

**BUFFALO UNITED
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2010-11 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 16, 2011

By the Buffalo United Board of Trustees

325 Manhattan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14214

National Heritage Academies prepared this 2010-11 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees:

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INTRODUCTION

Buffalo United Charter School (Buffalo United) was initially authorized by the State University of New York Board of Trustees in July 2002 and approved by the New York State Board of Regents that September. After a planning year, we began operation in fall 2003 with 234 students in grades K-4. In 2008, we applied for renewal and received a three-year charter extension. As outlined in the enrollment plan in our original charter, we have added a grade each year and reached our capacity in the 2010-11 school year. In the spring of 2011, Buffalo United applied for and received a full-term, five-year subsequent renewal.

The school is located at 325 Manhattan Avenue. The school facility provides ample room for all of the school's classrooms, as well as the library, gymnasium, technology center, and office space. It also provides a parent-room for school families.

In 2010-11, 90.9% of students at Buffalo United qualified for the National School Lunch Program. Ninety-five percent of students were African American and 3.9% percent were Hispanic. In addition, 9.7% of students were designated as special education.

The school's mission is to *“offer families and students a public charter school, which focuses on high academic achievement and instills a sense of family, community, and leadership within all of our students.”*

As the following analysis shows, Buffalo United has consistently met the comparative performance measures in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, outperforming the district public schools by double digits in both ELA and mathematics. The school continues to be a valuable educational option for the children and families in the Buffalo community. The school has also made progress in the absolute performance measures, achieving the absolute measure in mathematics over the past five years—with particular gains this year in grades 4, 7 and 8—cohorts that struggled in 2009-10. The School is also making incremental progress toward its absolute measure in ELA and has staff and measures in place to address areas for improvement in 2011-12. We are committed to fulfilling our mission of high academic achievement and preparing students for college, and we believe we are well positioned to address achievement gaps.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2006-07	50	70	75	67	67	50	45	45	n/a	469
2007-08	62	67	75	73	80	75	48	50	50	580
2008-09	54	75	72	77	74	74	71	50	51	598
2009-10	45	69	74	90	81	81	75	77	52	644
2010-11	66	53	76	70	73	63	67	74	70	612

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will be proficient in English language arts.

Background

Developing reading proficiency and strong literacy skills in elementary and middle school grades is essential to ensuring that students are on a college-readiness trajectory.¹ The ELA curriculum is designed to produce highly literate students who are proficient readers and strong writers. The curriculum enables students to read, comprehend, write, and respond thoughtfully to what they encounter in the classroom and the world around them through its reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing components.

The curriculum emphasizes the five components of reading instruction as outlined by the National Reading Panel. Students who master the ELA curriculum are prepared to read for deep meaning and understanding, write and speak effectively to communicate ideas and information while using appropriate language conventions, listen actively and critically as they encounter new information and ideas, and generate new ideas based on what they encounter both inside and outside the classroom.

Beyond this, the curriculum in grades K-2 focuses on and supports the process of learning to read. Decoding, word recognition, and building vocabulary are important as students begin to develop understanding and fluency. In grades 3-5, the curriculum supports a transition from learning to read to reading in order to learn; learning shifts to understanding that texts have specific purposes and students learn to read with those purposes in mind. Students are introduced to informational text in addition to a variety of literary texts. Reliance on the basal reader decreases and additional resources like novels, newspapers, magazines, and web-based resources are used to support reading instruction. Finally, in grades 6-8, the curriculum focuses on extending reading and comprehension skills, developing deep evaluation and analysis skills and the ability to make connections within and between texts.

The ELA curriculum supports learning in language conventions, mechanics, spelling, and writing. In the earliest grades, students learn how to write words and sentences using appropriate mechanics and grammar and begin to use the writing process to convey information and narrative through written text. In middle grades, the curriculum develops in students a deeper understanding of writing through a focus on prewriting strategies, organizational formats, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing. The curriculum ensures that students learn to write for different purposes; writing includes narratives, stories, poems, interpretive responses, essays, and descriptive pieces. In later grades, the curriculum continues to extend students' writing skills through narrative, expository, persuasive, and technical writing, and technology enhances students' ability to write, revise, edit, and publish their work. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and writing conventions are taught as part of language arts for students in all grades.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

¹ ACT, Inc., *Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT Reveals About College Readiness in Reading* (Iowa City, IA, 2006).

In 2009-10 and 2010-11, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores on the New York State English Language arts examination.²

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in grades 3 through 8 in April 2011. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. Through 2008-09, the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10 and 2010-11, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores¹, presented in the table below.

Grade	Time Adjusted Cut Scores
	Level 3
3	657
4	654
5	654
6	654
7	652
8	652

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

**2010-11 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ³			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	71	0	0	0	71
4	75	0	0	0	75
5	64	0	0	0	64
6	69	0	0	0	69
7	74	0	0	0	74
8	71	0	0	0	71
All	424	0	0	0	424

² In order to abide by the measures to which schools are held accountable in their school's Accountability Plans, the Institute will continue to use the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores, which provide year-to-year consistency with the Plan's standard while accounting for the timing of the test administration (i.e., SED now gives the test later in the school year).

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.

Results

Sixty percent of students enrolled in at least their second year at Buffalo United scored at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Scores in English language arts.

Charter School Performance on 2010-11 State English Language Arts Exam By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score	Number Tested
3	All Students	61%	71
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	68%	56
4	All Students	80%	75
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	84%	67
5	All Students	67%	64
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	68%	47
6	All Students	65%	69
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	63%	57
7	All Students	50%	74
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	51%	65
8	All Students	23%	71
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	26%	54
All	All Students	58%	424
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	60%	346

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. With 60% of second-year students scoring at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Scores, the School fell 15 percentage points below its accountability goal of 75%. The fourth grade cohort did meet this measure, with 84% of second-year students scoring at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Scores.

Additional Evidence

Proficiency in English language arts held even in 2010-11, with 60% of students scoring at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Scores in 2010-11, compared to 59% during the 2009-10 school year. In 2009-10, students in grades 4, 7 and 8 struggled in English language arts. We are pleased that fourth grade proficiency rates increased by 41 percentage points in 2010-11—a significant jump. However, we realize that a slight dip in grade 7 scores and a minimal increase in grade 8 indicate that we still have work to do. We have made a personnel change in grade 7 English language arts and believe we have the staff in place for accelerated growth in 2011-12.

English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 through 2008-09 and a Scale Score at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score in 2009-10 and 2010-11							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	77%	52	77%	64	66%	58	68%	56
4	54%	56	77%	60	43%	63	84%	67
5	84%	49	80%	46	83%	47	68%	47
6	75%	39	80%	60	76%	54	63%	57
7	46%	35	63%	40	57%	63	51%	65
8	41%	32	53%	38	25%	36	26%	54
All	73%	263	73%	308	59%	321	60%	346

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

Method

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

As SED has not yet determined this year’s AMO, schools need not calculate their Performance Index and may omit reporting on this measure.

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Results

In 2010-11, 38% of second year Buffalo United students scored at or above the (unadjusted) Level 3 Cut Scores in English language arts, compared to 27% of students enrolled in the district public schools.

**2010-11 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	54%	56	26%	2416
4	52%	67	28%	2419
5	47%	47	25%	2396
6	42%	57	35%	2397
7	20%	65	24%	2382
8	17%	54	23%	2321
All	38%	346	27%	14331

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 38% of students scoring at or above the (unadjusted) Level 3 Cut Scores, students at Buffalo United outperformed the district public schools by 11 percentage points. In addition, while local district schools outperformed Buffalo United by small margins in grades 7 and 8, Buffalo United outperformed the district by significant margins in grades 3-6, doubling the district’s proficiency percentages in grade 3 and exceeding the district by double digits in grades 4 and 5.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has met this measure while enrolling a higher percentage of students who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. At Buffalo United, 91% of students qualify for the free or reduced lunch program, compared to 82% in Buffalo City Public Schools. In 2005-06 and 2006-07, Buffalo United students outperformed district public schools by 10 percentage points. In 2007-08, Buffalo United students outperformed district public schools by 23 percentage points. In 2008-09, Buffalo United exceeded the local district by 19 percentage points. In 2009-10, Buffalo United exceeded the local district by 6 percentage points. In 2010-11, Buffalo United exceeded the local district by 11 percentage points.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Levels 3 and 4 and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	77%	47%	77%	49%	55%	28%	54%	26%
4	54%	42%	77%	54%	25%	31%	52%	28%
5	84%	53%	80%	56%	43%	32%	47%	25%
6	75%	44%	80%	64%	46%	30%	42%	35%
7	46%	44%	63%	62%	30%	32%	20%	24%

8	41%	28%	53%	43%	14%	26%	17%	23%
All	65%	42%	73%	54%	36%	30%	38%	27%

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Given the timing of the state's release of poverty data, the 2010-11 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2009-10 results, the most recent ones available.

Results

Buffalo United achieved an Effect Size of 0.33 in 2009-10, which is higher than expected to a small degree.

2009-10 English Language Arts 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		83	54.2	38.4	15.8	1.08
4		73	24.7	36.2	-11.5	-0.76
5		73	45.2	35.2	10.0	0.65
6		71	46.5	29.5	17.0	1.17
7		74	27.1	26.2	0.9	0.07
8		47	17.0	27.0	-10.0	-0.69
All	81.5	421	37.3	32.6	4.8	0.33

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Higher than expected to a small degree.

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With an Effect Size of 0.33, the School's performance in English language arts was higher than expected to a small degree.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United's Effect Size has been higher than expected for the past three years. In 2007-08, the Effect Size was higher than expected to a large degree (0.85). In 2008-09, the Effect Size was 0.50, higher than expected to a medium degree. In 2009-10, Buffalo United achieved an Effect Size of 0.33, higher than expected to a small degree. Given the timing of the state's release of poverty data, the 2010-11 analysis is not yet available.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2006-07	3-7	78.7	279	44.1	46.5	-0.14
2007-08	3-8	76.5	361	65.95	53.72	0.85
2008-09	3-8	77.4	392	71.4	64.7	0.50
2009-10	3-8	81.5	421	37.3	32.6	0.33

Goal 1: Growth Measure

On the current year's state English language arts exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's state English language arts exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3. 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

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above proficient. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2010-11 and also have a state exam score in 2009-10. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade are included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the aggregate of all cohorts is examined to determine the growth of all students who took a state exam in both years.

Results

Buffalo United did not meet its target cohort growth as an aggregate, or at any individual grade level.

Cohort Growth on State English Language Arts Exam from 2009-10 to 2010-11

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent Performing At or Above Level 3			Target Achieved
		2009-10	Target	2010-11	
4	63	49%	62%	54%	No
5	44	32%	54%	48%	No
6	52	44%	60%	42%	No
7	59	42%	58%	20%	No
8	50	24%	50%	14%	No
All	270	39%	47%	36%	No

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. None of the six cohorts achieved its target.

Additional Evidence

None of the six cohorts achieved their target in 2010-11. One cohort met its target in 2009-10. However, Buffalo United has demonstrated improvement in past years. In 2006-07, one cohort met its target; in 2007-08 two cohorts met their targets; and in 2008-09, four cohorts met their targets with one of those cohorts being the aggregate cohort.

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
2007-08	4-8	2	6
2008-09	4-8	4	6
2009-10	4-8	1	6
2010-11	4-8	0	6

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Buffalo United met one of three measures for which data is available for the 2010-11 school year. While the school did not meet its absolute measure or growth measure in English language arts, it did meet its comparative measure—outperforming the district public schools by 11 percentage points.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score on the New York State examination.	Did Not Achieve
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.	N/A
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	N/A
Growth	On the 2010-11 state exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above level 3 on the 2009-10 state exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3.	Did Not Achieve

Action Plan

The school will continue to implement data- and research-based interventions to accelerate student growth in English language arts. We believe the increased focus on data during the 2010-11 school year was beneficial for students. As such, teachers will continue to administer mock tests and analyze formative assessment data. Administration will work directly with teachers and teachers will then use the data to drive instruction to fit specific student academic needs.

This data will also allow the school to develop and provide instructional programs outside of school hours. BUCS will continue to move forward with unit and lesson planning, formative assessments, ISP's, one-on-one meetings, and observation of classrooms. Another need the school has identified is continuing to coach and mentor teachers on research-based strategies that they can use in their classrooms. More attention will be focused on the use of scoring scales, formative assessments, Accelerated Reader, Descartes, and Study Island.

We recognize a particular area for improvement in grade 7 and 8 English language arts. We have made a staffing change in grade 7 for the 2011-12 school year, which we believe will help the School better meet student needs. In addition:

- Grade 7 and 8 students will be grouped by instructional ability. An at-risk teacher will supplement instruction in the “novice” grades 7 and 8 sections and in the “basic” grade 8 section. This will assist teachers in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students.
 - An at-risk teacher will conduct fluency and comprehension assessments at the beginning of the school year. Once students’ scores have been analyzed, they will be put into instructional groupings within their class.
 - The at-risk teacher will provide a reading intervention program called, “Soar to Success” in the “novice” grades 7 and 8 sections and in the “basic” grade 8 section.
 - Classroom teachers will use workshop based instruction. This teaching method will further differentiate instruction for students in each section and ensure proficiency in all performance indicators.
- Students will read every night for at least 45 minutes. The School will hold students accountable for this requirement by administering Accelerated Reader tests.
- Once data from the fall administration of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments have been collected, deans and teachers will use the data to drive lesson plans and workshops.
- The dean will make each student an NWEA folder. The folder will include a checklist of skills that the student must master by the winter. There will be activities in the folder for the student to work on to ensure that they will become proficient in those areas.

In addition to the support provided specifically for 7 and 8 grade students listed above, school-wide efforts to accelerate growth in English language arts will include:

- Professional development for teachers on using NWEA data and Descartes to improve understanding of student needs.
- Implementation of the Wilson Reading Program to increase fluency based on Special Education students’ September fluency results. All targeted students will also be taught to use SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review) reading techniques to improve reading comprehension.
- Professional development for teachers to differentiate classroom instruction through workshops.
- Supplemental personnel—including paraprofessionals and at-risk teachers—to provide classroom teachers with additional support.
- Student incentive programs to motivate students.
- Parent communications that allow families to understand their children’s progress.
- Support and training to help parents understand their child’s achievement and how they can help their child achieve proficiency.
- Extended learning opportunities, including after-school and Saturday programming and summer programming for at-risk students.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will be proficient in mathematics.

Background

The National Council for Teachers of Mathematics has recognized the importance of the study of algebra in developing mathematical fluency and has also noted the importance of the study of other mathematics components such as number sense and number operations, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability and problem solving. The curriculum focuses on each of these components beginning in kindergarten. Number sense is developed through a variety of concrete models, allowing students to use the area of the brain used for the comprehension of mathematical knowledge. Students are prepared to be fluent in computation using formal algorithms and learn essential measurement and data analysis skills. Students also learn to make connections and apply mathematical knowledge through problem solving and inquiry.

In grades K-2, algebraic awareness, number sense and computational fluency are the main focus of students' learning. Students develop the skills necessary to progress into higher level mathematics; through open-ended problem solving, they increase their critical thinking skills and ability to see connections across mathematics as well as other subjects. In grades 3-5, learning shifts from computation to fractional awareness. The part-to-whole relationships developed in these early grades leads to a deeper understanding of fractions, percents, and decimals and computation. Algebraic skills move from pattern recognition and development to the creation of equations and the use of variables. As students move into grades 6 through 8, the focus shifts to the study of algebra and functions. Number sense remains a critical focus area through the study of integers, rational and irrational numbers, exponents, and absolute values. Conceptual ideas are integrated through lab activities that provide exploratory opportunities for students to explicitly connect abstract ideas to concrete examples.

The mathematics curriculum also ensures that students become effective as mathematical communicators by engaging them in thinking, reading, and writing about mathematics to help them understand the foundational concepts necessary for success in more complex mathematical coursework.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

In 2009-10 and 2010-11, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores on the New York State mathematics examination⁴.

⁴ In order to abide by the measures to which schools are held accountable in their school's Accountability Plans, the Institute will continue to use the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores, which provide year-to-year consistency with the Plan's standard while accounting for the timing of the test administration (i.e., SED now gives the test later in the school year).

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in grades 3 through 8 in May 2011. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. Through 2008-09, the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10 and 2010-11, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores¹, presented in the table below.

Grade	Time Adjusted Cut Scores
	Level 3
3	656
4	655
5	653
6	653
7	651
8	652

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

2010-11 State Mathematics Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁵			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	71	0	0	0	71
4	75	0	0	0	75
5	64	0	0	0	64
6	69	0	0	0	69
7	74	0	0	0	74
8	70	0	0	0	70
All	423	0	0	0	423

Results

In 2010-11, 92% of students scored at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score.

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 2010-11 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score	Number Tested
3	All Students	90%	71
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	98%	56
4	All Students	93%	75
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97%	67
5	All Students	91%	64
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	91%	47
6	All Students	84%	69
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	86%	57
7	All Students	78%	74
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	89%	65
8	All Students	87%	70
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	91%	53
All	All Students	90%	423
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	92%	345

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 92% of students scoring at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score, the School exceeded its goal by 17 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has consistently met this measure since 2007-08. The school increased proficiency by 12 percentage points from 2009-10 and 2010-11. In addition, in 2010-11, each individual grade level cohort exceeded the proficiency goal. Grades 4, 7 and 8, which struggled in 2009-10, made particularly noteworthy gains in 2010-11. The School achieved proficiency gains of 18 percentage points in grade 7 and 16 percentage points in grade 8. In addition, proficiency in grade 4 jumped from 62% in 2009-10 to 97% - an increase of 35 percentage points.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 through 2008-09 and at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score in 2009-10 and 2010-11							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	88%	52	89%	64	93%	58	98%	56
4	98%	56	92%	59	62%	63	97%	67
5	98%	49	93%	45	90%	47	91%	47
6	84%	38	97%	61	94%	54	86%	57

7	80%	35	82%	38	71%	63	89%	65
8	75%	32	67%	36	75%	36	91%	53
All	89%	262	88%	303	80%	321	92%	345

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

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

Method

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

As SED has not yet determined this year’s AMO, schools need not calculate their Performance Index and may omit reporting on this measure.

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Results

Sixty percent of students scored at or above the (unadjusted) Level 3 cut score, compared to 31% of students enrolled in the district public school.

**2010-11 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 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	57%	56	28%	2482
4	72%	67	35%	2485
5	55%	47	31%	2449
6	47%	57	32%	2438

7	65%	65	32%	2421
8	60%	53	28%	2404
All	60%	345	31%	14679

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 60% of Buffalo United students scoring at or above the (unadjusted) Level 3 Cut Score, the School outperformed the district public schools by 29 percentage points—nearly doubling the district’s proficiency rate.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has consistently met this measure since 2007-08. In 2009-10, Buffalo United outperformed the district public schools by 16 percentage points. In 2010-11, Buffalo United’s proficiency rate increased 14 percentage points, nearly doubling that gap between the school and the district. In addition, Buffalo United exceeded the district public school proficiency rates at each individual grade level. In grades 3, 4, 7 and 8, Buffalo United more than doubled the district proficiency rate.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Levels 3 and 4 and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	88%	66%	89%	75%	60%	28%	57%	28%
4	98%	53%	92%	64%	29%	31%	72%	35%
5	98%	50%	93%	62%	62%	32%	55%	31%
6	84%	49%	97%	57%	70%	30%	47%	32%
7	80%	50%	82%	63%	29%	32%	65%	32%
8	75%	34%	67%	58%	25%	26%	60%	28%
All	89%	50%	88%	63%	46%	30%	60%	31%

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Given the timing of the state's release of poverty data, the 2010-11 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2009-10 results, the most recent ones available.

Results

In 2009-10, Buffalo United achieved an effect size of 0.25 in mathematics, which is higher than expected but does not meet the 0.30 threshold.

2009-10 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		83	66.3	44.1	22.2	1.23
4		73	28.8	47.3	-18.3	-1.00
5		73	63.0	48.1	14.9	0.80
6		71	67.6	41.7	25.9	1.32
7		74	24.3	40.0	-15.7	-0.76
8		47	23.4	32.9	-9.5	-0.47
All	81.5	421	47.3	43.0	4.3	0.25

School's Overall Comparative Performance:

Slightly higher than expected.

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2009-10. With a 0.25 Effect Size, the school fell 0.05 points below the threshold for 'higher than expected to a small degree.' Given the timing of the state's release of poverty data, the 2010-11 analysis is not yet available.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2009-10, but consistently met this measure for the three years preceding 2009-10. In 2006-07, the school's Effect Size was 1.20, higher than expected to a large degree. In 2007-08, the school's Effect Size was 1.10, higher than expected to a large degree—with Effect Sizes in grades 4-8 all higher than expected to a large degree. In 2008-09, the school's Effect Size was 0.64, higher than expected to a medium degree.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2006-07	3-7	78.7	275	84.7	62.8	1.20
2007-08	3-8	76.5	360	88.62	70.60	1.10
2008-09	3-8	77.4	382	87.4	78.5	0.64
2009-10	3-8	81.5	421	47.3	43.0	0.25
2010-11	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Goal 1: Growth Measure

On the current year's state mathematics exam, 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. 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

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above proficient. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2010-11 and also have a state exam score in 2009-10. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade are included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the aggregate of all cohorts is examined to determine the growth of all students who took a state exam in both years.

Results

Buffalo United met its target in cohort growth in three of six cohorts: grades 4, 5 and 8.

Cohort Growth on State Mathematics Exam from 2009-10 to 2010-11

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent Performing At or Above Level 3			Target Achieved
		2009-10	Target	2010-11	
4	63	62%	69%	71%	Yes
5	44	34%	55%	59%	Yes
6	52	62%	69%	48%	No
7	59	66%	71%	64%	No
8	49	24%	50%	61%	Yes
All	269	51%	63%	61%	No

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. With an overall proficiency rate of 61% (using unadjusted Level 3 Cut Scores), Buffalo United fell two percentage points short of meeting its goal overall. However, the school did meet its targets in grades 4, 5 and 8.

Additional Evidence

While Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2010-11, it has shown improvement over the past three years. In 2008-09, one of six cohorts met their target growth. In 2009-10, two cohorts met their growth targets. In 2010-11, three cohorts did so. In addition, the school was just 2 percentage points below its target in its combined growth in 2010-11.

**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
2007-08	4-8	4	6
2008-09	4-8	1	6
2009-10	4-8	2	6
2010-11	4-8	3	6

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

In 2010-11, Buffalo United met two of the three measures for which data is available. With 92% of students scoring at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Scores, it exceeded the first absolute measure by 17 percentage points. In addition, Buffalo United nearly doubled the proficiency rate of the district public schools, with 60% of students scoring at or above the unadjusted Level 3 Cut Scores, compared to 31% of district public school students. Buffalo United did not meet its growth measure in mathematics, but built on progress made in previous years—with three of six cohorts meeting their growth targets.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	N/A
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	N/A
Growth	On the 2010-11 state exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above level 3 on the 2009-10 state exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3.	Did Not Achieve

Action Plan

Based on the 2009-10 state assessment data, Buffalo United implemented a number of targeted practices to increase proficiency in mathematics during the 2010-11 school year. These measures focused particularly on grades 4, 7 and 8. We are pleased that these grade levels have shown significant progress, as reflected in increases of 35 percentage points in grade 4, 18 percentage points in grade 7 and 16 percentage points in grade 8. As such, we believe our interventions are proving to be effective and will continue implementing them during the 2011-12 school year.

- Teachers will review multiplication and division with students on a daily basis and post visuals of these operations throughout their classrooms.
- Teachers will work with students to solve a “problem of the day” and practice identifying numeric or geometric patterns daily.
- Teachers will use data from a strand-analysis of NYS assessment data and the NWEA Measures of Academy Progress to tailor instruction to meet students’ diverse needs and fill specific knowledge gaps

- Teachers will use Descartes to identify the topics in which each student requires additional instruction.
- Teachers will use grade-level planning time and formative assessment data to create lesson plans that allow for small group instruction with academic specialists and paraprofessionals.
- Teachers will develop a series of hands-on activities and real-life examples to demonstrate multiples, least common multiples, and estimation.
- A professional development consultant will work with deans and teachers to identify areas for additional support in mathematics instruction.

In addition, a number of additional measures will be implemented this year:

- Deans and teachers will receive professional development to help them create differentiated instruction, with a particular focus on workshops.
- Classroom teachers will be supported by supplemental personnel—including paraprofessionals and at-risk teachers.
- Extended Learning opportunities will be provided, including after-school/Saturday programming and summer programming for at-risk students.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will be proficient in Science.

Background

As the Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Council on Science explain, developing college-ready and scientifically literate students involves teaching a mixture of content knowledge, the practices and skills of scientists, and information on the nature of science. The curriculum, which includes study in life science, physical science and earth and space science, is designed to develop content knowledge about the results of scientific discoveries regarding the natural world. The teaching of practices and skills of scientists requires that students participate in the scientific process of inquiry and discovery through conducting investigations, using instruments, and applying mathematical skills that model the process used by scientists to learn about the universe. The curriculum provides students with the opportunity to participate in the scientific process, in addition to read, write, discuss and experiment with science through high level thinking and problem solving. It also ensures that students use the scientific processes and skills through lab work and investigations.

The content of the science curriculum in kindergarten through grade two focuses scientific learning primarily through the study of events and phenomena in nature that can be observed with the five senses. Investigations at this level are modeled, simple, and structured, allowing students to write journals on their discoveries, create simple pictographs of data, and draw conclusions from observations under the direction of the teacher. The incorporation of non-fiction readers on each topic provides students the opportunity to develop grade level appropriate science vocabulary.

Building on these foundational skills, including the integration of skills from ELA and math, the curriculum for grades three through five directs students to begin exploring cause and effect connections between events (e.g., the sun rises every day and it gets warmer during the day, ergo, the sun provides heat to earth). Investigations for students in grades three through five are still often modeled, but they are more complex and involve more detailed measurements, use a variety of tools such as balances and microscopes, and require students to control for multiple variables. Students engage in the practices of

scientists as they chart data, complete lab reports, and create graphs in order to communicate results of investigations orally and in writing while defending their conclusions.

The curriculum for students in grades six through eight includes further exploration of cause and effect relationships while also connecting knowledge of concepts to real world examples and solidifying congruence between students’ understanding of phenomena to that of the scientific community. Investigations are more student-directed, from the guiding question through the scientific procedures to the organizing, analyzing and reporting of data.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

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

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in grades 4 through 8 in spring 2010. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4.

Results

In 2010-11, 86% of students scored at or above the Level 3 Cut Score in science.

**Charter School Performance on 2010-11 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%	4%	27%	69%	96%	78
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0%	4%	27%	69%	96%	77
8	All Students	0%	25%	67%	7%	74%	55
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0%	25%	67%	7%	74%	55
All	All Students	1%	14%	49%	35%	84%	141
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	1%	14%	36%	39%	86%	118

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 86% of students scoring at or above the Level 3 Cut Score, Buffalo United exceeded its accountability goal of 75% by 11 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

While Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2009-10, the School has otherwise met this measure consistently over the past 5 years. In 2006-07, the School met this measure in grade 4 (the School did not enroll grade 8) with 98% of students scoring at or above Level 3. In 2007-08, the first year the school enrolled 8 grade students, 81% scored at Level 3 or above. The School met the measure again in 2008-09, with 83% of students scoring at Level 3 or above. In 2009-10, the School missed its 75% goal by two

percentage points. In 2010-11, the School exceeded its 75% goal by 11 percentage points. In addition, the school showed gains of 13 percentage points in grade 4 and 17 percentage points in grade 8.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	93%	56	95%	57	83%	63	96%	77
8	59%	32	64%	36	57%	36	74%	55
All	81%	88	83%	93	73%	99	86%	132

Goal 3: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Results

Buffalo United achieved a proficiency rate of 86% in science. Data for the district public schools is not yet available. Therefore, we are unable to compare Buffalo United scores to those of the district schools.

**2010-11 State Science Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	96%	77	n/a	n/a
8	74%	55	n/a	n/a
All	86%	132	n/a	n/a

Evaluation

Because data for district public schools has not yet been released, we are unable to determine if the School met this measure.

Additional Evidence

Because data for district public schools has not yet been released, we are unable to determine if the School met this measure. However, the school has consistent met this measure for the past three years. It

outperformed the district public schools by 29 percentage points in 2007-08, by 28 percentage points in 2008-09 and by 19 percentage points in 2009-10.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Levels 3 and 4 and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students							
	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	93%	63%	95%	70%	83%	62%	96%	n/a
8	59%	41%	64%	40%	57%	45%	74%	n/a
All	81%	52%	83%	55%	73%	54%	86%	n/a

Summary of the Science Goal

Buffalo United achieved the measure for which data is available at this time. With 86% of students achieving at or above a Level 3 Cut Score, it exceeded its accountability plan goal by 11 percentage points. Data from the district public schools is not yet available. Therefore, we are unable to report on the comparative measure.

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

Action Plan

Buffalo United's students performed favorably on the state science assessment. The school will continue working until all students perform at or above Level 3 on the exam. Due to the positive results, the school will continue implementing and supporting the science program as done in 2009-10.

NCLB

Goal 5: NCLB

The School will be in “Good Standing” each year.

Goal 5: Absolute Measure

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

Method

Since *all* students are expected to meet the state's learning standards, the federal No Child Left Behind legislation stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results. New York, like all states, established a system for making these determinations for its public schools. Each year the state issues School Report Cards which indicate each school’s status under the state’s NCLB accountability system. For a school’s status to be “Good Standing” it must not have failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years.

Results

Buffalo United met adequate yearly progress this year in every cohort except for English language arts for special education students.

ELA	Met
Math	Met
Special Education ELA	Not met
Special Education Math	Met
Economically Disadvantaged ELA	Met
Economically Disadvantaged Math	Met

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. It failed to meet adequate yearly progress in special education for two consecutive years and is therefore a “School in Need of Improvement” in 2010-11.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has been in good standing every year for the past five years. However, the school failed to meet AYP in special education in 2009-10 and again in 2010-11.

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2005-06	Good Standing
2007-08	Good Standing
2008-09	Good Standing
2009-10	Good Standing
2010-11	School in Need of Improvement

Action Plan

In order to meet our goals for AYP, Buffalo United will implement the following practices during the 2010-11 school year:

- Target students who are deficient in oral reading fluency and provide these students with an additional intervention called Wilson Reading System.
- Target students who are deficient in reading comprehension and teach them to utilize a research proven strategy called SQ3R.
- Eligible students, as determined by socio-economic status, can receive Supplementary Educational Services. These services will provide additional tutoring in ELA and Math for targeted students.