



**HARLEM LINK
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2011-12 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

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Steven Evangelista prepared this 2011-12 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
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Steven Evangelista has served as the Principal since 2011, and served as Co-Director from 2004 to 2011.

INTRODUCTION

Harlem Link is an independent charter school initially chartered to serve grades K-4 in Central Harlem. The school opened with grades K-1 in September 2005 with the mission of graduating articulate scholars who meet or exceed state performance standards and active citizens who learn and serve in their communities, and the aim of eventually expanding to grades K-8 with the goal of gaining admission for graduates to high performing, competitive public and private high schools. The school reached a grades K-5 consolidation phase in 2008 and plans to remain at these grades through the next charter period, choosing to focus on honing the academic programs in the elementary grades before pursuing charter authorization for middle school at a future point. The school was granted a three-year charter renewal by SUNY in 2010.

The school design is distinguished by an emphasis on teaching students critical thinking skills—as the mission explicitly mentions students taken an active role in their own learning and being empowered to develop good character—as well as an emphasis on collaboration, embodied in the co-teaching model as well as the numerous community institutional partnerships for programming. As such, the school has vigorously embraced New York State’s transition to Common Core Standards, in which there is an increased emphasis on literary analysis, mathematical thinking and process, and student discussion. These elements have always been a part of Harlem Link’s instructional vision.

The charter anticipates 54 students per grade, and the school has generally held to this number. Each year, the school has attracted an increasing number of families eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a federal indicator of poverty level. In 2011-12, approximately 85% of Harlem Link students fell into this category. Throughout the four years of the school’s existence, the ethnic and neighborhood demographics have held fairly constant, approximately 80% of the students being African-American, non-Hispanic (and the balance Hispanic) and approximately 80% from Upper Manhattan (with the balance from the South Bronx). In recent years, thanks to a change in the charter law the school’s enrollment has stabilized to include a greater portion of students from Community School District 3, the district of location, though a plurality of students still reside in Community School District 5, which encompasses central Harlem.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2007-08	51	52	54	53										210
2008-09	53	54	54	54	50									266
2009-10	54	54	54	54	54	40								310
2010-11	48	53	49	53	54	38								295
2011-12	50	50	51	52	52	37								292

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

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

Background

Harlem Link uses a balanced literacy approach to teaching English Language Arts (ELA). Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading and Independent Reading with teacher conferencing are all elements of the Reader's Workshop instruction. Shared Writing, Interactive Writing, Guided Writing and Independent Writing are all elements of the classroom Writer's Workshop instruction. Teachers use individual conferences and written, unit-end performance assessments as well as school wide Level 4 (term-level) assessments to gauge student achievement and to plan differentiated instruction based on individual student needs. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are the school's current Level 4 assessments.

Harlem Link employs three Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teachers to provide support to struggling readers and writers through a robust Student Support and Response to Intervention (RTI) process. RTI at Harlem Link is facilitated in twice-weekly Child Study Team meetings and includes targeted goals, interventions and expected time frames for improvement for each child in the process. The school emphasizes classroom-based interventions, aiming to use the Committee on Special Education sparingly and only when school-based interventions are ineffective, in accordance with protections in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Despite identifying a small percentage of enrolled students newly as disabled, the school maintains a similar rate of enrollment of students with disabilities to the surrounding community.

In response to a variety of data points, the school implemented two overlapping phases of changes to the ELA curriculum in 2011-12—moving in summer 2011 from the school's homegrown 2004 standards to the New York State standards, and gradually over the course of the year transitioning to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), with the transition complete in the summer of 2012.

While the school had come close to meeting its ELA Accountability Plan goal and had met some of the measures in past years, the change in Level 3 cut scores in 2010 and the school's similar performance in 2011 compared to 2010 showed definitively that the school's standards were insufficient in preparing students for state performance assessments.

The school dramatically revamped its curriculum including the way units of study are structured, designing the first phase of change in curriculum to prepare for the second phase. While in the past the curriculum was organized into three to four units per year, coordinating ELA instruction with social studies topics, the school organized the new curriculum units explicitly around genre in a manner similar to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for Career and College (PARCC) Model Content Frameworks. The school began to monitor the percentage of its reading units devoted to literature and informational texts (which CCSS and PARCC recommend being approximately equal after second grade begins), and the percentage of its writing units devoted to

argumentation, expository writing and narrative (which, among the three types, CCSS and PARCC also recommend being approximately equal). In both 2011-12 and as planned for 2012-13, the school made improvements to the genre structure allowing for greater vertical alignment and greater fidelity to the genre distributions recommended by CCSS and PARCC. Importantly, the new unit structure allowed the school to purposefully plan for skill instruction in a logical manner across the units and across grades.

Finally, as described in the “Action Plan” section of the school’s 2010-11 Accountability Plan Progress Report, the school made two more changes in the areas of lesson planning and assessment. The school raised expectations for teachers in lesson planning, requiring teachers to provide the most extensive plans in its history, and selected NWEA’s MAP exam to replace the school’s prior Interim Assessments (which had been based on the Harlem Link standards).

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

In 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the state’s Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores on the New York State English language arts examination.¹

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in grades 3 through 5 in April 2012. Each student’s raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. Through 2008-09, the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2010-12, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score at or above the state’s Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores¹, presented in the table below.

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

¹ In order to abide by the measures to which schools are held accountable in their school’s Accountability Plans, the Institute will continue to use the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores, which provide year-to-year consistency with the Plan’s standard while accounting for the timing of the test administration (i.e., SED now gives the test later in the school year).

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

**2011-12 State English Language Arts Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ²			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	52	0	0	0	52
4	52	0	0	0	52
5	37	0	0	0	37
All	141	0	0	0	141

Results

88.6% of students in at least their second year at Harlem Link achieved a Scale Score at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score.

**Charter School Performance on 2011-12 State English Language Arts Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score	Number Tested
3	All Students	80.8%	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	82.8%	29
4	All Students	88.5%	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	90.5%	42
5	All Students	89.2%	37
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	91.2%	34
All	All Students	85.8%	141
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	88.6%	105

Evaluation

Harlem Link met the Absolute Measure target, exceeding the target of 75% by 13.6 percentage points. Notably, the school surpassed the target in each of the testing grades. In contrast to past performance, each successive grade had a higher percentage of students meeting the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score.

The school attributes this successful performance to a variety of factors.

² 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.

First, the school has set a goal of raising academic expectations each year since first receiving feedback from the SUNY Charter Schools Institute in 2006. In the 2011-12 school year, Harlem Link implemented a variety of strategies to set a high standard for academic excellence. Examples include the inception of the “Grammar Hall of Fame,” an honor bestowed upon students in grades three through five who consistently demonstrated appropriate grade level grammar in their writing; individual testing targets for each student that challenged them to improve upon their 2011 performance (or set a high target if taking the test for the first time); and school-wide performance targets that included aggressive growth on internal assessments and a 75% passing rate against the more rigorous public Level 3 cut score.

Second, the school’s leadership structure changed in 2011-12 to provide greater supervision and support to teachers, particularly in the testing grades. In 2010-11, the school suffered from a pair of unexpected leadership challenges when the principal needed a longer than expected maternity leave for medical reasons and one of the other three members of the Instructional Leadership Team moved to California in December. In 2011-12, the school went through a leadership transition with the former principal taking a part-time advisory role, and removed direct teacher supervision responsibility from the principal, who had been responsible for evaluating all of the teachers in grades 3-5. The school promoted its Dean of Students (eliminating that position) to Assistant Principal for the upper grades, providing a greater level of individual attention to classrooms and teachers than was possible when the principal had sole supervisory responsibility.

As a result, the school was able to anticipate and make staffing changes much more quickly than in the past. All three of the testing grades saw some change in staffing during the school year, with the strongest team configuration emerging by the late winter. The school was able to take a more proactive stance in these cases than it had been able to in the past.

A third factor was the school’s prioritization of moving students who scored at the public Level 2 to Level 3. Past internal analysis revealed that while Harlem Link’s intervention program supported students who would otherwise have scored at low levels, resulting in a smaller percentage of students scoring at Level 1 than would otherwise be expected, students in the middle of the school’s test score distribution were bunched largely below the public Level 3 cut score. Incentives noted above and other resources such as after-school tutoring were focused particularly on these students who were just below the public Level 3 cut score as well as on the students who scored above the Level 3 cut score, in order to ensure their continued success.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, in line with raised academic expectations the school continued to tighten policies around student discipline and attendance. Having the assistant principals administer suspensions for their respective grades rather than a Dean who was disconnected from teacher supervision led to greater consistency in instructional leadership for teachers related to student behavior. Total suspensions dropped by nearly 50% from 2010-11 to 2011-12. Regarding attendance, the school entered its second year of an aggressive protocol for communicating with families regarding chronic attendance problems, including providing support through school social workers and the school’s parent coordinator and reaching out to the Administration for Children’s Services if necessary. Attendance improved from 92.9% to 94.9% in one year, and perhaps more significantly, average daily incidence of tardiness dropped from 6.9% to

3.9%. Finally, severely chronic attendance problems nearly disappeared, even as many of the more than 10 students who struggled in this area returned for the 2011-12 school year.

A fifth factor is undoubtedly the school's approach to curriculum and instruction, which continues to evolve as New York State has made dramatic changes to its standards and assessment procedures in the each of the past several years. The school responded to feedback from the Charter Schools Institute by removing the former Harlem Link standards and transitioning to the Common Core standards by taking one year to utilize New York State learning standards. This process began in January 2011 with staff study of Common Core, but took a major turn following SUNY feedback in the spring and testing data in the summer that confirmed SUNY's suspicion that school standards were inadequate for meeting the state test expectations. The school went through a major overhaul of units in 2011, with a newly aligned and rigorous curriculum emerging.

The school also implemented new interim assessments to accompany the new curriculum approach. Scrapping the home-grown interim assessments—which were based on the Harlem Link standards and were not tested for reliability or validity—the school chose two sets of complementary assessments, NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and tests produced by the EdVistas corporation. In the cases of both companies, the school was able to receive feedback within minutes or days with actionable results that directly informed teachers planning to prepare for the state tests. Both tests purported to being aligned to the New York State performance standards. Being computer based, MAP had the additional advantage of preparing students for the PARCC exam on or about the year 2015.

Sixth, the school raised lesson planning expectations by teachers for the first time since the school's first year. By having a standardized lesson plan format across the school, which retained the same elements as the prior five-day plan but required more description and therefore more purposeful thought, the school ensured a consistently high level of planning in grades K-5. Administrators noticed and teachers reported a greater level of teacher mastery of curriculum material and stronger lesson delivery as a result.

Finally, the school made a number of staffing changes in the faculty between 2011 and 2012, both through termination and attrition. Excepting one teacher who left the school to become a coach, the teachers who were rated highest by the school's evaluation system in 2010-11 returned to their teaching positions at Harlem Link in 2011-12. The school experienced significant turnover nonetheless, out of character with its previous years, and with its rigorous hiring process added a number of strong teachers to the faculty for the 2011-12 school year.

Additional Evidence

The data show that the school has consistently been improving its performance. Following the major change in Level 3 cut score in 2009-10, Harlem Link's ELA scores fell precipitously. Since that year of adjustment, the school's scores have steadily climbed.

Bolstered by a high percentage of "high Level 2" students against the public Level 3 criterion, the school met this benchmark for the first time in 2011 despite having a disappointingly low percentage at public Level 3. The school further improved on this showing in 2012.

English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 in 2008-09 and a Scale Score at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12							
	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	72.7%	44	69.0%	42	65.9%	41	82.8%	29
4	75.0%	36	53.5%	43	93.2%	44	90.5%	42
5	N/A	0	63.9%	36	73.3%	30	91.2%	34
All	73.8%	80	62.0%	121	78.3%	115	88.6%	105

The chart below corroborates the notion that the school's instruction has improved over time. The Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score data show that generally (though not without exception, and with the proviso that these are in some cases vanishingly small sample sizes), students who are enrolled at the school longer fare better on the state ELA exam than those who are new.

2011-12 English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and Years Attending the School

Grade	Percent of Students at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score According to Number of Years Enrolled							
	One		Two		Three		Four or More	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	78.3%	23	60.0%	5	100.0%	7	82.4%	17
4	80.0%	10	88.9%	9	100.0%	3	90.0%	30
5	66.7%	3	83.3%	6	80.0%	5	95.7%	23
All	77.8%	36	80.0%	20	93.3%	15	90.0%	70

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

Method

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

for 2011-12 is 148. The PI 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 PI is 200.

Results

Harlem Link continued to have few students in the Level 1 category. Fifty-one percent of students scored at Level 3 or Level 4, giving the school a PI of 148.

Calculation of 2011-12 English Language Arts Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3-5	3	46	50	1	141

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{PI} &= 46 + 50 + 1 = 97 \\
 &+ 50 + 1 = 51 \\
 \text{PI} &= \mathbf{148}
 \end{aligned}$$

Evaluation

Harlem Link met the measure, as the PI was exactly equal to the 2012 AMO.

Additional Evidence

The percentage of students at Level 1 has decreased both years since the state revised cut scores in 2010, falling by a total of 7.2 percentage points over those two years. Partly for this reason the school’s PI has been able to surpass the AMO in both years.

The school has been In Good Standing each year since inception under NCLB.

English Language Arts Performance Index (PI) and Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) by School Year

Year	Grades	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				PI	AMO
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2008-09	3-4	104	0.0%	29.8%	65.4%	4.8%	170	162
2009-10	3-5	140	10.0%	56.4%	27.9%	5.7%	124	169
2010-11	3-5	143	6.3%	60.8%	32.9%	0.0%	127	122
2011-12	3-5	141	2.8%	46.1%	49.6%	1.4%	148	148

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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.

Results

While Harlem Link saw 52.4% of students enrolled for two or more years surpass the public Level 3 cut score, Community School District 3 had 61.9% of its students in the same grades do so.

**2011-12 State English Language Arts Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	55.2%	29	61.7%	1352
4	52.4%	42	65.3%	1379
5	50.0%	34	58.5%	1356
All	52.4%	105	61.9%	4087

Evaluation

Harlem Link did not surpass the performance of the technical district of location in any of the three grades tested. However, the school did come close (within ten percentage points) in two of the three grades, as well as in aggregate, to the results of this relatively wealthy and high-performing district. Of the 15 different New York City school districts in which Harlem Link students reside, District 3 had the second best performance. It did so on the strength of its Upper West Side schools, not the smaller number of schools that are located in Harlem, as indicated in the “Additional Evidence” section below.

Additional Evidence

The pattern of Harlem Link not surpassing Community School District 3 in public Level 3 cut scores, but outperforming the local schools in the Harlem community instead, became established with the change in state cut scores in 2010. Over time, the school has closed the gap that was established that year, from 21 percentage points to fewer than 10 percentage points in 2012.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Levels 3 and 4 and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students							
	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	72.7%	71.8%	47.6%	54.4%	46.3%	61.0%	55.2%	61.7%
4	75.0%	74.5%	20.9%	54.5%	36.4%	59.1%	52.4%	65.3%
5	N/A	N/A	30.6%	55.8%	20.0%	57.3%	50.0%	58.5%
All	73.8%	73.1%	33.1%	54.9%	35.7%	59.2%	52.4%	61.9%

As noted above, Harlem Link enrolls most of its students not from District 3 but a collection of far worse performing districts, both adjacent and far-flung. A proportional representation of these districts' performance, in comparison to Harlem Link in both the percentage passing and percentage at Level 1, is shown below. As the table shows, the weighted composite of local district performance saw more than an astonishing *six times* the percentage of students at Level 1 compared to Harlem Link. The school also outperformed this composite by a larger amount (11.8 percentage points) than it trailed the performance of wealthy District 3.

**2011-12 State English Language Arts Exam
Composite of Student Body by Districts of Residence**

District	Percent at Level 1	Percent Passing	Number HL students resident
Dist. 1	11.7%	53.7%	1
Dist. 2	6.4%	73.1%	2
Dist. 3	8.9%	61.8%	22
Dist. 4	14.7%	45.8%	7
Dist. 5	22.9%	30.1%	64
Dist. 6	21.2%	35.6%	18
Dist. 7	23.5%	29.6%	1
Dist. 8	17.6%	41.7%	2
Dist. 9	22.9%	31.6%	4
Dist. 10	18.6%	39.3%	4
Dist. 11	15.2%	44.0%	10
Dist. 12	23.1%	32.1%	3
Dist. 15	10.8%	60.7%	1
Dist. 17	16.3%	42.6%	1
Dist. 28	9.4%	56.1%	1
Composite district	18.8%	39.3%	
Harlem Link	2.8%	51.1%	

Below is a comparison of Harlem Link’s performance and that of the three district schools with which the school has shared space in the time that the tested cohorts have been enrolled. It should be noted that while P.S. 129M is located in District 5 (which, as noted above, has a poor performance record relative to Harlem Link and is where a plurality of tested students reside), both P.S. 242M and P.S. 208M are located in the Harlem portion of otherwise wealthy District 3 and have a similar performance profile to District 5 schools.

**English Language Arts Performance of
School and Comparison Schools by School Year**

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All Students in Comparison Schools Scoring at or above Level 3 on State Exam							
		Charter School		P.S. 242M		P.S. 129M		P.S. 208M	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2008-09	3-4	73.8%	80	54.8%	93	53.8%	160	53.7%	134
2009-10	3-5	33.1%	121	29.2%	120	30.3%	198	31.3%	192
2010-11	3-5	35.7%	115	38.2%	102	43.8%	185	29.2%	195
2011-12	3-5	52.4%	105	27.4%	106	42.1%	171	39.5%	172

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Given the timing of the state’s release of family income data, the 2011-12 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2010-11 results, the most recent one available.

Results

In 2010-11, the most recent year for which data is available at the time of submission, Harlem Link’s ELA performance was lower than expected to a small degree. While the third grade result was

directionally appropriate, both fourth grade and especially fifth grade performed on the metric at a lower rate than similar schools statewide.

2010-11 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Free Lunch Eligible Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	78.0	52	42.3	40.6	1.7	0.1
4		53	34.0	41.7	-7.7	-0.5
5		38	18.4	38.7	-20.3	-1.2
All	78.0	143	32.9	40.5	-7.6	-0.5

School's Overall Comparative Performance:
Lower than expected to a small degree

Evaluation

The school did not meet the measure, as the aggregate Effect Size was negative. Throughout the school's existence, the school focused its resources on the lowest level students, with a robust Response to Intervention program and aggressive application of school-based resources to forestall over-referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). As a possible consequence of this priority, the school's performance against the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score is similar or superior compared to similar schools statewide, but appears to be far inferior when using the public Level 3 cut score. For the year shown in the table above, Harlem Link had 5.1% of its students enrolled at least two years score at Level 1; the weighted composite of districts attended by those same students had 18.4% of students score at Level 1. In other words, Harlem Link's students who performed at middling levels (42.6% which scored above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score but below the public Level 3 cut score) are treated as the same as the students who performed poorly at similar schools statewide.

Additional Evidence

The table below demonstrates the point made above about Harlem Link's historical focus on lowest scoring students. When New York State altered the Level 3 cut score, Harlem Link's profile on this measure changed dramatically. The school had a positive and climbing Effect Size until the change.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2007-08	3	71.3	50	60.0	57.5	0.19
2008-09	3-4	71.1	104	70.2	66.3	0.27
2009-10	3-5	70.9	140	33.6	41.6	-0.50
2010-11	3-5	78.0	143	32.9	40.5	-0.50

Harlem Link is confident that the school will meet the measure when the regression analysis is available for the 2011-12 school year; the school's aggregate performance in 2012 was 10 percentage points better than the 2011 comparison group, which in the past year would have been higher than expected to a medium degree.

Goal 1: Growth Measure

On the current year's state English language arts exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's state English language arts exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

Method

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above proficient. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2011-12 and also have a state exam score in 2010-11. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade are included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the school examines the aggregate of all cohorts to determine the growth of all students taking a state exam in both years.

Results

Both cohorts improved, by nearly 10 percentage points and nearly six percentage points in fourth and fifth grade respectively. In order to achieve the target schoolwide, 16% more of the students would have had to pass the state test at public Level 3.

Cohort Growth on State English Language Arts Exam from 2010-11 to 2011-12

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent Performing At or Above Level 3			Target Achieved
		2010-11	Target	2011-12	
4	42	42.9%	59.0%	52.4%	NO
5	34	44.1%	59.6%	50.0%	NO
All	76	43.4%	59.2%	51.3%	NO

Evaluation

Neither of two cohorts met the target. However, both cohorts did move in the right direction, making tremendous strides and coming within striking distance of the targets. School-wide, the school made it halfway to the halfway point between prior performance and the 75% target. That is, the two cohorts combined needed to increase their scores by 16 percentage points, and had them increase by 8 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has not historically fared well on this analysis; as noted above, the school’s performance plummeted in 2010 with the change in Level 3 cut scores. Since that time, the school’s ELA performance has been slowly increasing.

Cohort Performance on State English Language Arts Exam

School Year	Cohort Grades	Number of Cohorts Meeting Target	Number of Cohorts
2008-09	4-5	1	2
2009-10	4-5	0	2
2010-11	4-5	0	2
2011-12	4-5	0	2

The table below demonstrates the positive direction of Harlem Link’s ELA performance. As the table shows, 23 students moved up a level, including all five students who had scored at Level 1. Fewer students—13 in all—moved down a level.

Change in English Language Arts Performance Levels from 2010-11 to 2011-12

		Number of Students at Each Performance Level				
		2011-12				
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Total Number
2010-11	Level 1	0	5	0	0	5
	Level 2	2	20	17	0	39
	Level 3	0	11	21	1	33
	Level 4	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Number	2	36	38	1	77

The table below, taken from the New York City DOE’s “Where Are They Now?” report, suggests that Harlem Link students are prepared for the rigors of middle school. Harlem Link has committed to supporting its alumni through college, and looks for opportunities to continue to engage with them. In doing so, the school aims both to demonstrate value added during graduates’ time at Harlem Link and to continue to close the achievement gap.

Performance on Grade 6 English Language Arts Exam

Number of students	Percent passing 2010 NYS ELA exam	
	HL students	NYC average
38	53%	45%

Holding its first annual reunion in October 2012 with its leading cohort, now in eighth grade and preparing for high school, Harlem Link will continue to track and report on this important data in the next charter period.

Finally, Harlem Link began administering a new nationally normed standardized test, NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), in the 2011-12 school year. The school does not have growth data yet after one year of administration and will report cohort growth in 2012-13.

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Due to its strong showing relative to the local school districts, its achievement of the Absolute target by a strong margin and its consequent expected outperformance of similar schools statewide, Harlem Link has the strongest case in its history for meeting the English Language Arts goal.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Did Not Achieve (D3); Achieved (weighted composite)
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	Data not yet available
Growth	On the 2011-12 state exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above level 3 on the 2010-11 state exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3.	Did Not Achieve

Action Plan

Although the state tests are changing considerably in 2013 and will likely do so again in 2015, Harlem Link is attempting to use the state test results to guide further curriculum and instructional development. An additional barrier is the fact that state test item analysis is no longer publicly available.

In addition to analyzing the school’s own performance and the insight it provides about the school’s ELA program, Harlem Link leaders are focusing on the Common Core and PARCC expectations.

The school is currently planning on implementing the following steps to improve the ELA program:

- Closing the second phase of the recent curriculum revision by adding one nonfiction unit to each grades’ reading scope and sequence, adding a research project based on CCSS literacy standards to each grade’s science scope and sequence, and adding an opinion unit into each

writing scope and sequence

- Moving to performance assessment at the end of each unit, having all the rubrics in place ahead of planning the unit (the prior year's unit end assessments were helpful but not completely effective, and there were gaps in preparedness)
- Listing grammar expectations for the unit directly in the writing unit plans, replacing them with school technology standards in each digital skills unit
- Adding resources to coaching (a professional to coordinate more external coaching time), as the school is losing its coach to a family move to California

Learning lessons from the past year, the board and school leadership have decided on three priorities for the coming year:

- Ensure teachers are successful implementing a complete and aligned curriculum
- Consistently utilize effective common lesson planning structure and effective instructional strategies to ensure higher order thinking
- Share a school culture that supports an ethos of scholarship and citizenship

Through increased professional development (continually greater clarity of expectation at the school's pre-service Summer Institute, full rollout of Professional Growth Plans, which did not begin until December in 2011-12 are two examples), the school will also target student use of text evidence in referring to reading as an instructional priority area driven by its centrality in the Common Core.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 1: Mathematics

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

Background

In the seven years of its existence, Harlem Link has built a math curriculum that is standards-based, philosophically aligned with the school's mission, and comprehensive in its approach. The curriculum underwent no major revisions in the 2011-12 school year.

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

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

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

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

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

In 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores on the New York State mathematics examination.³

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in third through fifth grade in April 2012. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level. Through 2008-09, the criterion for success on this measure required students who have been enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4. For 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2010-12, the criterion for success on this measure requires students to have a Scale Score at or above the state's Time Adjusted Level 3 cut scores¹, presented in the table below.

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

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

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

**2011-12 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁴			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	52	0	0	0	52
4	51	0	0	0	52
5	37	0	0	0	37
All	140	0	0	0	141

Please note: there was one math test in fourth grade that was not reported by the New York State Education Department. As of this writing, Harlem Link is awaiting this score from the New York City DOE.

Results

Harlem Link had over 97% of students in at least their second year surpass the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score. In each grade at least 96.6% of students did so.

**Charter School Performance on 2011-12 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	Population	Percent Scoring at or above Time Adjusted Level 3 Cut Score	Number Tested
3	All Students	98.1%	52
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	96.6%	29
4	All Students	96.2%	51
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97.6%	41
5	All Students	94.6%	37
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97.1%	34
All	All Students	96.5%	140
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	97.1%	104

Evaluation

The school met the measure by a wide margin—over 20 percentage points in each grade. The school’s performance in the fourth grade was particularly notable, with a similar percentage of students achieving even the more rigorous public Level 3 cut score, placing Harlem Link’s fourth grade math performance in the 98th percentile among all schools’ fourth grade performances statewide.

Several factors could explain the strong scores. In fourth grade, a strong co-teaching team was moved up from fifth grade and began the year already knowing the strengths and needs of many of their students.

⁴ 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 transition to common core created fertile ground for teacher learning, discussion and sharing of best practices.

The school’s experience across seven years of using TERC allowed it to make the necessary adjustments to be ready for the state tests. The school has also had in place consistently the core ideas of the Common Core’s eight mathematical practices: emphasis on student thinking and strategy, explaining their work, communication of their thinking, argumentation and opinion.

Many of the same elements of the school program described in ELA were in force in mathematics as well (high expectations, greater supervision and support for teachers, student behavior and attendance, new interim assessments, more robust lesson planning).

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has demonstrated a consistently extremely high level of achievement in mathematics throughout its existence. As shown below, the school has had 90% or more of students passing the accountability target in each of the past four years, with an increasing percentage passing after the state raised the cut scores in 2010.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4 in 2008-09 and a Scale Score at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12							
	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	100.0%	44	100.0%	42	100.0%	41	96.6%	29
4	80.6%	36	83.7%	43	97.7%	44	97.6%	41
5			94.4%	36	96.7%	30	97.1%	34
All	91.3%	80	92.6%	121	98.3%	115	97.1%	105

The chart below shows that—as is true with regard to English Language Arts—the longer a student stays at Harlem Link the better his or her performance is expected to be. The school analyzed both public Level 3 cut score data and Time Adjusted cut score passing but chose to present the former below since such a high level met the latter in all categories (including 94.4% of new students) that the differences are not as noticeable as they are below. Students enrolled four years or more, the chart shows, outperformed new students to the school by a robust 27.5 percentage points.

**2011-12 Mathematics Performance
by Grade Level and Years Attending the School**

Grade	Percent of Students at or above the public Level 3 cut score According to Number of Years Enrolled							
	One		Two		Three		Four or More	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	56.5%	23	60.0%	5	71.4%	7	70.6%	17
4	90.0%	10	100.0%	8	100.0%	3	96.7%	30
5	33.3%	3	100.0%	6	80.0%	5	100.0%	23
All	63.9%	36	89.5%	19	80.0%	15	91.4%	70

Goal 1: Absolute Measure

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

Method

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards all students being proficient by the year 2013-14. As a result, the state sets an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal that 100 percent of students will ultimately be proficient in the state's learning standards in mathematics. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a Performance Index (PI) value that equals or exceeds this year's mathematics AMO, which for 2011-12 is 158. The PI 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 PI is 200.

Results

The school's aggregate PI is 181, with 83% of students scoring at Level 3 or Level 4.

Calculation of 2011-12 Mathematics Performance Index (PI)

Grades	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				Number Tested
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
3-5	2	15	54	29	140

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 15 & + & 54 & + & 29 & = & 98 \\
 & & & & + & 54 & + & 29 & = & 83 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PI} & = & \mathbf{181}
 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

The school met the AMO, surpassing it by 23 points.

Additional Evidence

Similarly to the English Language Arts pattern, the school has surpassed the AMO each year with the exception of 2010, when the cut score changed dramatically but the AMO continued to rise. In the case of mathematics, the school has considerably surpassed the AMO in the years excepting 2010.

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

Year	Grades	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level				PI	AMO
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
2008-09	3-4	107	0.9%	12.1%	64.5%	22.4%	186	168
2009-10	3-5	139	3.6%	35.3%	41.0%	20.1%	158	174
2010-11	3-5	143	1.4%	33.6%	58.0%	7.0%	164	137
2011-12	3-5	140	2.1%	15.0%	53.6%	29.3%	181	158

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

Results

In aggregate, the school's performance saw 89.4% of students in at least their second year score at or above Level 3. The technical comparison district saw 69.4% of its students meet the standard.

2011-12 State Mathematics Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	69.0%	29	66.9%	1360
4	97.6%	41	73.6%	1397
5	97.1%	34	67.5%	1374
All	89.4%	104	69.4%	4131

Evaluation

The school surpassed this measure by a great amount, with 20 percentage points more students passing the state mathematics exam than District 3. The school outperformed this district in each grade, but did so significantly in both fourth and fifth grade, with the fifth grade having a nearly 30 percentage point disparity.

As noted above in the ELA discussion, District 3 is not a representative district for Harlem Link's performance. It consistently scores at a higher level than the districts dominating Harlem Link's catchment area, further illustrating how superior the school's mathematics performance was in 2012.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has consistently performed at a level at or above that of the technical local district, District 3.

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

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Levels 3 and 4 and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students							
	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	100.0%	91.7%	81.0%	56.0%	68.3%	64.0%	69.0%	66.9%
4	80.6%	86.9%	44.2%	63.1%	79.5%	68.9%	97.6%	73.6%
5	N/A		63.9%	63.7%	43.3%	65.4%	97.1%	67.5%
All	91.3%	89.4%	62.8%	60.9%	66.1%	66.1%	89.4%	69.4%

A truer comparison of Harlem Link's performance to the local district is the weighted composite of student districts of residence below. The table shows that Harlem Link had a passing rate 33 percentage points higher than the comparison composite district.

**2011-12 State Mathematics Exam
Composite of Student Body by Districts of Residence**

District	Percent at Level 1	Percent Passing	Number HL students resident
Dist. 1	6.9%	64.9%	1
Dist. 2	3.8%	82.3%	2
Dist. 3	6.7%	69.4%	22
Dist. 4	7.8%	58.9%	7
Dist. 5	17.0%	39.2%	64
Dist. 6	12.9%	51.3%	18
Dist. 7	16.8%	41.6%	1
Dist. 8	11.2%	56.4%	2
Dist. 9	14.9%	42.9%	4
Dist. 10	11.3%	52.9%	4
Dist. 11	10.2%	54.2%	10
Dist. 12	16.0%	42.6%	3
Dist. 15	5.1%	73.9%	1
Dist. 17	12.0%	52.1%	1
Dist. 28	6.2%	66.0%	1
Harlem Link	2.1%	82.9%	
Composite district	13.1%	49.7%	

Below is a comparison of Harlem Link’s performance and that of the three district schools with which the school has shared space in the time that the tested cohorts have been enrolled. The data demonstrate that Harlem Link has far outperformed the schools with which it has shared space continually.

**Mathematics Performance of
School and Comparison Schools by School Year**

School Year	Grades	Percent of Charter School Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year and All Students in Comparison Schools Scoring at or above Level 3 on State Exam							
		Charter School		P.S. 242M		P.S. 129M		P.S. 208M	
		Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
2008-09	3-4	91.3%	80	78.9%	95	65.8%	158	75.5%	139
2009-10	3-5	62.8%	121	36.9%	122	46.1%	206	33.5%	194
2010-11	3-5	66.1%	115	48.0%	102	43.7%	190	31.8%	201
2011-12	3-5	89.4%	105	25.9%	108	53.2%	173	43.1%	174

Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a

regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.

Method

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

Given the timing of the state’s release of family income data, the 2011-12 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2010-11 results, the most recent one available.

Results

In 2011, the most recent data available at the time of submission, Harlem Link had an Effect Size of +0.8. Each grade except for fifth grade had an Effect Size greater than +1.0 in the regression analysis.

2010-11 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Free Lunch Eligible Students	Number of Students Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	78.0	52	67.3	45.9	21.4	1.1
4		53	77.4	52.8	24.6	1.3
5		38	44.7	52.3	-7.6	-0.4
All	78.0	143	65.0	50.1	14.9	0.8

School’s Overall Comparative Performance:
Higher than expected to a large degree

Evaluation

The school met the measure, having a performance that was higher than expected to a large degree. While the fifth grade underperformed compared to the similar school state average, the third grade and fourth grade tremendously outperformed the comparison group.

In 2011-12, the school’s performance improved at a far greater rate than the state average; the school likely had a stronger performance on this measure in 2011-12.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has consistently outperformed similar schools statewide. In three of the past four years, the performance has been better than expected to either a medium or a large degree.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2007-08	3	71.3	53	94.3	84.6	0.86
2008-09	3-4	71.1	107	86.9	85.8	0.23
2009-10	3-5	70.9	139	61.1	50.6	0.58
2010-11	3-5	78.0	143	65.0	50.1	0.80

Goal 1: Growth Measure

On the current year’s state mathematics exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s state mathematics exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.

Method

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making towards the absolute measure of 75 percent of students performing at or above proficient. Each grade level cohort consists of those students who took the state exam in 2011-12 and also have a state exam score in 2010-11. It includes students who repeated the grade. Students who repeated the grade are included in their current grade level cohort, not the cohort to which they previously belonged. In addition, the school examines the aggregate of all cohorts to determine the growth of all students taking a state exam in both years.

Results

Both cohorts that took the state mathematics test in 2011 and 2012 met the growth target.

Cohort Growth on State Mathematics Exam from 2010-11 to 2011-12

Grade	Cohort Size	Percent Performing At or Above Level 3			Target Achieved
		2010-11	Target	2011-12	
4	41	71.4%	73.2%	97.6%	YES
5	34	79.4%	79.5%	97.1%	YES
All	76	75.0%	75.1%	97.4%	YES

Evaluation

The school met the measure, as both cohorts considerably surpassed their targets. The overall performance of the school surpassed the target by 20 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

Harlem Link has had mixed success in meeting growth targets over the years, with at least one cohort meeting the target in each of the past three years.

Cohort Performance on State Mathematics Exam

School Year	Cohort Grades	Number of Cohorts Meeting Target	Number of Cohorts
2008-09	4	0	1
2009-10	4-5	1	2
2010-11	4-5	1	2
2011-12	4-5	2	2

The table below demonstrates the school’s dramatic growth in mathematics performance. There were 44 students who took the exam in both years and scored at a higher level in 2012, while only one student scored at a lower level, falling from a Level 4 to a Level 3.

Change in Mathematics Performance Levels from 2010-11 to 2011-12

		Number of Students at Each Performance Level				
		2011-12				
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Total Number
2010-11	Level 1	0	0	0	0	0
	Level 2	0	2	14	3	19
	Level 3	0	0	23	27	50
	Level 4	0	0	1	6	7
	Total Number	0	2	38	36	76

Finally, Harlem Link began administering a new nationally normed standardized test, NWEA’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), in the 2011-12 school year. The school does not have growth data yet after one year of administration and will report cohort growth in 2012-13.

Summary of the of the Mathematics Goal

Harlem Link comfortably met each of the targets, demonstrating that it has attained this Accountability Plan goal for the 2011-12 school year.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above at or above the Time Adjusted Level 3 cut score on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Absolute	Each year, the school’s aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state’s NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their	Achieved

	second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size.	Data Not Yet Available
Growth	On the 2011-12 state exam, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above level 3 on the 2010-11 state exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3.	Achieved

Action Plan

At first glance it would appear that there is not much room for improvement in Harlem Link’s state test scores. But the school knows that it is in for a dramatic change in expectations with the state exam being based on Common Core standards. The school leaders also know that the most successful teachers in preparing scholars for success on the state mathematics test put in a tremendous amount of initiative to prepare students not only with conceptual understanding but frequent practice with the format of questions as they might appear on the state math test. The school needs to spread this best practice around as a standard way of planning math instruction.

Regarding Common Core, as in ELA, the school has been preparing for this change since January 2011. At that time the faculty noted that there is a great deal of content in each grade in common core that had been previously taught in the subsequent grade. The school began making preparations immediately. With the help of the school’s longtime math consultant, Joan Backer, teachers made changes to curriculum maps over the summer of 2011. Throughout the school year, teachers transitioned from using state standards to plan units to using Common Core standards. The aim is to continue this transition, which involves some new units being taught that had not been taught before.

In the last part of the 2011-12 school year, teachers began teaching units that were previously part of the coming grade’s units. The plan in 2012-13 is to continue supporting teachers in making the transition to Common Core. All of the school’s units are now planned around Common Core, but teachers need additional training. The school will have Ms. Backer returning as a consultant coach, a role she has filled at the school since 2006.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

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

Background

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

For the past five years, the school has hired an independent contractor, Garo Tekeyan, with extensive experience in FOSS instruction, to provide professional development. In September 2012, both science teachers will return for their fifth year in the position each, as will Garo.

Goal 3: Absolute Measure

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

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th grade in spring 2012. The school converted each student's raw score to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year) to score at Levels 3 or 4.

Results

All of Harlem Link's fourth graders scored at Level 3 or 4 on the 2011 state science exam, the most recent data available at the time of submission.

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

Grade	Population	Percent at Each Performance Level					Number Tested
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3/4	
4	All Students	0.0%	0.0%	40.7%	59.3%	100.0%	53
	Students in At Least 2 nd Year	0.0%	0.0%	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%	44

Evaluation

In 2011, the school met the measure, greatly surpassing the 75% target. Every student passed the exam. Harlem Link's science program has experienced tremendous consistency and professional growth in the past four years. The school has had the same science teachers in both the upper and lower grades collaborating and building curriculum together, and supported by an experienced staff developer.

Additional Evidence

The school over time has built a record of strong performance on the state science exam. Since all students scored at proficient, and the majority scored at Level 4, disaggregating data by length of time at the school would not illuminate any new information. However, the table below shows that the school has exceeded the accountability plan target of 75.0% proficiency each year since beginning testing in science in 2009.

Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Levels 3 and 4							
	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	91.4%	35	79.1%	43	100.0%	44	100.0%	41
All	91.4%	35	79.1%	43	100.0%	44	100.0%	41

Goal 3: Comparative Measure

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

Method

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

The school has not been able to ascertain updated science test data for the local district. However, the school is likely to meet the expectation, with the local district having 68 percent of fourth graders passing the science exam in 2010.

**2011-12 State Science Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Levels 3 and 4			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
4	100.0%	41		

Evaluation

The school has exceeded the district’s performance in the past on the state science exam.

Summary of the Science Goal

Harlem Link’s performance on the state science exam has been nothing short of phenomenal, and the school has met its Accountability Plan goal in this area.

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

Action Plan

Although the school has had 100% of students passing for two consecutive years, the school understands that there is still work to do in the science department.

First, both science teachers and the school’s science consultant have been in place for approximately five years. The school needs to plan seriously around succession planning for the science program to ensure that its strength will continue in the event of the departure of one of these three key collaborators.

Second, the school is adding one unit per grade to the science scope and sequence that will utilize Common Core ELA standards. Science will increasingly be taught with connections to high quality nonfiction texts. The school will begin this process with a tightly focused unit that includes a research project, taught by the science teachers, while maintaining its stunningly successful inquiry-based program.

NCLB

Goal 5: NCLB

Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.

Goal 5: Absolute Measure

Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.

Method

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

Results

Harlem Link is rated "In Good Standing" for this school year.

Evaluation

The measure has been met each year of the charter, beginning with the school's first administration of state tests in 2008. There has been no change over time.

Additional Evidence

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2007-08	In Good Standing
2008-09	In Good Standing
2009-10	In Good Standing
2010-11	In Good Standing
2011-12	In Good Standing