

**EXCELLENCE GIRLS  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2014-15 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 15, 2015

By Madlen Read & Ashanti Herndon  
794 Monroe Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl  
Brooklyn, NY 11221  
Ph: 718-638-1875  
F: 718-228-6670

Madlen Read, Director of Operations and Ashanti Herndon, Director of Operations, prepared this 2014-15 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Laura Blankfein	Program Cmte; Joint High School Cmte
Cecily Carson	Program Cmte; Organization Management
Sabrina Dycus	Finance Cmte
Shakima Jones	Program Cmte
Alison Mass	Program Cmte; Finance Cmte
Tony Pasquariello	Board Chair; Finance; Joint High School Committee
Brett Peiser	Governance Cmte
Rosa Pizzi	Program Cmte; Governance Cmte
David Saltzman	Governance Cmte; Finance Cmte
Tokumbo Shobowale	Program cmte
Chrystal Stokes Williams	Program Cmte; Finance Cmte
Joseph Wayland	Finance Cmte
Julie Kennedy	Program Cmte

**Madlen Read has served as the Director of Operations of the elementary academy since 2015. Ashanti Herndon has served as the Director of Operations of the middle academy since 2013.**

## INTRODUCTION

Excellence Girls Charter School (Excellence Girls) is an all-girls charter public school, whose mission is to prepare its students to enter, succeed in and graduate from college preparatory high schools and colleges. Excellence Girls was founded in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, in August 2009 and has successfully completed sixth year of operation in June 2015.

### Enrollment & Demographics

During the 2014-15 school year, Excellence Girls served 587 scholars in Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> Grade. Seventy-two percent of Excellence Girls students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Two percent were English Language Learners. Seven percent were identified as requiring special education services. 90% of Excellence Girls students were African American, 7% were Latina, and 1% were Southeast Asian.

### Academic Program

At Excellence Girls Elementary Academy and Middle Academy, we not only have a longer school year, but we also have a longer school day. At the elementary academy, the day begins at 7:10 AM and ends at 3:50 PM, and at the middle academy, the day starts at 7:15 AM and ends at 4:05 PM with six or more hours of instruction every day. Over the course of the school year, this is equivalent to at least 25% more instructional time than the New York City Department of Education's minimum requirements.

In the elementary academy, our students receive 3 hours of literacy instruction, 75 minutes of math instruction, 45 minutes of instruction in social studies or science, 10 minutes of grammar instruction, 45 minutes of writing instruction every day; along with 45 minutes of instruction in character development and structured choice time, and 45 minutes of instruction in music and performing arts. In addition, scholars in need of extra help to reach proficiency receive one-on-one instruction from their teachers, or small group instruction with learning support teachers.

At the middle academy, students receive 60 minutes of science, history and writing instruction, daily. They receive intensive ELA instruction with 60 minutes of reading and 30 minutes of small group literacy instruction through our guided reading program. Four days a week, the scholars participate in enrichments that include performing arts, yearbook, dance or art.

Excellence Girls' program focuses on literacy instruction because we understand that literacy is the key to unlocking all future information, understanding and knowledge. This begins in the earliest grades:

- In the early grades, scholars have nearly 3 hours of reading instruction each day, which includes a systematic decoding program (Reading Mastery), a teacher-designed reading comprehension curriculum, and daily read alouds.
- In the key literacy-building years of K-4<sup>th</sup> grade, classrooms are staffed with two teachers in order to ensure that the student-to-teacher ratio never exceeds 15:1;
- Students are expected to read for at least 15-20 minutes at home each night in Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and for at least 30 minutes each night starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade;

- Students write in every class, and use the Writer’s Workshop method to cultivate creativity and voice.

Learning does not stop after the school day comes to a close. Each scholar, including each Kindergarten scholar, takes home at least 20 minutes of homework which we call Life’s Work, every evening – including weekends and holidays. Families and students are expected to read together for 20 minutes each night and then parents/guardians review and sign each evening’s assignment upon completion.

#### Character Development Program

We know that academic excellence is not enough. To achieve our mission here at Excellence Girls, it is imperative that we instill in them the character traits that will allow them to persevere along the road to college. We therefore explicitly teach our scholars about key character traits and community involvement.

We provide daily instruction in our Creed Values (optimism, respect, honesty, curiosity, justice, love, justice, hope, courage, and sisterhood). Each week ends with a Friday Community Meeting where we celebrate the academic successes of the week through reinforcement and celebration of our Creed Values. Classroom teachers present awards to the scholar in their class who best demonstrated the designated Creed Value of the week at each Community Meeting.

#### High Behavioral Expectations & Code of Conduct

We implement a strict code of conduct and have incredibly high behavioral expectations for our scholars in order to maintain an environment where teachers can focus on teaching and students can focus on learning.

#### Family Involvement

We know that the road to college is a long and difficult one, and requires a considerable amount of parental/family support. Therefore, we work tirelessly to involve our scholars’ families in their education.

Parents are required to attend two different orientations and one small-group meeting with our Dean of Students before scholars even start their first day of school. Teachers call parents constantly to share information about both the scholars’ struggles and positive news so that parents and teachers work together in celebrating scholars’ successes and resolving scholars’ issues. In grade K-4, teachers send home information about scholars’ academic and behavioral performance daily on a behavior log attached to the scholars’ Life’s Work packet. At the middle academy, weekly reports go home that detail the choices scholars have made that week. The school hosts a series of Families for Achievement Events (e.g. Literacy Night, Math Night, Community Service Day, Health & Wellness Night), which bring families together with scholars and teachers around academic and character development topics. Additionally, parents are required to pick up report cards in person at report card conferences, held twice each year at the elementary academy and three times a year, at the middle academy.

**School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year**

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2011-12	87	86	86	50										309
2012-13	79	84	82	81	41									367
2013-14	82	84	86	79	77	82								490
2014-15	84	87	86	86	75	86	83							587

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: English Language Arts

#### Background

The Excellence Girls reading program overcomes our scholars' early literacy deficits by aggressively accelerating them through a coherent set of teacher created curricula that addresses five components of early literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The foundation of our reading curriculum lies in four complementary, research-based programs – Direct Instruction (Reading Mastery); Riverdeep Destination Reading Program (computer program); reading comprehension instruction based on the Urban Education Exchange Concepts of Comprehension; and explicit vocabulary instruction through Text Talk (designed by noted vocabulary expert Isabel Beck) – that incorporate these five components of early literacy to provide a rigorous reading education.

This year, the Excellence Girls English Language Arts program continued to reflect our understanding that literacy is the foundation upon which all future knowledge is built. We provided our scholars with 160 minutes of reading instruction each day. Scholars started the day with a 25-minute Read Aloud, where they sat on the rug, listened to their teacher read to them from a text taken from the Text Talk Program or a teacher-selected text, and answered questions that increase their reading comprehension skills and vocabulary base. Teachers selected texts which allowed them to introduce particular comprehension concepts that they then expanded upon during Reading Comprehension. In 5<sup>th</sup> Grade through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, each subject has its own teacher. By 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, students have two hours of literacy instruction each day.

The Reading Mastery program, which teachers used as the curriculum for one of the daily 45-minute reading blocks, has an extremely strong research base. It is particularly effective in building the core decoding and fluency skills of students; moreover, the program is designed in a very linear, sequential manner. Students are not allowed to move on until they show mastery of the reading material. The Excellence Girls program gave scholars five 45-minute Reading Mastery lessons a week in order to rapidly accelerate them to mastery.

Scholars spent five 45-minute blocks each week doing Reading Comprehension and Guided Reading, using a teacher-created curriculum that is based on the Urban Education Exchange Concepts of Comprehension. During this time, scholars delved into authentic literature and practice independent reading strategies.

Kindergarten and First Grade scholars spent their third 45-minute reading block each day of the week on the classroom computers using the Riverdeep Destination Reading Program, which provided engaging individualized early literacy instruction that reinforces both phonics and comprehension skills. Second Graders spent some days using the Riverdeep Program and other days independently reading during their third reading block. Third and Fourth Graders spend their third reading block independently reading, every day.

This year, we again had two teachers in each K-4 classroom, allowing all of our scholars to rotate through the above-mentioned three 45-minute reading blocks each day in groups of 10-11 scholars. This year, we again administered several different English Language Arts assessments throughout the year. Commercial assessments included the TerraNova and the STEP Assessment (see “Summary of ELA Goal” section for details). School-created assessments included: writing assessments and school-created Interim Assessments. The middle academy and Uncommon, as a whole introduced more close reading and literature circles to push the comprehension and habits and discussion.

Beginning in Summer Staff Training and throughout the school year, our Principals developed and led along with the Director of Staff Development and Dean of Students extensive and intensive professional development workshops, some in collaboration with other Uncommon Elementary Schools.

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade in April 2015. 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 (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year).

**2014-15 State English Language Arts Exam  
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>1</sup>			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	81	1	0	0	82
4	75	0	0	0	70
5	84	0	0	0	84
6	81	0	0	0	81
All	321	1	0	0	321

<sup>1</sup> 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

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade in April 2015. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. This year 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, which marks that the student is proficient. The percentage of students at Excellence Girls who scored at a Level 3 or 4 is presented in the table below.

**Performance on 2014-15 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 Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	67%	81	68%	74
4	59%	75	58%	69
5	52%	84	58%	71
6	41%	81	40%	67
All	55%	321	56%	282

## Evaluation

With 55% of students scoring at a Level 3 or 4, Excellence Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade scholars are still working to achieve this measure. In the second year of administration of the New York State Common Core exam in English Language Arts Excellence Girls came within 20% points of the absolute measure for ELA. This gap has increased 7% points from 13% in 2014-15.

There are a number of reasons to why our scholars fell short of the goal of 75% at or above a Level 3 on the NYS ELA Exam this year. However we are confident that the steps we are continuing to implement will help to increase student performance on the exam in the coming year.

- While we continue to align our curriculum to Common Core standards in Summer of 2012 there was still a lot of work to be done around our alignment in Informational Reading as well as Social Studies and Science. Over the 2014-15 school year we focused on improving our teaching practice and ensuring that teachers were educated and received professional development on the shift happening with Common Core prior to exams. We look forward to increasing our curricular alignment to the Common Core standards in the coming year.
- Excellence Girls Elementary Academy worked hard in the 2014-15 school year to focus on writing, beginning with teacher practices during writing instruction and teacher feedback on student work after each session. In 2015-16, Excellence Girls will be focusing particularly on



reading comprehension, by providing teacher feedback on all work and using the feedback to target specific needs for each scholar in ELA. Excellence Girls also plans to instill a greater joy of reading in its scholars by implementing more initiatives to encourage independent reading.

- Excellence Girls Middle Academy will focus on reading comprehension and more data driven interventions to ensure the right scholars receive the supports beyond mandated IEPs, in the 2015-16 school year. Teachers will be working to strengthen close reading, as now, it is a large part of Uncommon’s middle school reading curriculum.

### English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	55%	76	62%	76	68%	74
4	56%	41	64%	70	58%	69
5	N/A	N/A	59%	36	58%	71
6			N/A	N/A	40%	68
All	56%	117	62%	182	56%	282

#### 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 2014-15 English language arts AMO of 97. 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.<sup>2</sup>

#### Results

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

Of Excellence Girls Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade students, 39% achieved a Level 2 on the State Exam, 43% achieved a Level 3 and 12% achieved a level 4 on the State Exam. Therefore, Excellence Girls students achieved a Performance Index of 148.

### English Language Arts 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
321	7%	39%	43%	12%

$$\begin{array}{rcccccccc}
 \text{PI} & = & 39 & + & 43 & + & 12 & = & 93 \\
 & & & & 43 & + & 12 & = & 55 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 148
 \end{array}$$

### Evaluation

Excellence Girls achieved a Performance Level Index of 148 which exceeds the 2014-15 AMO of 97. Therefore, Excellence Girls achieved 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 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.<sup>3</sup>

### Results

Excellence Girls Charter School met the comparative goal for all grade levels tested in 2015. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 68% of Excellence Girls scholars scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA exam, compared to 17.8% of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in District 16. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 58% of Excellence Girls scholars scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA exam, compared to 25.1% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 16. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 58% of Excellence Girls scholars scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA exam, compared to 15.8% of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 17. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 40% of Excellence Girls scholars scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA exam, compared to 22.3% of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 17.

<sup>3</sup> 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](#).

**2014-15 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 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	68%	74	17.8%	630
4	58%	69	25.1%	645
5	58%	71	15.8%	1383
6	40%	68	22.3%	1630
All	56%	282	20.1%	4288

**Evaluation**

Excellence Girls Charter School met the comparative goal for all grade levels tested in 2015.

**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					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	55%	13.9%	62%	22%	68%	17.8%
4	56%	18.7%	64%	20%	58%	25.1%
5	N/A	N/A	59%	20%	58%	15.8%
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	40%	22.3%
All	56%	16.3%	62%	21%	56%	20.3%

**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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students 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. 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 meaningful 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## Results

For the 2013-14 School Year, 64% of Excellence Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade scholars scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State ELA Exam. It was predicted that 25.2% would score at or above a Level 3 making the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 38.8%. It was predicted that 26.7% of 4<sup>th</sup> Grade scholars would score at or above a Level 3, and 64% actually scored at or above a Level 3. This makes the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 37.3%. It was predicted that 22.4% of 5<sup>th</sup> Grade scholars would score at or above a Level 3, and 35% actually scored at or above a Level 3. This makes the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 12.6%. The Effect Size overall is 2.08.

### **2013-14 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Proficiency		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	74.7	79	64	25.2	38.8	2.72
4	71.1	76	64	26.7	37.3	2.59
5	73.8	82	35	22.4	12.6	0.98
6						
7						
8						
<b>All</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>2.08</b>

## Evaluation

With an aggregate Effect Size of 2.08 Excellence Girls 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Scholars exceeded 0.3 and therefore met this measure.

### 2013- 14 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

Grade	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Proficiency		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	74.7	79	64	25.2	38.8	2.72
4	71.1	76	64	26.7	37.3	2.59
5	73.8	82	35	22.4	12.6	0.98
6						
7						
8						
All	73.2	237	54.0	24.7	29.3	2.08

#### Goal 1: Growth Measure<sup>4</sup>

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.

#### 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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score from 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 score are ranked by their 2013-14 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>5</sup>

#### Results

In 2014-15 the Mean Growth Percentile for Excellence Girls Scholars overall was 56. This is in comparison to the Statewide Median of 50.

### 2013-14 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

<sup>4</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

<sup>5</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s Business Portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	56.8	50.0
5	54.5	50.0
6	N/A	50.0
All	55.6	50.0

### Evaluation

Excellence Girls scored a 56 for the Mean Growth Percentile in comparison to the Statewide Median of 50, therefore Excellence Girls met this measure.

### Additional Evidence

In 2012-13 and 2013-14, Excellence Girls' growth was greater than the statewide median of 50.

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

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>6</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4		69.1	56.8	50.0
5			54.5	50.0
6				50.0
7				50.0
8				50.0
All		69.1	55.6	50.0

### Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Excellence Girls Charter School students in all grades achieved all comparative and growth measures as well as the Performance Level Index Absolute measure. Excellence Girls students are still working toward the absolute 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 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.	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 English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested	Achieved

<sup>6</sup> Grade level results not available.

	grades in the local school district.	
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 2013-14 school district results.)	Achieved
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**

Since the introduction of the Common Core curriculum, Excellence Girls has been working to strengthen our Reading Instruction and ELA curriculum to align with the new Common Core standards. While our narrative reading has been Common Core aligned, the work that our experienced teachers and instructional leaders have been doing this summer will ensure that our informational reading is also Common Core aligned. In addition there is an increased focus on feedback given to scholars and collecting data from classwork to inform instruction. This will ensure that student performance on the New York State Common Core ELA exam is increased in future years.

Uncommon Brooklyn Middle School ELA Department Coordinators worked with principals, the Associate Managing Director, and the Director of Staff Development continue to modify the Uncommon Brooklyn Middle School scope and sequence documents for ELA and Math (and the accompanying Interim Assessments), incorporating many of the Common Core Learning Standards, as we looked at our IA and test scores from last year. In 2013-2014, the Department Coordinators completed the modifications to the Uncommon Brooklyn Middle School ELA and Math scope and sequence documents and Interim Assessments, ensuring that each Common Core Learning Standard is taught and assessed. 2015-16 will be the second year of taking more rigorous and Common Core aligned interim assessments designed externally.

In addition, we’ve put a focus on close reading and literature circles in the middle academy. Close reading will allow our scholars to examine meaning thoroughly and analytically; direct attention to the text, central ideas, and supporting details. These skills are critical to ensure comprehension. A more rigorous set of grade level common texts was chosen across grades at the end of last year, and Excellence Girls middle academy reading teachers (as well as all other Uncommon middle school teachers) will now be teaching these more rigorous texts. For example, several texts were moved down a grade level or two to account for the more rigorous text expectations and texts formerly taught in 8th grade will be taught in 6th. The school has also made adjustments to its guided reading program to maximize that time which is crucial for teachers to be able to work with students at their instructional level. The scheduling of these blocks has been adjusted so that special education teachers are able to work with the school’s lowest readers multiple times a day and support more readers across grades. In addition, the school’s Principal and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will be spending more time instructing students through guided reading in order to serve as a model for other teachers to observe.

Finally, professional development and instructional leadership decisions have been made to increase the effectiveness of the ELA program. This year there will be continued PD for all teachers, regardless of the subject they teach, on Evidence Based Questions, interactive reading, Accountable Independent Reading and Habits of Discussion. Nonfiction study will be incorporated into history and science classes on a more regular basis and Instructional Leaders will be planning to co-teach with our most rookie teachers to ensure they have the most effective instruction possible while they learn to become great teachers.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Goal 2: Mathematics**

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

### **Background**

At Excellence Girls, we employ a Math curriculum that is designed to ensure that our students master both math procedures and problem-solving skills. Our math curriculum uses various methodologies and approaches to move students towards competency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving. At Excellence Girls, K-2 scholars have 75 minutes of Math instruction 5 days per week, while 3-4 scholars have 65 minutes of math instruction per day. 5<sup>th</sup> grade scholars attend a 90 minute math block 4 days a week and a 50 minute math block once a week.

In Fall 2013, Excellence Girls began to implement teacher created math lessons which utilizes the Investigations math curriculum. Excellence Girls made this change in curriculum to increase the rigor of instruction and to incorporate the Common Core.

Math Lessons include the following components:

- The Math Meeting
- The Lesson which includes: Introduction to material, the workshop, and independent practice
- Mixed Review and Fact Practice
- Story Problem
- Explore Problem
- Weekly quizzes



Teachers supplement lessons with additional materials, based on the skill needs reflected in students' Interim Assessments, and TerraNova results.

At Excellence Girls elementary academy, the Math Meeting is conducted whole-group on the rug. The Lesson is conducted whole group with both teachers, with one teacher giving individual support based on current skill level of the scholars, except in instances where lessons call for small groups to be split to ensure targeted instruction for students who have begun to master the material, and students who are still struggling to master the material. Weekly quizzes are given to students to check for student mastery on skills taught and reviewed each week. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade scholars received additional tutoring supports to help them master the necessary math skills. Khan Academy was used heavily to build on math techniques in the middle academy, along with the Eureka curriculum.

**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 3rd through 5<sup>th</sup> grade in April 2015. 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.

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam  
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>7</sup>			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	81	1	0	0	82
4	75	0	0	0	75
5	84	0	0	0	84
6	80	0	0	1	81
All	320	1	0	1	322

**Results**

<sup>7</sup> 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.

The school administered the New York State Testing Program math assessment to students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade in April 2015. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. This year 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, which marks that the student is proficient. The percentage of students at Excellence Girls who scored at a Level 3 or 4 is presented in the table below.

**Performance on 2014-15 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 Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	95%	81	95%	74
4	93%	75	94%	69
5	56%	84	60%	71
6	61%	80	62%	66
All	75.9%	320	78%	280

**Evaluation**

95% of scholars in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in their second year scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math exam, while 94% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in their second year scoring at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math exam. 60% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade scholars in at least their second year scoring at or above a Level 3. 62% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade scholars in at least their second year scoring at or above a Level 3. Excellence Girls scholars exceeded the goal in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade.

We are proud of the work our scholars have done this year to meet this measure in the second year of administering the NYS Common Core Exam. In evaluating our middle academy scholars' results the Eureka curriculum was impactful for our 5<sup>th</sup> grade scholars and intensive small group instruction was implemented in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We plan to continue with these structures to help all scholars, not just those in at least their second year come closer to meeting the 75% goal of proficiency.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15

	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	64%	76	84%	76	95%	74
4	73%	41	90%	70	94%	69
5	N/A	N/A	78%	36	60%	71
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	62%	66
All	68%	117	84%	182	78%	280

### 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 2014-15 mathematics AMO of 94. 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.<sup>8</sup>

### Results

Of Excellence Girls third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade students, 18% achieved a Level 2 on the State Exam, 33% achieved a Level 3 and 43% achieved a level 4 on the State Exam. Therefore, Excellence Girls students achieved a Performance Index of 170.

#### Mathematics 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
320	6%	18%	33%	43%

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 18 & + & 33 & + & 43 & = & 94 \\
 & & & & 33 & + & 43 & = & 76 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 170
 \end{array}$$

### Evaluation

Excellence Girls achieved a Performance Level Index of 170 which exceeds the 2014-15 AMO of 94. Therefore, Excellence Girls achieved this measure.

<sup>8</sup> In contrast to NYSED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

## 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 the performance of tested students enrolled in at least their second year to that of 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.<sup>9</sup>

### Results

Excellence Girls Charter School met the comparative goal for all grade levels tested in 2015. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 64% of Excellence Girls scholars scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State math exam, compared to 13.9% of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in District 16. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 73% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State math exam, compared to 25% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 16. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 60% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State math exam, compared to 28.3% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 17. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 62% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students scored at or above Level 3 on the New York State math exam, compared to 24.9% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in District 17.

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam  
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	95%	74	23.1%	629
4	94%	69	22.3%	647
5	60%	71	28.3%	1395
6	62%	66	24.9%	1645
All	78%	280	24.5%	4316

### Evaluation

<sup>9</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its 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](#).

Excellence Girls Charter School met the comparative goal for all grade levels tested in 2015.

**Additional Evidence**

Additionally this is the fourth year that Excellence Girls scholars have achieved this measure. The below table shows Excellence Girls scholars who scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math exam in 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 compared to all students in District 16 and 17 who scored at or above a Level 3 in 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15

**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					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	64%	13.9%	84%	21%	95%	23.1%
4	73%	25%	90%	20%	94%	22.3%
5	N/A	N/A	78%	25%	60%	28.3%
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	62%	24.9%
All	68%	19%	84%	22%	78%	24.5%

**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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students 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. 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 meaningful 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## Results

For the 2013-14 School Year, 84% of Excellence Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade scholars scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math Exam. It was predicted that 34.8% would score at or above a Level 3 making the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 49.2%. 89% of 4<sup>th</sup> Grade scholars scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math Exam. It was predicted that 31.6% would score at or above a Level 3, making the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 17.4 percent. 49% of 5<sup>th</sup> Grade scholars scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York State Math Exam. It was predicted that 31.6% would score at or above a Level 3, making the difference between the actual percentage and the predicted percentage 17.4 percent. Therefore the overall Effect Size is 2.07.

### **2013-14 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Proficiency		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	74.7	79	84	34.8	49.2	2.67
4	71.1	76	89	35.1	53.9	2.71
5	73.8	82	49	31.6	17.4	0.91
6						
7						
8						
<b>All</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>2.07</b>

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

## Evaluation

With an aggregate Effect Size of 2.07 Excellence Girls 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Scholars exceeded 0.3 and therefore met this measure in 2013-14.

### **Goal 2: Growth Measure<sup>10</sup>**

<sup>10</sup> 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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score in 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 scores are ranked by their 2013-14 scores 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>11</sup>

In 2013-14 the Mean Growth Percentile for Excellence Girls Scholars overall was 61. This is in comparison to the Statewide Median of 50.

### 2013-14 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	65.5	50.0
5	57.0	50.0
6		50.0
7		50.0
8		50.0
All	61.1	50.0

## Evaluation

Excellence Girls scored a 61.1 for the Mean Growth Percentile in comparison to the Statewide Median of 50, therefore Excellence Girls met this measure.

## Additional Evidence

---

<sup>11</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED’s business portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

With 2013-14 being the first year of taking Common Core aligned exams, there was a decline in test scores. We are confident with the Common Core woven throughout our general curriculum that scores will be boosted.

**Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year**

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 <sup>12</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4		79	65.5	50.0
5		N/A	57.0	50.0
All		79	61.1	50.0

**Summary of the Mathematics Goal**

In all Grades, Excellence Girls met all comparative, absolute and growth measures in 2014-15.

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.	Achieved
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 2013-14 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**

During the 2013-2014 school year Excellence Girls K-4<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum was adjusted so that it was aligned to Common Core. In addition our math assessments were also revised to ensure that they were more rigorous and Common Core aligned. For the 2013-14 school year, Excellence Girls will continue to revise the curriculum to ensure Common Core alignment.

In addition, math lessons are currently being revised so that student activities more closely align to the objective, and the independent practices are as rigorous as the lessons being taught to

<sup>12</sup> Grade level results not available.



students. Finally, scope and sequences are being revised to ensure that math meeting in grades Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and fact practices in grades 3-4 are focused solely on reviewing difficult to master material throughout the school year.

While we were encouraged by the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade performance, the proficiency levels speaks to the need to continue hone on our curriculum with Eureka math. It follows the focus and coherence of the Common Core State Standards and carefully sequences the mathematical progressions into expertly crafted instructional modules. We, also, hired a two math teachers across 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade to administer more small group instruction, which was instrumental in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade performance.

## SCIENCE

### Background

Excellence Girls incorporates at least 45 minutes of science instruction, grades Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grades. An emphasis is placed on both reading science texts, as well as conducting experiments.

### **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 4<sup>th</sup> grade in spring 2015. 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 to score at proficiency.

### **Results**

Excellence Girls scholars are achieving a high level of proficiency in Science, with 96% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade scholars in at least their 2<sup>nd</sup> year scoring either Proficient or Advanced.

### **Charter School Performance on 2014-15 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 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	96%	69	Not Yet Available	Not Yet Available

8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
---	-----	-----	-----	-----

### Evaluation

Excellence Girls well exceeded its goal of 75% proficiency on the State Science Exam, beating it by 21 percentage points.

### Additional Evidence

Excellence Girls has greatly exceeded its goal for three straight years.

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

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	98%	40	96%	77	96%	69
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
All	98%	40	96%	77	96%	69

### 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

Excellence Girls is awaiting district-level data on State Science Exam performance in order to get comparative results.

#### 2014-15 State Science Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested

4	96%	69	Not Yet Available	Not Yet Available
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### Evaluation

The District results from the Science Exam are not yet available. Excellence Girls will update the above chart when the scores are released.

### 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					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	98%	Not Yet Available	96%	Not Yet Available	96%	Not Yet Available
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
All						

### Summary of the Science Goal

Excellence Girls achieved the Absolute measure in all grades tested where results are 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.	Data Not Yet Available

### Action Plan

Excellence Girls will continue its rigorous science curriculum in order to achieve high results, and get district-level results in order to determine comparative performance.

## 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 school requiring a local assistance plan.

### Method

Because *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

Excellence Girls Charter School is currently in "Good Standing" under the NCLB accountability system.

### Evaluation

Excellence Girls Charter School is currently in "Good Standing" under the NCLB accountability system and will continue to work diligently to meet each NCLB requirement and comply with all stated guidelines.

### NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2012-13	Good Standing
2013-14	Good Standing
2014-15	Good Standing