teachers, referred to as the Revised Framework for Professional Development. Each teacher, in conjunction with administrators and professional development specialists, will develop an individual professional development plan. In this plan, teachers will focus on targeted, observable student and teacher outcomes, which may include the teaching of science.
2. The school will continue to use Science 21 as its primary resource within the teaching of science. Teachers will be supported in the use of these materials. The school will continue to support teachers’ participation at professional development seminars within grade levels. Teachers will then “turnkey” that training, by sharing their experiences with their grade-level colleagues.
3. The school has developed and submitted to the State Education Department a correction action plan regarding the administrative error that occurred prior to the administration of the 2008-09 Grade 4 Science Examination. All steps within this plan have been completed to ensure that results moving forward will be valid.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Goal 4: Social Studies

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

Background

The school's social studies curriculum is very closely aligned to the New York State Core Curriculum Standards. Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*, incorporates techniques and materials that foster students' active participation in lessons.

Goal 4, Measure 1: Absolute Proficiency

Each year, 75 percent of 4th 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.

Method

New York State administers an annual social studies examination to students in Grade 5. That examination is a cumulative assessment measuring student mastery of skills and knowledge, as determined by the New York State social studies examination. Individual student performance is reported as a scale score and a performance level is determined by the state. Performance levels range from 1 to 4, with Level 3 being proficient and Level 4 being advanced. Evaluation of this outcome measure is based on the percentage of students who are enrolled in at least their second year, that is, students who have been enrolled since at least BEDS day of the previous school year and score at Levels 3 and 4. During the week of November 14-15, 2009, Bronx Better Learning's 5th grade teachers administered the New York State Science Assessment to all of its 52 5th graders, in strict accord with all test administration procedures.

2008-09 State Social Studies Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁶			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
5	52	0	0	0	52

Results

The following table presents the New York State social studies examination results for all students tested and for those students enrolled in at least their second year. All of the 52 students tested were enrolled in at least their second year. Of these students, 76.9% (40 of 52) performed at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.

⁶ Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam

**Charter School Performance on 2008-09 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	13.5	9.6	53.8	23.1	76.9	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	13.5	9.6	53.8	23.1	76.9	52

Evaluation

Since the attained percent scoring at Levels 3 and 4 for students enrolled in at least their second year above 75.0, Bronx Better Learning has met its objective for this outcome measure by surpassing the target by 1.9 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

As the table below indicates, there are only two years' worth of data available, and only one grade level tested for this goal area, therefore only allowing a single year-to-year absolute measure comparison. Social Studies performance in Grade 5 has decreased slightly from 2007-08 to 2008-09 (81.6% to 76.9%).

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Second Year at Levels 3 and 4			
	2007-08		2008-09	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
5	81.6	49	76.9	52

Goal 4, Measure 2: Comparative Proficiency

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.

Note: Statewide New York State social studies examination results were not available at the time of the submission of this report; therefore, compared proficiency with the local school district could not be determined.

SUMMARY

As delineated in the following table, during the 2008-09 school year, Bronx Better Learning met its first outcome measure for Goal 4. Since comparative data were not available at the time of the preparation of this report, attainment of the second outcome measure could not be determined.

Measure	Type	Description	Outcome
			2008-09
1	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.	Met
2	Comparative	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.	N/A

ACTION PLAN

As a result of a careful analysis and review of the results all state examination results related to social studies, and teacher reflection, the Bronx Better Learning will undertake the following steps to improve academic achievement in social studies, and thereby continue to fully meet Goal 4:

1. Bronx Better Learning has developed a refined approach to supporting needs of its teachers, referred to as the Revised Framework for Professional Development. Each teacher, in conjunction with administrators and professional development specialists, will develop an individual professional development plan. In this plan, teachers will focus on targeted, observable student and teacher outcomes, which may include the teaching of social studies.
2. As stated in the Action Plan for English language arts, the school refined its curriculum maps at each grade level in the spring of 2009. Special attention was paid during this process to the integration of social studies within the English language arts curriculum. Specifically, themes consistent with author and genre study have been aligned within the written curriculum.
3. To increase student achievement of grade level social studies skills and concepts, Bronx Better Learning will review an item analysis of the results of the most recent NY State Social Studies examination and identify those strands in which its students performed less well. One of the school’s professional development specialists will lead teachers in Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 through the analysis of the results, prior to the start of the 2009-2010 school year. Grade 5 teachers will adjust the sequence of their instructional priorities to address the areas of greatest need prior to the Fall 2009 test administration.
4. Additionally, the school intends to pilot in at least one grade level the implementation of an approach to social studies learning that is in close accord to its more general approach, the *subordination of teaching to learning*. The social studies pilot will employ the consultant services of a celebrated author of elementary level books that present history as a series of stories, including those from a child’s perspective. The approach engages students in “living history vicariously,” so that they will understand their lives, their

society and their world from the relative perspective of other people, in other places and other times. The consultant will conduct classroom visits and lesson studies, already established resources in our more general framework for professional development, to promote our teachers' understanding and effective implementation of the approach.

NCLB Accountability

Goal 5: NCLB Accountability

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

The school's 2006-07 Accountability status was: Charter School In Good Standing

The school's 2007-08 Accountability status was: Charter School In Good Standing

The school's 2008-09 Accountability status was: Not Available