



**Harlem Link
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2013-14 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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By Steven Evangelista

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Steven Evangelista, Principal, prepared this 2013-14 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Jonathan Barrett	Chair/President, Executive, Development, Finance
Krista Barron	Trustee, Education
David Brown	Secretary, Executive
Bianna Cardinale	Trustee, Education
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Kenneth Catandella	Trustee, Development
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Brandilyn Dumas	Trustee, Education, Executive
Rachel Field	Trustee, Education, Development, Executive
John Reddick	Trustee

Steven Evangelista has served as the Principal since 2011 and served as the Co-Director from 2004 to 2011.

INTRODUCTION

Harlem Link is an independent charter school initially chartered to serve grades K-4 in Central Harlem. The school opened with grades K-1 in September 2005 with the mission of graduating articulate scholars who meet or exceed state performance standards and active citizens who learn and serve in their communities. The school reached grades K-5 in 2008 and plans to remain at these grades through the next charter period, choosing to focus on honing the academic programs in the elementary grades before pursuing charter authorization for middle school. Harlem Link currently aids its fourth and fifth grade students to gain admission to high performing, competitive public and private middle schools. The SUNY Charter Schools Institute granted Harlem Link a three-year charter renewal in 2010 and a five-year renewal in 2013.

The school design is distinguished by an emphasis on teaching students critical thinking skills, encouraging students to take an active role in their own learning and thus empowering themselves to develop good character. Harlem Link's culture emphasizes collaboration, which is embodied in the co-teaching model as well as the numerous community and institutional partnerships the school uses to advance student learning. As such, Harlem Link vigorously embraced New York State's transition to Common Core Standards, in which there is an increased emphasis on literary analysis, mathematical thinking and process, and student discussion. These elements have always been a part of Harlem Link's instructional vision.

With the exception of fifth grade, Harlem Link enrolls 54 students per grade. (Since many charter schools and other competitive middle school programs begin in fifth grade, the school experiences and even encourages greater student attrition. In 2012, for example, the school facilitated four top students to gain admission to the Upper West Side's exclusive Center School, and nominated them as honorary Harlem Link alumni.) Each year, the school has attracted an increasing number of families eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a federal indicator of poverty level. In 2013-14, approximately 87% of Harlem Link students fell into this category. Throughout the eight years of the school's existence, the ethnic and neighborhood demographics have held constant, approximately 80% of students are African-American, non-Hispanic with remaining students identifying as Hispanic. Though the school is located in Community School District 3 in upper Manhattan, a plurality of students reside in Community School District 5, which encompasses central Harlem. The remainder of students resides in more than 10 other districts throughout New York City.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2010-11	48	53	49	53	54	38	295
2011-12	50	50	51	52	52	37	292
2012-13	55	51	51	51	54	40	302
2013-14	50	53	53	48	53	48	305

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

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

Background

Harlem Link uses a balanced literacy approach to teaching English Language Arts (ELA). Teachers use the Reader's and Writer's Workshop as a guide for instruction. This includes the use of read aloud, shared reading, guided reading and other small group instruction, independent reading with teacher conferencing, shared writing, interactive writing, guided writing and independent writing as elements of classroom instruction. Teachers use individual conferences and a variety of unit-level and term-level formal assessments to gauge student achievement and to plan differentiated instruction based on individual student needs. Harlem Link uses the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) as a school-wide reading level benchmarking tool. Teachers use results to plan small group instruction goals.

Harlem Link also employs two Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teachers to provide support to struggling readers and writers through a robust Student Support and Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Harlem Link's RTI program is organized through Child Study Team meetings. Each student as part of RTI receives targeted goals with expected periods for improvement, interventions and frequent progress monitoring. The school emphasizes classroom-based interventions with the goal of using the Committee on Special Education sparingly and only when school-based interventions are ineffective, in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Despite identifying a small percentage of enrolled students as disabled, the school maintains a similar rate of enrollment of students with disabilities to the surrounding community.

Harlem Link's curriculum is completely aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the culmination of a process that began with staff, administrators and faculty in January 2011. As part of this transition, the school modified the Reading and the Writing scopes and sequences in each grade to include more nonfiction reading and persuasive writing. Based on these and other small changes to the ELA program, for the first time in the school's history, a large percentage of returning students are arriving to the school on or above grade level for ELA.

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts examination for grades 3-8.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in third through fifth grade in April 2014. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

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 not enrolled in at least their second year.

**2013-14 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ¹			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	48	-	-	-	48
4	53	-	-	-	53
5	48	-	-	-	48
All	149	0	0	0	149

Results

During the 2013-14 academic year, 15.0% of students enrolled at Harlem Link for two or more years achieved proficiency on the state English Language Arts (ELA) exam.

**Performance on 2013-14 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	22.9	48	17.1	35
4	9.4	53	11.4	44
5	12.5	48	17.1	41
All	14.8	149	15.0	120

Evaluation

Harlem Link did not meet the measure for 2014 with only 15.0% of students across the school attaining proficiency on the state’s ELA exam. This performance falls below the measure’s target of 75% proficiency. Students in the third and fifth grade achieved the highest levels of proficiency in the school at 17.1%, which represents an increase over the grades performance on the 2013 administration of the exam.

This performance mirrors the results from the 2013 administration of the state’s ELA exam, when across the state student proficiency dropped by an average of 24.0 percentage points with the administration of a Common Core aligned exam. Over the last three years, Harlem Link has

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.

adjusted and strengthened its program to meet the higher standards of the Common Core. The 2014 scores demonstrate the school’s long transition from its former school-based learning standards to the New York State Common Core Curriculum Standards, which has resulted in some successes such as the year-to-year increase in performance for the school’s third and fifth grades.

Additional Evidence

The 2012-13 academic year began a new Accountability Period for the school with a new test. As evidenced by the results of the 2014 administration of the ELA exam, Harlem Link, similar to many schools across the state, continues to face challenges with meeting the demands of the new test.

The following chart depicts Harlem Link student performance on the state’s ELA exam during the three most recent years. Generally, students enrolled at the school for two or more years perform better than those who have benefitted from the school’s program for less time. In addition, the school experienced year-to year gains with third and fifth grade student performance.

English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	55.2	29	13.9	36	17.1	35
4	52.4	42	26.6	43	11.4	44
5	50.0	34	13.9	36	17.1	41
All	52.4	105	18.3	115	15.0	120

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) 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 enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state’s learning standards in English language arts. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2013-14 English language arts AMO of 89. The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.²

² In contrast to SED’s Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

Results

Harlem Link's Performance Level Index for 2014 is 77.4.

English Language Arts 2013-14 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	38.3	47.5	13.3	1.7

$$\begin{array}{rcccccccc} \text{PI} & = & 47.5 & + & 13.3 & + & 1.7 & = & 62.4 \\ & & & & 13.3 & + & 1.7 & = & \underline{15.0} \\ & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 77.4 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Harlem Link's PLI did not meet the state's AMO of 89 by 12 points.

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year 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 in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.³

Results

Harlem Link saw 15.0% of its students attain proficiency on the state exam as compared with 49% of students in District 3 and 14.4% of students in District 5 attaining proficiency. While the school is physically located in District 3, a significant number of Harlem Link's students reside in District 5. Harlem Link students outperformed students in District 5 but did not exceed the performance of students in District 3 as shown in the chart below.

³ Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its Access database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

**2013-14 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency					
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District 3 Students (Local District)		All District 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	17.1	35	45.0	1394	13.9	932
4	11.1	44	54.0	1415	16.0	899
5	17.1	41	48.0	1268	13.0	769
All	15.0	120	49.0	4077	14.4	2600

Evaluation

Based on its student population characteristics, Harlem Link’s performance is compared to District 5 for the 2013-14 academic year. When compared to District 5, the residence of a noteworthy majority of the school’s students, Harlem Link’s students having outperformed District 5 students in all grades except for fourth. As such, Harlem Link has met this measure.

In previous years, the school was compared to District 3 based on its location. While the school is technically located in the relatively high-performing and diverse District 3, the majority of Harlem Link’s students live in the low-performing and low-income District 5. In District 3, the majority of schools are located on the wealthy Upper West Side, with a small number of schools (including Harlem Link and its co-located schools) being located in the southern part of Harlem.

Additional Evidence

The change in state cut scores in 2010 established the pattern of Harlem Link not surpassing Community School District 3, but outperforming the local schools in the Harlem community. Over time, the school had closed the performance gap between Harlem Link and District 3 from over 20 percentage points to fewer than 10 percentage points in 2012. However, those gains were lost in 2013 and not yet reclaimed in 2014 as the school once again fell more than 20 percentage points behind District 3’s performance.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students						
	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		
	Charter School	District 3	Charter School	District 3	Charter School	District 3	District 5
3	55.2	61.7	13.9	48.8	17.1	45.0	13.9
4	52.4	65.3	26.2	44.5	11.4	54.0	16.0
5	50.0	58.5	13.5	41.3	17.1	48.0	13.0
All	52.4	61.9	18.3	45.0	15.0	49.0	14.4

In addition, Harlem Link students continue to outperform the combined third through fifth grade students enrolled at P.S. 208, a district school with which Harlem Link shares a building.

**English Language Arts Performance of
School and Comparison School(s) by School year**

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All students in Comparison School(s) Scoring Proficient on the State Exam by Year			
		Harlem Link		P.S. 208	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2010-11	3-5	35.7	115	29.2	195
2011-12	3-5	52.4	105	39.5	172
2012-13	3-5	18.3	115	7.7	155
2013-14	3-5	15.0	120	12.8	141

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.⁴

Method

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

Given the timing of the state’s release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2013-14 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2012-13 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

Results

Harlem Link achieved a -0.03 effect size during the previous school year. Data for the current school year is not yet available.

⁴ The Institute will continue using *economically disadvantaged* instead of *eligibility for free lunch* as the demographic variable in 2013-14. Schools should report previous year’s results using reported free-lunch statistics.

2012-13 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3		51	11.8	18.1	-6.3	-0.54
4		54	24.1	17.7	6.4	0.54
5		40	15.0	16.8	-1.8	-0.16
All	90.5	145	17.3	17.6	-0.4	-0.03

School's Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Lower than expected</i>

Evaluation

Overall, Harlem Link did not meet this measure performing lower than expected. However, the performance of fourth graders exceeded the prediction with students performing higher than expected to a small degree.

Additional Evidence

The school met the target in 2011-12, the final year of its accountability term. Harlem Link has yet to meet the target during the new charter term.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2010-11	3-5	78.0	143	32.9	40.5	-0.05
2011-12	3-5	74.6	141	51.0	43.9	0.45
2012-13	3-5	90.5	145	17.3	17.6	-0.03

Goal 1: Growth Measure⁵

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

⁵ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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 in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2012-13 and also have a state exam score from 2011-12 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2011-12 score are ranked by their 2012-13 score and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2013-14 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2012-13 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁶

Results

Harlem Link's mean growth percentile for 2012-13 of 57.6 exceeds the statewide median of 50.0. In particular, students in the fourth grade cohort exceeded the grade-level median by more than 10 points.

2012-13 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
3	N/A	50.0
4	63.8	50.0
5	48.8	50.0
All	57.6	50.0

Evaluation

Harlem Link met this measure for the 2012-13 academic year. Data for 2013-14 is not yet available. The school's overall mean growth percentile is greater than the state median of the 50th percentile. In addition, fourth grade students far surpassed the state median attaining the 63.8 percentile.

⁶ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

Additional Evidence

Given the change to the state's testing program, multi-year comparison data is not yet available.

English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2010-11 ⁷	2011-12 ⁷	2012-13	Statewide Average
3			NA	50.0
4			63.8	50.0
5			48.8	50.0
All			57.6	50.0

⁷ Grade level results not available.

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Data is only available for three of the five measures applicable for the 2013-14 academic year. Of the three measures with available data, Harlem Link has achieved one measure but has not yet achieved the others. As a result, Harlem Link has not yet met its ELA goal. Data is available for two of the five measures applicable for the 2012-13 academic year. Harlem Link has achieved one of these measures.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts exam for grades 3-8.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state English language arts exam will meet that year’s Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Did not Achieve
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of 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 English language arts exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2012-13 school district results.)	Did Not Achieve
Growth	Each year, under the state’s Growth Model the school’s mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state’s unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved

Action Plan

The Harlem Link staff, board and community are committed to students achieving the high standards set by the state and within the school’s Accountability Plan goals. Harlem Link has not yet met these goals and standards during the charter term. As a result, Harlem Link leaders have developed and are implementing an aggressive plan to increase student achievement. With the transition toward common core and a suspension of Harlem Link’s historical program features to focus solely on those efforts proven to increase student learning, some of these changes are well underway and producing promising results. These changes include:

- New, highly qualified teaching staff in the upper grades who are committed to continuous improvement through the implementation of feedback and professional development
- Curriculum shift from large, thematically themed units to small genre-based units
- Implementation of a 90-minute reading workshop to give students additional reading instruction and that offers students up to five different opportunities to receive small group instruction
- Renewed emphasis on social studies content
- Refinement of the school’s assessment program to provide teacher’s with clarity on how and when to use data

- Implementation of structured, ongoing professional learning communities that meet monthly and collectively and consciously work toward meeting quarterly and annual content area goals

Younger students, exposed to Harlem Link's new approach since joining the school, are experiencing significant learning gains over students in prior years as evidenced by internal assessments such as the DRA and MAP exams. As an example, 74% and 80% of second and third graders, respectively, for the 13-14 academic year are arriving to the school performing at or above grade level from the prior school year. Performance for students in lower grades is comparable. This is compared to fourth and fifth graders who are having difficulty adjusting to new strategies and content. These students are arriving to the school with significantly less students performing at or above grade level. We strongly believe that the state's testing exams administered in 2015 will mirror the results seen at the school level. Consequently, Harlem Link will continue to implement the strategies above.

However, in response to recent student performance on the state exam, Harlem Link also plans to increase student performance in all grades through implementation of the following:

- Closely align the school's social studies and ELA curriculum to provide students with supplemental ELA instruction
- Increased coaching of teacher implementation of the 90-minute reading workshop to focus on questioning techniques, decreasing teacher thinking time and placing the emphasis and thought work on students, guidance on conferencing (one-on-one instruction) implementation
- Increased teacher professional development on the ongoing use of student data for making instructional decisions including external training for school leaders and staff
- The addition of a tier to the school's Response-to-Intervention (RTI) program to provide students with additional structured support as needed

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

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

Background

In the nine years of its existence, Harlem Link has built a math curriculum that is standards-based, philosophically aligned with the school's mission and comprehensive in its approach. This curriculum has gone through a thorough review for the 2013-14 school year, to address gaps between it and the Common Core State Standards as identified by school staff in 2012-13.

Harlem Link teachers implement the TERC math program in the classrooms, along with skills practice during Morning Meeting, direct skills instruction through assessment-driven, teacher designed instruction, and the Contexts for Learning program, which supplements conceptual gaps in TERC such as measurement of time and money and basic number sense but uses the same pedagogical philosophy. This combination of programs ensures students have the number sense and basic number fact recall to wrestle with and master conceptual problems. It also allows students to understand and apply mathematical computation and problem solving to situations that arise in everyday life.

As constructivist math programs, TERC and Contexts for Learning foster mathematical thinking. Calendar study provides daily practice with basic skills, and teachers create individualized math stations and lead Guided Math groups to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students.

The school's shift away from Harlem Link school standards to New York State standards and then Common Core State Standards in two overlapping phases has mirrored that of the ELA, but has required much less effort from the leadership and teachers since the school was already substantially teaching in a manner consistent with CCSS. The school has identified two major concepts as key to faithful implementation of CCSS and preparation for PARCC in math: embedding the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice in daily math routines and a logical sequence of skill development from grades K to 5.

The eight Standards for Mathematical Practice, with their focus on student argumentation, communication, and problem solving, are consistent with the school's structured constructivist approach. The CCSS vertical sequence of skills, particularly the major emphasis on number sense in the early grades and the comparatively disproportionate focus on fractions in the upper elementary grades, has led to a change in the school's use of TERC and Contexts for Learning modules. In many cases this change has pushed units previously taught at the school into a prior grade. The school is well prepared to support teachers in this transition and well-practiced in the use of TERC modules to deliver effective math instruction.

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics examination for grades 3-8.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in third through fifth grade in April 2014. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

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 not enrolled in at least their second year.

**2013-14 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁸			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	48	-	-	-	48
4	53	-	-	-	53
5	47	-	-	-	48
All	148	0	0	0	148

Results

Student enrollment data at the time Harlem Link administered the state mathematics exam differs from that at the time Harlem Link administered the state ELA exam. This is due to the transfer of a student to another school between test administrations.

Overall, 48.6 percent of Harlem Link's students in grades 3-5 attained proficiency on the state's math exam. Students enrolled with the school for two or more years achieved proficiency at higher rates with 52.9 percent of these students attaining proficiency. This jump in performance provides evidence of the value of Harlem Link's mathematics program when students participate for two or more years.

⁸ 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.

**Performance on 2013-14 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	37.5	48	40.0	35
4	60.4	53	63.6	44
5	46.8	47	52.5	40
All	48.6	148	52.9	119

Evaluation

Harlem Link has not yet met this measure. With 52.9 percent of students enrolled in at least their second year attaining proficiency, this performance falls about 20 points below the performance determined by the measure. Of the three grades tested, the fourth grade attained the performance with 63.6 percent of students attaining proficiency.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link’s performance in the 13-14 academic year far exceeds its performance in the prior year by more than 20 percentage points providing evidence of the school’s success with adjusting to the state’s Common Core Learning Standards and its associated state exam. As shown in the table below, Harlem Link is making clear progress toward attainment of this measure.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	69.0	29	8.3	36	40.2	34
4	97.6	41	60.5	43	63.6	45
5	97.1	34	19.4	36	52.5	40
All	89.4	104	31.3	115	52.9	119

Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) 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 enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state's learning standards in mathematics. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2013-14 mathematics AMO of 86. The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.⁹

Results

Harlem Link's PLI for the 13-14 academic year is 141. This performance significantly surpasses the state's AMO of 86. Harlem Link is further encouraged by the fact that the bulk of students, who did not attain Level 3 or 4 on the state math exam, did attain a Level 2, a small distance to move students toward achievement.

Mathematics 2013-14 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	11.8	35.2	42.0	10.9

$$\begin{array}{rcccccccc} \text{PI} & = & 35.2 & + & 42.0 & + & 10.9 & = & 88.1 \\ & & & & 42.0 & + & 10.9 & = & \underline{52.9} \\ & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 141 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Harlem Link has met this measure outperforming the state's AMO by more than 55 points.

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

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

Method

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which

⁹ In contrast to NYSED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.¹⁰

Results

Harlem Link students outperformed those in District 5 and came four points shy of meeting District 3 student performance.

2013-14 State Mathematics Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency					
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		District 3 Students		District 5 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	40.0	35	54.0	1401	17.0	939
4	63.6	44	61.0	1430	18.0	915
5	52.5	40	55.0	1283	15.0	786
All	52.9	119	<u>56.7</u>	4114	16.8	2640

Evaluation

Harlem Link has met this measure. Harlem Link students outperformed the students of District 5, the residence of most Harlem Link students, by 35 percentage points. Students in the historically higher performing District 3, Harlem Link's geographical district of location, only surpassed Harlem Link's students by 3.8 percent, significantly closing the achievement gap between this district and Harlem Link's students.

Additional Evidence

With the transition to the Common Core aligned state exams in 2012-13, Harlem Link performance trailed that of District 3's performance by more than 15 percentage points and the performance of District 5 by four percentage points. In the most recent year, Harlem Link erased the gap between District 5 and closed the gap between District 3 by more than two thirds.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students							
	2011-12		2012-13			2013-14		
	Charter School	District 3	Charter School	District 3	District 5	Charter School	District 3	District 5
3	69.0	66.9	8.3	52.1	36.8	40.0	54.0	17.0

¹⁰ Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its Access database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

4	97.6	73.6	60.5	51.9	39.7	63.6	61.0	18.0
5	97.1	67.5	19.5	40.0	41.5	52.5	55.0	15.0
All	89.4	69.4	31.3	48.0	35.8	52.9	56.7	16.8

Harlem Link also outperforms the third through fifth grade performance of P.S. 208, a school that resides in the same facility as Harlem link.

Mathematics Performance of School and Comparison School(s) by School year

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All students in Comparison School(s) Scoring Proficient on the State Exam by Year			
		Harlem Link		P.S. 208	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2010-11	3-5	66.1	121	31.8	194
2011-12	3-5	89.4	115	43.1	201
2012-13	3-5	31.3	105	6.4	157
2013-14	3-5	52.9	119	17.4	144

Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.¹¹

Method

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

Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2013-14 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2012-13 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

Results

¹¹ The Institute will continue using *economically disadvantaged* instead of *eligibility for free lunch* as the demographic variable in 2013-14. Schools should report previous year's results using reported free-lunch statistics.

Harlem Link performed higher than expected to a small degree as compared to school's across the state with a similar demographic population. The school realized a 0.47 effect size for the 2012-13 academic year. Students in grade four performed higher than expected by a large degree with an effect size of 1.72.

2012-13 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3		51	9.8	21.7	-11.9	-0.77
4		54	51.8	23.4	28.4	1.72
5		40	22.5	17.3	5.2	0.36
All	90.5	145	28.9	21.1	7.9	0.47

School's Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Higher than expected to a small degree</i>

Evaluation

Harlem Link met this measure during the 2012-13 academic year performing better than expected to a small degree. Two out of three grades exceeded expectations with fourth grade performing better than expected to a large degree and fifth grade performing better than expected to a small degree.

Additional Evidence

In comparison to similar schools statewide, Harlem Link has performed better than expected during the last three academic years. The school's actual performance has consistently exceeded predictions.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2010-11	3-5	70.9	139	61.1	50.6	0.58
2011-12	3-5	78.0	143	65.0	50.1	0.80
2012-13	3-5	90.5	145	28.9	21.1	0.47

Goal 2: Growth Measure¹²

¹² See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

Each year, under the state’s Growth Model, the school’s mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state’s unadjusted median growth percentile.

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 in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2012-13 and also have a state exam score in 2011-12 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2011-12 scores are ranked by their 2012-13 scores and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (mean growth percentile). Students’ growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school’s mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state’s release of Growth Model data, the 2013-14 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2012-13 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.¹³

With the second year of testing on the state’s new math assessment, Harlem Link has exceeded the statewide average student growth on the math exam. The statewide average is 50 and Harlem Link attained growth of 57.7. To attain this growth percentile, the state used data for Harlem Link’s grades four and five. Harlem Link’s fourth grade students, in particular, far surpassed state performance obtaining a 67.7 mean growth percentile.

2012-13 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Average
3	NA	50.0
4	67.7	50.0
5	43.3	50.0
All	<u>57.7</u>	50.0

Evaluation

Harlem Link has met this measure. The school’s mean growth percentile is greater than the state median of the 50th percentile.

¹³ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s business portal: portal.nysed.gov.

Additional Evidence

This is the first year that Harlem Link is able to calculate its mean growth percentile, as this is only the second year that the state has administered the new math exam. Consequently, Harlem Link is unable to examine historical trends at this time.

Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2010-11 ¹⁴	2011-12 ¹⁴	2012-13	Statewide Average
3			NA	50.0
4			67.7	50.0
5			43.3	50.0
All	-	-	57.7	50.0

¹⁴ Grade level results not available.

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Harlem Link has met its math goal for the 2013-14 academic year. Three of the five measures to evaluate performance toward meeting the 2013-14 goal have data available at this time. Harlem link has met all but one of these measures and has met the two measures for 2012-13 where data is now available.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics exam for grades 3-8.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state mathematics exam will meet that year’s Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of 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 mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2012-13 school district results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state’s Growth Model the school’s mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state’s unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved

Action Plan

To improve math performance, Harlem Link will continue implementing a constructivist instructional model in alignment with the school’s founding educational philosophy. As part of the transition to common core, the school began implementing an I, we, you approach to math instruction which placed the burden of critical thinking on the teachers rather than the students. The constructivist approach is better aligned to the Common Core State Standards as well as the school’s goals to create responsive classrooms with rigorous instruction. Harlem Link’s teachers have defined rigor to emphasize thinking and effort. Implementation of this definition ensures that students carry the burden for critical thinking throughout each lesson and that students complete their work and continue trying and seeking to understand content.

Harlem Link will continue training all math teachers to implement the constructivist approach using a classroom format that begins with introducing a problem, having the class come together to explore different ways of solving the problem and coming to a solution and then providing time for independent work and exploration. To support this transition, in addition to working directly with a math coach, Harlem Link teachers will conduct lesson studies throughout the year. This will take place as part of the school’s professional learning communities. Teachers will come together to watch a teacher’s lesson and then provide them with feedback. In addition, teachers will visit other schools that are successfully implementing the constructivist model.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

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

Background

Harlem Link uses and supplements the FOSS (Full Option Science System) program, an inquiry-driven set of units that align to New York State Learning and Performance Standards. The school staffs science instruction with two Specialty Teachers. Students receive science instruction three periods per week. The school also sets aside time and when necessary extra funding for external enrichment programs that support science units. The school takes advantage of its proximity to Central Park and the variety of museums in New York City for hands-on experiences that support curriculum units.

Internal science assessment is done primarily through the use of curriculum-based measures provided with the FOSS kits. For the past six years, the school has hired an independent contractor, Garo Tekeyan, with extensive experience in FOSS instruction, to provide professional development to the teaching staff twice a month. The school has also begun adjusting the science curriculum to meet Common Core learning standards. As a result, science instruction is closely aligned to ELA standards, mirrors the constructivist math approach and includes small and whole group instruction.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State science examination.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th grade in spring 2014. The school converted each student's raw score to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at proficiency.

Results

Forty-four of the 53 Harlem Link students who took the 2013-14 state science exam were enrolled at the school for two or more years. Of these students, 90.9 percent attained a Level 3 or Level 4 on the state science exam.

**Charter School Performance on 2013-14 State Science Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	90.9	44	NA	NA

Evaluation

Harlem Link far exceeded this measure by more than 15 percentage points. Overall, Harlem Link is accustomed to attaining 100% proficiency on the state’s science exam. The school attributes this decrease in performance to a transition in the science program at the start of the school year.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has met the science goal throughout the charter term. During the two previous academic years, all students enrolled at the school for two or more year’s attained proficiency on the state’s science exam. In the 2013-14 academic year, Harlem Link continues to meet the goal with 90.9% of all students enrolled for two or more years attaining proficiency. This performance exceeds the goal by 14 percentage points and demonstrates the school’s record of maintaining a high level of performance in science.

Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	100.0	41	100.0	43	90.9	44
All	100.0	41	100.0	43	90.9	44

Goal 3: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state science exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

Method

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year 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 in at least their second year and the results for the respective grades in the local school district.

Results

District performance data is not yet available. As a result, Harlem Link is unable to determine whether this goal was met.

**2013-14 State Science Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	90.9	44	NA	NA

Evaluation

District data is not yet available.

Additional Evidence

During the two most recent years, Harlem Link met this measure and outperformed the district by 7 to 11 percentage points.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Proficiency and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students					
	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	100.0	89.0	100.0	93.0	90.9	
All	100.0	89.0	100.0	93.0	90.9	

Summary of the Science Goal

Harlem Link fully expects to meet its science goal for the 2013-14 academic year. At this time, the school does not yet have sufficient data to evaluate the outcome of this goal. However, of the two measures for this goal, Harlem Link has met one and fully expects to meet the other when data is available.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Not Yet Available

Action Plan

Harlem Link will continue implementing its science program, with no significant changes planned for curriculum or instruction.

NCLB

Goal 4: NCLB

The school will make adequate yearly progress.

Goal 4: Absolute Measure

Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status is in good standing: the state has not identified the school as a Focus School nor determined that it has met the criteria to be identified as a local-assistance-plan school.

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 state proficiency standards. New York, like all states, established a system for making these determinations for its public schools. Each year the state issues School Report Cards. The report cards indicate each school's status under the state's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.

Results

Harlem Link is in good standing this year.

Evaluation

Harlem Link has met the measure.

Additional Evidence

The New York State Education Department has deemed Harlem Link in good standing each year since inception.

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2011-12	Good Standing
2012-13	Good Standing
2013-14	Good Standing