Explore Excel Charter School

2023-24 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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By: Explore Schools Inc.

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Explore Schools Inc. prepared this 2023-24 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the charter school's board of trustees:

Anna Bear Dallis and Aisha Lubin have served as the Co Principals since 2019 and 2024 respectively.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Excel Charter School is a K–8 public charter school in Canarsie, Brooklyn. Excel opened in 2011 and graduated its first class of 8th graders in 2017 to some of the top college-preparatory high schools in New York City. While Excel's mission continues to be to provide students with the academic skills and critical-thinking abilities they need to succeed in a college-preparatory high school, we have honed the vision and priorities for how we go about achieving that mission. Our vision for instruction includes:

- We view excellent curriculum and instruction as a pathway to equity and a response to the opportunity gap by providing our scholars with access and opportunities to succeed
- Our curriculum is culturally responsive, rigorous, and standards aligned
- We believe children are natural problem solvers, and so we value teaching that balances critical thinking with learning new skills and knowledge
- We cultivate student investment by nurturing curiosity, providing high-quality feedback, and using data to drive our decision making

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

In the 2023-24 school year, Excel served 559 students as of BEDS Day (October 4, 2023).

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2021-22	53	46	57	55	57	60	69	63	63	519
2022-23	48	57	54	66	54	55	70	73	56	533
2023-24	64	56	60	49	61	55	74	67	73	**559**

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

BACKGROUND

For the 2023-24 school year, Excel Charter School continued to use the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Skills and Knowledge Strands for grades K–2 and EL Education (formerly known as Expeditionary Learning) in grades 3–8. Both programs provide students with literacy education rooted in the science of reading.

K–2
Excel's early literacy curriculum focuses on developing phonological awareness, building content knowledge and vocabulary, and developing comprehension skills. Excel uses the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program as its main curriculum. CKLA has two program strands: Knowledge and Skills. CKLA's two strand program is research-based and provides extensive support for students as they become critical readers and writers.

According to CKLA, the Knowledge Strand emphasizes reading comprehension development in a language- and knowledge-rich context. The primary instructional activity is a read-aloud that exposes students to complex texts, related to a systematically ordered set of topics, or domains. The materials are designed to build knowledge in areas of history, science, literature, and geography. The lesson activities emphasize vocabulary acquisition, building comprehension skills through interactive discussions during and after reading, and use writing to extend and explore the texts and their content. The **Skills** strand is a comprehensive, explicit, and systematic phonics program designed to build decoding, fluency, and writing/spelling skills.

In addition to the CKLA Program, Excel's K-2 literacy program also included: Independent Reading, Small Group Instruction, Play Labs, and Interactive Read Aloud as supplemental supports for comprehension development, skill practice, and discourse.

3–8
Our literacy program is designed to help our students become successful readers and life-long learners who are prepared to thrive in college-preparatory high school programs and beyond.

Specifically, Excel uses the EL Education curriculum as the primary resource for teaching literacy in grades 3–8. EL Education includes reading and writing instruction and explicitly embedded practice with Speaking and Listening Standards. The curriculum is designed to address the three key components of the standards: (1) regular practice with complex text and its academic language, (2) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from both literary and informational text, and (3) building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction. Based on the latest research supporting the power of background knowledge, EL modules are designed around topics that help students build background knowledge. Modules also include a blend of fiction and non-fiction complex texts. In each module, students dig deeply into a high-interest topic by analyzing complex, grade-level texts and then completing performance tasks and assessments aligned to the standards.

In grades 6-8, we added a fourth EL Education module this year to increase our students' exposure to high-level topics, texts and tasks. In so doing, we are deepening our students' background knowledge, exposure to content-specific vocabulary, and a variety of texts and genres – all aligned to the science of reading.

In addition to our anchor curriculum, we offer students four periods per week of Close Reading where they read short grade-level texts, dissect the main ideas and craft and structure moves to build independence as readers. Excel used i-Ready as a diagnostic assessment for all students and as a progress monitoring tool to support RTI and small group instruction.

Writing was also a focus for the 2023 – 24 school year. We improved our approach to writing both within our EL curriculum and across content areas. In grade levels where students have more than one teacher who writes with them, we ensured consistent use of a shared rubric and outlining process. This supported students by providing a clear and systematic process for organizing their thinking and tracking their progress as writers. We introduced assessed writing cycles across grades 3-8 approximately every 6 weeks. Students produced an on-demand writing assignment based on a grade level text(s) and a standards-aligned question. We used our 3-5 writing rubric and our 6-8 writing rubric to grade, identify grade level trends and clear reteaching opportunities and goals, and give students feedback on their work.

Students who required additional reading support in 23-24 received small group, targeted instruction using mCLASS intervention, Just Words, Wilson, or Leveled Literacy Intervention. Students who are Multi-Lingual Learners (MLLs) were offered SIOP. In addition to their core literacy programming, each week, Excel's students received four periods of modified Close Reading with additional scaffolds built in. Throughout Close Reading, students were taught transferable thinking that provided access to unlock the deepest meaning of any texts, across all subject matters. ESI's Program Team continued to provide support directly to Excel's leaders and teachers in these areas.

For our youngest students, Excel used the mCLASS DIBELS 8 assessment as the central literacy assessment in K-2. Data from the assessment was used to inform responsive instruction across core content blocks and small group instruction (SGI). Excel also continued use of Amplify Reading to provide

personalized instructional support. Amplify Reading is an interactive, game-based platform that targets specific literacy skills for students based on their performance on the DIBELS 8.

Excel continued to use mCLASS Intervention as an added curricular structure to provide enhanced support for students in response to mCLASS data. The mCLASS Intervention program groups students into SGI groups based on the highest-leverage skill they need support on and provides teachers with detailed scope and sequence and lessons for 2 weeks of intensive instruction with embedded progress monitoring.

For 3-8 students, Excel administered i-Ready diagnostic assessments during the beginning of the year, middle of the year and end of the year. As mentioned above, these assessments determined the year's beginning RTI groups and informed small group intervention and cross-curricular support throughout the year.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ELA

ELA Measure 1 - Absolute

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

The tables below summarize the participation information for this year's test administration as well as the performance of all students and students enrolled for at least two years.

| Grade | Total Tested | Not Tested | | | | | | Total Enrolled |
		Absent	Refusal	ELL/IEP	Admin error	Medically excused	Other reason	
		2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam **Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**						
3	43		3					46
4	58		2					60
5	56		2	2				60
6	70		4	5				79
7	67			3				70
8	72			3				75
All	**366**		**11**	**13**				**390**

Grade	All Students			Enrolled in at least their Second Year[1]		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
3	43	14	32.6%	37	12	32.4%
4	58	37	63.8%	48	33	68.8%
5	56	25	44.6%	40	15	37.5%
6	70	27	38.6%	42	20	47.6%
7	67	37	55.2%	58	32	55.2%
8	72	40	55.6%	62	37	59.7%
All	366	180	49.2%	287	149	51.9%

Performance on 2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year[1]

ELA Measure 2 - Absolute

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index ("PI") on the State English language arts exam will meet that year's state Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the English language arts test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2023-24 English language arts MIP for all students of **113**. The PI is the sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250. [2]

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[1] Students are considered "enrolled in at least their second year" if they were enrolled on BEDS day of the school year prior to the most recent exam administration.

[2] You can find the statewide MIP goals for 2022-23 to 2026-27 here

English Language Arts 2023-24 Performance Index

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	21.0	29.8	35.8	13.4

PI	=	29.8	+	35.8	+	13.4	=	79.0
				35.8	+	13.4	=	49.2
					+	(.5)*13.4	=	6.7
						PI	=	**134.9**

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel Charter School did not meet the first absolute measure, but came within 26 percentage points with all students, and was even closer with students in at least their second year, coming within 24 percentage points of meeting the overall proficiency goal. Excel did meet the measure for internal progress, exceeding the state's goal by 21.9 points.

> **ELA Measure 3 - 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 all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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]

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[3] Schools can access these data when the NYSED releases its database containing grade level ELA and mathematics results for all schools and districts statewide.

	2023-24 State English Language Arts Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level			
	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
Grade	Charter School Students In At Least 2nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	32.4%	37	42.6%	662
4	68.8%	48	45.0%	664
5	37.5%	40	37.2%	656
6	47.6%	42	40.0%	705
7	55.2%	58	50.2%	751
8	59.7%	62	54.9%	782
All	**51.9%**	**287**	**45.3%**	**4220**

ELA Measure 4 - 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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The difference between the school's 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 target for this measure. Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results.[4]

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[4] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

2022-23 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Mean Scale Score		Effect Size
		Actual	Predicted	
3	89.1%	444.0	438.7	0.51
4	85.2%	453.0	442.6	1.02
5	87.3%	439.0	440.7	-0.18
6	84.1%	446.0	440.6	0.59
7	75.3%	447.0	445.4	0.18
8	82.1%	455.0	447.8	0.74
All	**83.6%**	**447.1**	**442.6**	**0.45**

ELA Measure 5 - 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 target of 50.

METHOD

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains <u>2022-23</u> results, the most recent Growth Model data available.[5]

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 2022-23 and also have a state exam score from 2021-22 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2021-22 score are ranked by their 2022-23 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 target for this measure, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

2022-23 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	74.4	50.0
5	41.8	50.0
6	57.0	50.0
7	56.0	50.0
8	55.3	50.0
All	**56.6**	**50.0**

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[5] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

ELA INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2023-24, in addition to the New York State 3rd – 8th grade exams, the school primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in ELA: i-Ready

2023-24 i-Ready ELA Assessment End of Year Results					
Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.	All students	100%	386	151%	Yes
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3rd through 8th grade students who were two or more grade levels below grade level in the fall will be equal to or greater than 110% by the spring assessment administration.	Low initial achievers	110%	160	133%	Yes
Measure 3: Each year, the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities[5]	143%	41	124%	No

End of Year Performance on 2023-24 i-Ready ELA Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year				
Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested
3	18.8%	48	22.5%	40
4	37.1%	62	38.8%	49
5	20.3%	59	22.5%	40
6	26.9%	78	31.0%	42
7	21.1%	71	24.6%	57
8	19.2%	73	21.0%	62
All	**24.0%**	**391**	**26.6%**	**290**

End of Year Growth on 2023-24 i-Ready ELA Assessment By All Students		
Grades	Median Percent of Annual Typical Growth	Number Tested
3	106%	46
4	171%	62
5	150%	56
6	175%	77
7	217%	70
8	94%	75
All	**151%**	**386**

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

For iReady there are three additional measures. Excel Charter School met two of them. With regards to all students, Excel set a goal for median percent progress toward annual growth of 100% or greater. Excel exceeded this goal with 151% median progress toward annual growth. For students who started the year 2 or more grade levels behind, this was a solid 133%. Regarding students with disabilities, while their annual growth did not match the rate of their GenEd peers, they were still over twenty points ahead of the overall 100% growth goal at 124%.

Additional Measure 4: Growth

75% of students in KG-2 will reach or exceed their mCLASS growth goal or meet/exceed their grade level benchmark from 23-24 Beginning of Year Assessment to 23-24 End of Year Assessment.

METHOD

Using the mCLASS assessment hosted by Amplify, students are tested regarding their early literacy skills at various points throughout the school year. Growth goals are determined by the platform based on beginning of year assessment/diagnostic and results are gathered in the spring as part of an end of year assessment.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

	Performance on 23-24 mCLASS EOY By All Students		

Grades	All Students	
	Met Measure	Number Tested
KG	85.0%	60
1	68.5%	54
2	51.7%	58
All	**68.6%**	**172**

Excel did not meet this measure overall, falling short by 6.4 percentage points. Kindergarten was a bright spot however, surpassing the goal by 10 percentage points.

SUMMARY OF THE ELA GOAL

Overall, of the 9 measures that could be evaluated given current data, Excel met 6 of them while falling short in 3 others.

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 Meet
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's English language arts exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Met
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 school district of comparison.	Met
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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.	Met
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 target of 50.	Met

Growth (iReady)	Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.	Met
Growth (iReady)	Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3rd through 8th grade students who were two or more grade levels below grade level in the fall will be equal to or greater than 110% by the spring assessment administration.	Met
Growth (iReady)	Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.	Did not Meet
Growth (mClass)	75% of students in KG-2 will reach or exceed their mCLASS growth goal or meet/exceed their grade level benchmark from 23-24 Beginning of Year to 23-24 End of Year.	Did Not Meet

ELA ACTION PLAN

Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

We made some gains in our literacy outcomes in 23-24 and they have informed our action planning. We believe that our curricular anchors are high-quality, standards-aligned materials that expose students to rigorous learning opportunities. To that end, we are continuing to develop our use of our curricular materials to ensure expanded differentiation for various learners.

For example, in 24-25, our first and second grade students will begin taking part in leveled skills groups from the start of the year to ensure that each student is learning at their readiness level. All students will continue being exposed to rigorous grade-level texts through the Knowledge component of the CKLA curriculum. Additionally, our K-2 students will engage in higher volumes of independent reading, word work, and literacy activities during our literacy centers block which will take place 3 times a week.

Across all grades K-8, we are implementing shared close reading strategies across content areas. These strategies include routines for introducing and using grade-level and content-specific vocabulary, standardizing our approach to annotation, and giving students regular at bats with short response writing across all subjects. We are also adding a focus on small group discussion protocols to ensure that more students are getting repeat opportunities to speak and evaluate each other's ideas. We believe that by defining and practicing researched and proven pedagogical techniques, our instructional delivery will continue improving across the board for our students.

In grade 3-8, we have defined the fourth day of close reading as a data-response day. Teachers will grade student work from day 3 and recognize the trends across their class to craft the highest leverage reteaching point and to organize small groups when necessary. Last year, we piloted this clearly defined fourth day near the end of the school year and we believe this positively impacted our growth measured

by the ELA state tests. To continue our momentum, we are beginning with a data-driven day 4 from the very start of the school year in 2024-25.

Our team of program experts at the network has set student outcomes specific goals for themselves in addition to our network-wide goal of improving student outcomes by 10 percentage points in ELA. Based on our data from 2024, we are targeting grade levels and cohorts for closer data monitoring and school visitation.

Special Populations of Students (MLLs, Students with Disabilities)
Aligned to our belief that all children can learn when immersed in a rich environment full of high expectations, rigorous academics, and caring, committed adults, Explore Schools has a multi-tiered system of support ("MTSS") to meet the needs of all learners. Our multi-tiered system of support creates inclusive and equitable systems that ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and develop their social-emotional well-being at high levels. Our staff is equipped with the necessary tools and supports to cultivate identity, skills, intellect, and criticality in all our students. The key components of our MTSS are:

- Strong core instruction at the tier 1 level, including responding to data to maximize student achievement.
- Strengths-based perspective to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
- Universal screening to identify students in need of additional support.
- Progress monitoring for all students
- Multi-level prevention/tiered interventions
- Data-based decision making

In addition to ensuring that we provide high-quality mandated services, including SETSS, integrated co-teaching, and ENL services, we believe in using data to make informed decisions to support students in areas in which they need targeted support. Given this belief, we utilize a wide range of intervention programs, and we train our teachers to implement data-driven, student-centered, targeted instruction by collecting and closely analyzing assessments and student work. Our intervention programming includes mCLASS intervention, LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention), Wilson, Just Words, and iReady. We also offer targeted close reading, aligned to specific needs identified in our universal screening process. In grades 3-5, students who are identified as needing additional reading support can be in a "Close Reading Foundations" small group. These small groups will launch each week with a focus on both morphology and phonics (Day 1) as well as fluency practice (Day 2). Using the foundation established during Days 1 & 2, students will learn transferable thinking that gets them to the deepest meaning of the text (Day 3) and examine how authors craft impacts how they communicate that meaning. This five-day cycle ends with students taking the learning from the week to read and respond to new text with strategic coaching and support (Day 5). The close reading foundations curriculum was released for this year and only in grades 3-5.

In our 6-8 grades, we are piloting a new program called STARI for literacy intervention. STARI offers reading intervention through explicit phonics and fluency instruction for older students. It uses authentic, culturally relevant texts to build students' reading comprehension and writing skills. Ahead of the school year and throughout our in-service planning days, our STARI teachers are receiving targeted training to ensure we are delivering the curriculum with fidelity.

We consistently develop the skillset of our staff to provide effective intervention through network-led professional development, ongoing PLCs and RTI meetings, and individual teacher coaching. We focus on using progress monitoring data to ensure that our interventions are effectively leading students to meet their growth goals.

We are committed to improving outcomes for our MLLs and know that our teachers need high-level training to best support this subset of students. This year, we are partnering with ElevatED to provide whole staff trainings to all academic content teachers around serving MLLs. Our 3 trainings across the year will cover:

- 8 impactful strategies to use in planning and instruction of MLLs
- Teaching academic vocabulary to MLLs
- Designing effective graphic organizers for MLLs

Lastly, we are opening two additional sections of 12:1:1 classrooms at the elementary level to support students at Excel from elementary through middle school. We have a clear scope and sequence planned for our 1st/2nd grade class as well as our 3rd/4th grade class that includes Fundations and Geodes curricula for our literacy programming, PhD Science, and LEAP Mathematics. These set students up for success when entering our 5-8 12:1:1 program that builds on the foundations we set in lower school. We utilize STARI as our literacy curriculum, NYC Passport to Social Studies, Amplify Science and Transmath. All curricula selected set students up for scaffolded learning of the NYS Next Gen Standards at their grade level.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

BACKGROUND

Excel's approach to math instruction prioritizes focus and cohesiveness as New York State shifted to Next Generation Learning Standards, which balances rigor of conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application in preparation for college and career. Excel implements research-based curricular resources that best support this vision for mathematical instruction. In grades K–8, Excel used LEAP math, also known as Achievement First's math curriculum. We also offered an Algebra 1 elective to 8th graders who are prepared to take on high school level standards in addition to their 8th grade coursework. ESI's Program Team continued to support Excel's leaders and teachers, focusing on strengthening instruction and data-driven practices.

In the 2023-24 school year, Excel built on the success we experienced in the 2022-2023 school year. We continued to ensure that all standards were taught ahead of the NYS exam, in alignment with the updated NYS Next Generation Standards Educators' Guide. Based on our programmatic success from the previous year, we stayed the course with our approach – teaching all tested standards ahead of the NYS exams and utilizing our interim assessments and math quizzes to inform reteaching opportunities. We also continued using our formalized preparation program leading up to the state exams.

In our K-4 classrooms, we continued to strengthen our instructional delivery by standardizing teaching practices across our classrooms. For example, during the Math Stories block, when students solved rigorous, standards-aligned word problems, we implemented the 3-reads strategy to give students a systematic approach to comprehending the story problem and making sense of its solution.

Given our gains in 8th grade math and in collaboration with our consultants at LEAP, we shifted our 8th grade math pacing to teach all students the first three units of Algebra 1 before making placement decisions for our Regents level Algebra 1 course which we offered to qualifying students in addition to the 8th grade math class.

We added weekly differentiated digital practice in all grades K-8 through Khan Kids (K-2) and Khan Academy (3-8) and trained our staff on how to assign targeted lessons to students based on their data.

Additionally, we implemented the Do The Math curriculum as our intervention curriculum for students who demonstrated lagging skills in math with a focus on the four operations as applied to whole and rational numbers. Using a systematic approach to diagnostic testing, we ensured that all students placed in Do the Math groups were entering at their readiness levels and building from there. In support of all these changes, ESI's Program Team worked to ensure Excel leaders had the tools, resources, and access to high-quality trainings for strong data analysis and response and standards-aligned math instruction.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Math Measure 1 - Absolute

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

The tables below summarize the participation information for this year's test administration as well as the performance of all students and students enrolled for at least two years.

2023-24 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

| Grade | Total Tested | Not Tested | | | | | | | Total Enrolled |
		Absent	Refusal	ELL/IEP	Admin error	Medically excused	Other reason	Took Regents	
3	44		3						47
4	60		2						62
5	58		2						60
6	75		4						79
7	70		1						71
8	74		0						74
All	**381**		**12**						**393**

Performance on 2023-24 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

| Grade | All Students | | | Enrolled in at least their Second Year | | |
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
3	44	18	40.9%	37	16	43.2%
4	60	53	88.3%	48	44	91.7%
5	58	26	44.8%	40	18	45.0%
6	75	36	48.0%	42	24	57.1%
7	70	49	70.0%	58	41	70.7%
8	74	36	48.6%	62	32	51.6%
All	**381**	**218**	**57.2%**	**287**	**175**	**61.0%**

Math Measure 2 - Absolute

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index ("PI") on the state mathematics exam will meet that year's state Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.

METHOD

In New York State, ESSA school performance goals are met by showing that an absolute proportion of a school's students who have taken the mathematics test have scored at the partially proficient, or proficient and advanced performance levels (Levels 2 or 3 & 4). The percentage of students at each of these three levels is used to calculate a PI and determine if the school has met the MIP set each year by the state's ESSA accountability system. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PI value that equals or exceeds the state's 2023-24 mathematics MIP for all students of **115.3**. The PI is the

sum of the percent of students in all tested grades combined scoring at Level 2, plus two times the percent of students scoring at Level 3, plus two-and-a-half times the percent of students scoring at Level 4. Thus, the highest possible PI is 250.

Mathematics 2023-24 Performance Index (PI)			
Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level		
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	19.7	23.1	35.7	21.5

PI	=	23.1	+	35.7	+	21.5	=	80.3
				35.7	+	21.5	=	57.2
					+	(.5)*21.5	=	10.8
						PI	**=**	**148.3**

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Excel Charter School did not meet the first absolute measure, but came within 18 percentage points with all students, and was even closer with students in at least their second year, coming within 14 percentage points of meeting the overall proficiency goal. Excel did meet the measure for internal progress, exceeding the state's goal by 33.0 points.

> **Math Measure 3 - 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 all students in the same tested grades in the school district of comparison.

METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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.

	2023-24 State Mathematics Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level			
	Percent of Students at or Above Proficiency			
Grade	Charter School Students In At Least 2nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	43.2%	37	56.8%	694
4	91.7%	48	56.1%	686
5	45.0%	40	49.8%	666
6	57.1%	42	46.0%	706
7	70.7%	58	52.0%	756
8	51.6%	62	47.1%	633
All	**61.0%**	**287**	**51.4%**	**4141**

Math Measure 4 - 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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

METHOD

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The difference between the school's 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 target for this measure. Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2022-23 results.[6]

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[6] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Mean Scale Score		Effect Size
		Actual	Predicted	
3	89.1%	457.0	444.4	0.87
4	85.2%	465.0	444.6	1.45
5	87.3%	445.0	441.6	0.27
6	84.1%	446.0	442.9	0.24
7	75.3%	454.0	448.2	0.45
8	82.1%	454.0	440.0	0.90
All	**83.6%**	**453.2**	**443.8**	**0.66**

Math Measure 5 - 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 target of 50.

METHOD

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2023-24 analysis is not yet available. This report contains <u>2022-23</u> results, the most recent Growth Model data available.[7]

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 2022-23 and also have a state exam score in 2021-22 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2021-22 scores are ranked by their 2022-23 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 meet the measure, the school would have to achieve a mean growth percentile above the target of 50.

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[7] These data can be found in the school's Accountability Summary provided by the Institute in spring 2024.

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Target
4	75.2	50.0
5	42.2	50.0
6	60.1	50.0
7	75.6	50.0
8	63.1	50.0
All	**63.5**	**50.0**

MATHEMATICS INTERNAL EXAM RESULTS

During 2023-24, in addition to the New York State 3rd – 8th grade exams, the school primarily used the following assessment to measure student growth and achievement in mathematics: Curriculum based.

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1 Absolute: 75% of students will meet grade level proficiency on the 23-24 EOY Math IA (R4)	All students	75%	449	45.4%	No
Measure 2 Growth: 75% of students will show 5% improvement over their scores between the 22-23 R3 and 23-24 R3. For new students, they will show 5% improvement over their scores between the 23-24 R1 and 23-24 R3.	All students	75%	490	23.1%	No

Performance on 23-24 Math IA EOY (R4)
By All Students

Grades	All Students	
	Met Measure	Number Tested
KG	81.4%	59
1	32.0%	50
2	10.0%	60
3	32.5%	40
4	78.8%	52
5	43.6%	55
6	36.8%	68
7	47.7%	65
All	**45.4%**	**449**

Percent of Students Showing Improvement Between 22-23 R3 Math IA and 23-24 R3 Math IA By All Students

Grades	All Students	
	Met Measure	Number Tested
KG	24.2%	62
1	34.6%	52
2	9.3%	54
3	6.4%	47
4	3.3%	60
5	18.9%	53
6	45.5%	66
7	22.4%	58
8	44.7%	38*
All	**23.1%**	**490**

*Many of the strongest performing 8th graders were on the Algebra Regents track, and did not take the R3 IA, which negatively impacted the proficiency, and total testing counts for that grade level. This will be addressed in the scope and sequence planning for 24-25.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Excel did not meet either of the internal/curriculum-based measures for 23-24. Empower fell short of 75% overall proficiency at the End of Year exam by 29 percentage points and fell short of the year over year growth goal by approximately 52 percentage points. Despite falling particularly short in the growth goal, there were bright spots; 6th and 8th grades each came within 30 percentage points of meeting the growth goal.

Additional Measure 2: Absolute

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students will perform at proficiency on the New York State Algebra I Regents.

METHOD

A subset of students in 8th grade received a high school Algebra I curriculum throughout the 22-23 school year and sat for the June 2022 Algebra I Regents. Proficiency is defined by scoring 65% or higher.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Performance on a Regents Math Exam Of 8th Grade All Students by Year				
Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Percent Passing with a 65	Number Tested
8	2018-19	Algebra	100%	15
8	2021-22	Algebra	89.5%	19
8	2022-23	Algebra	85.7%	14
8	2023-24	Algebra	100%	12

We are proud that we have met our goals on the Algebra Regents. Looking toward the 24-25 school year, we are looking for a greater percentage of students earning a mastery score of at least 80% and increasing the percent of students who have access to Regents level math, which will be expanded on in the action plan section of this report.

SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

Overall, of the 8 measures that could be evaluated given current data, Excel met 5 of them while falling short in 3 others.

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 Meet
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate PI on the state's mathematics exam will meet that year's state MIP as set forth in the state's ESSA accountability system.	Met
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 school district of comparison.	Met
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 meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.	Met
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 target of 50.	Met
Absolute	75% of students will meet grade level proficiency on the 23-24 EOY Math IA (R4)	Did not Meet

Growth	75% of students will show 5% improvement over their scores between the 22-23 Math R3 Interim and 23-24 Math R3 Interim. For new students, they will show 5% improvement over their scores between the 23-24 R1 Interim and 23-24 R3 Interim.	Did not Meet
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested 8th grade students will perform at proficiency on the New York State Algebra I Regents.	Met

MATHEMATICS ACTION PLAN

With the adoption of the LEAP curriculum, Excel maintained a high level of rigor in math instruction for its students. Below, we outline the additional steps Excel is taking by grade band to continue to improve the quality of math instruction:

- **Grades K–8:** In 2024-25 our math teachers, like their ELA counterparts will also engage our students in the same set of teaching techniques around vocabulary acquisition and use, annotation and short answer response writing, and small group discussion. We have identified that as a general trend, our students' math skills are solid, and we need to continue developing their comprehension of mathematical situations. We believe that the same techniques we are using in our humanities classes will help students gain independence and access to a range of higher-level problems at their grade level.

- **Grade 8 and Algebra 1 Regents Programming** – we recognize that the approach to teaching 8th grade that we used in 22-23 was more effective for more students than our revised approach in 23-24. To that end, we are shifting the design of our 8th grade math curriculum back to the original order of the standards and removing Algebra 1 units from our 8th grade math class. We believe this pacing will provide all students with the practice they need to solidify their 8th grade skills. We also wanted to make Algebra 1 a more accessible option for students who are interested in this Regents level course. To that end, we used 7th grade data to determine eligibility for the Algebra 1 course which will begin at the very start of the school year. We also offered a summer math course for rising 8th graders who had not yet qualified for the class but wanted the opportunity to take it. As a result of this shift, more students will be able to take the Algebra 1 Regents course and will have a full year of instruction in Algebra 1 in addition to their 8th grade math class. We anticipate that these 2 shifts will strengthen our 8th grade math achievement outcomes in 24-25.

- **Special Populations:** In 2024-2025, we will be in our second year of implementing Do the Math and look to see strengthened growth trends for our students now that our staff and leaders are more familiar with the program. At the network level, we are leveraging one of our most successful math teachers, who specializes in growing cohorts of students in their proficiency, to serve as the lead teacher for the Do the Math and to conduct training for more novice staff. Similar to their humanities counterparts, we are ensuring that our math teachers will all be trained by ElevateED to deepen our knowledge of best practices for MLLs in our math classes. Math teachers will join their humanities counterparts in the trainings listed in the ELA section above.

Approach to data-driven instruction

In the 2023-24 school year, we implemented numerous data systems and structures to provide school leaders and teachers with actionable data to accelerate student learning. We have continued using a comprehensive data platform, PowerBI, to provide school leaders earlier access to assessment data that can be analyzed and compared across grades, schools, terms, and years.

As in previous years, we use a set of common benchmarks and measures for student performance in ELA and math. In collaboration with the school's leadership, the network sets End of Year (EOY) measures tied to official assessments. They include:

- Foundational reading assessments – mClass (K-2) and IReady (3-8)
- Math Interim Assessments
- Math and ELA Quizzes
- WIDA Assessment
- NYS ELA and Math Exam proficiency and cohort growth

Aligned to the EOY measures, the network also sets cycle measures that identify intervals for improvement on internal assessments to be on track to meet EOY measures. Progress toward benchmarks is tightly monitored, through bi-weekly data tracking of student outputs aligned to each measure, and through teacher observations, feedback, and professional development aligned to a focused set of teacher inputs. Most network-driven professional development and resource creation is aligned to the benchmarks with student outputs and teacher inputs identified termly. Student outputs are evaluated through student work analysis that indicates progress toward achieving the cycle and EOY measures. Teacher inputs are defined as observable strategies and actions teachers can take that will lead to the student outputs.

In 2024-2025, we will continue to provide oversight and training on best practices in data analysis and action planning. A significant addition to our data-driven approach is including a "looking at student work" component in our weekly PLC meetings with teachers. We believe that the weekly practice of analyzing data – whether it is formative or summative – will sharpen our collective approach to data-driven instruction and ensure that teachers are responding to what their students know and where they need to grow. As always, teachers and leaders facilitate formal data driven planning around key assessments like our interims, mClass and iReady data. This planning includes reflection on progress toward measures, studying the assessment results to determine what students already know and what they do not yet know, data driven lesson planning to close gaps, reassessment, and reflection.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

BACKGROUND

In 2023-24, Explore Schools continued our implementation of a cohesive K-5, 6-7, and grade 8 science program. In grades K-5, the science program used PhD Science by Great Minds. In Gr6-7, the science program was Amplify Science, and grade 8 was New Visions Living Environment. In 2023-24, Explore

Schools employed full-time K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 science teachers. Excel's chosen science curricula is designed to promote inquiry, problem solving skills, and exposure to 21st century learning and skills. All three science curricula support rigorous, aligned instruction to NYS Next Generation Science standards.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Science Measure 1 - Absolute

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

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 5th and 7th graders, along with 8th grade students who were not sitting for the Living Environment Regents in Spring 2024. The table below summarizes the performance of students enrolled for at least two years.

	Charter School Performance on 2023-24 State Science Exam By Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year					
Grade	All Students			Enrolled in at least their Second Year		
	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	57	17	29.8%	40	10	25.0%
7	68	17	25.0%	56	15	26.8%
8	50	10	20.0%	39	8	20.5%
All	**175**	**44**	**25.1%**	**135**	**33**	**24.4%**

Science Measure 2 - Comparative

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 school district of comparison.

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the public school district of comparison. 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 school district of comparison.

2023-24 State Science Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level						
	Charter School Students in at Least 2nd Year			All District Students*		
Grade	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
5	40	10	25.0%	NA	NA	NA
7	56	15	26.8%	428	148	35.0%
8	39	8	20.5%			
All	135	33	24.4%	428	148	35.0%

*Due to the timing of data release, 22-23 NYC CSD data is included instead of 23-24. The elementary science test was not administered in 22-23, hence the missing G5 data at the district level.

Science Measure 3 - Absolute
Each year, 75 percent of all tested 8th grade students will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State Living Environment Regents.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Performance on a Regents Science Exam Of 8th Grade All Students by Year				
Grade	Year	Regents Exam	Percent Passing with a 65	Number Tested
8	2021-22	Living Environment	53.3%	45
8	2022-23	Living Environment	69.7%	33
8	2023-24	Living Environment	78.3%	23

We are proud that we have met our goals on the Living Environment Regents for each of the last three testable years. Looking toward the 24-25 school year, we are looking for a greater percentage of students earning a mastery score of at least 80% as we transition all 8th grade students to Regents level science course work.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

Overall, of the 3 science measures Excel met 1, but came short in 2 others.

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.	Did Not Meet

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 school district of comparison.	Did Not Meet
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested 8th grade students will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State Living Environment Regents.	Met

ACTION PLAN

In 2024-2025 we are strengthening our science programming in several ways:

1. Like our humanities and math teachers, science teachers in K-8 will also be using our shared teaching strategies to teach technical vocabulary, support students in annotations and short response writing, and to provide students with opportunities for small group discussion protocols. We know that science literacy is dependent on transferable and cross-cutting frameworks for thinking and we are committed to providing all our science students with clear and consistent instruction on how to approach their learning.
2. We are offering an accelerated middle school science course to our 6th and 7th graders that covers all 6-8th grade investigations and content and culminates in our 7th graders sitting for the 8th grade state science exam. We will continue using the Amplify science curriculum for 6th and 7th grade.
3. We are offering the Biology Regents course to our 8th graders. We will continue using the New Visions curriculum for Biology in place of Living Environment.
4. Across 5-8th grade, we will engage in more frequent and rigorous data analysis with science teachers. We will utilize network-wide planning days to analyze unit test data and ensure that our students are making sufficient progress as they prepare for their culminating exams.

GOAL 4: ESSA

ESSA Measure 1

Under the state's ESSA accountability system, the school is in good standing: the state has not identified the school for comprehensive or targeted improvement.

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's performance standards, the federal statute stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results. As New York State, like all states, is required to establish a specific system for making these determinations

for its public schools, charter schools do not have latitude in establishing their own performance levels or criteria of success for meeting the ESSA accountability requirements. Each year, the state issues School Report Cards that indicate a school's status under the state accountability system. More information on assigned accountability designations and context can be found here.

Accountability Status by Year	
Year	Status
2021-22	Local Support and Improvement
2022-23	Local Support and Improvement
2023-24	Local Support and Improvement

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

We have met this measure; Excel Charter School has been in good standing aka identified for only local support and improvement with ESSA for at least the last 3 school years where data is available.