



**UNIVERSITY PREP CHARTER
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

August 16, 2021

By Andrea d'Amato, Executive Director

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2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Andrea d'Amato, Executive Director, prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position	
	Office (e.g. chair, treasurer, secretary)	committees (e.g. finance, executive)
Steve Barr	Chairperson	
Judith Bergtraum	Member	
Justin Pasternak	Teacher Representative	Teacher Representative
Burton Sacks	Treasurer	Finance
Miguel Suarez	Member	Negotiation
Randi Weingarten	Member	

Andrea d'Amato has served as the Executive Director since July 1, 2019. David Patterson has served as the Principal since August 28, 2018.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The University Prep Charter Middle School has as its mission to prepare students for success in high school, college, leadership and life. Ensuring growth in all three areas is our professional commitment and privilege. UPCMS (or “the School”) achieves this mission by creating small, college-preparatory learning communities where all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students and community) actively engage in the education process. We create a student-centered environment that unifies the efforts of family, community and school to foster life-long learning, cross-cultural competency, social responsibility and academic excellence. The underlying belief at UPCMS is that all students can go to college and that their preparation is our professional responsibility and moral obligation.

University Prep Charter Middle School opened in Fall 2019 serving grades 5 and 6 and will grow by one grade each year to become a full Grade 5-8 middle school. University Prep Public Schools opened UPCMS to offer an earlier start to college and career preparation. University Prep Public Schools also operates University Prep Charter High School, which was nationally recognized as a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School in the category of Exemplary High-Performing Schools.

Our Approach

We believe that with appropriate academic supports, students of all abilities learn more in classes with highly challenging content than in those with low academic rigor. The administration and staff of University Prep Public Schools is forward focused, making sure that we are working to achieve long-term longitudinal academic goals for our students. Regardless of the age group, teachers and administrators are striving to ensure that all students have the preparation necessary to excel at the next level.

UPCMS students enroll in a scope and sequence of courses aligned to the New York State and Common Core Learning Standards. We employ a team of highly qualified individuals to help identify and service the social and emotional needs of our diverse student body which fosters our school's culture of support and creates a strong sense of community.

Key Design Elements

The key design elements of University Prep Public Schools are:

A Shared Commitment to Academic Excellence – The UPCMS community of stakeholders shares a commitment to academic excellence. We design and decide together. At UPCMS, we prioritize our commitment to teacher voice and agency through our community decision-making model of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership means instructional decision-making is shared and extended between administrators and faculty; and, that responsibility for excellence is held by those with expertise. Anchored in our unique partnership with the United Federation of Teachers, our model provides systemic, mission-aligned opportunities for teachers to share responsibilities and lead various initiatives. To sustain and extend the effectiveness of our practice, we collaborate on the design of professional development opportunities. We ensure professional development provides teachers with timely, relevant and challenging content within structures inter-visitation,

coaching, mentorship, small group leadership, etc.) created by and for teachers. We measure our shared commitment to excellence through multiple data points, including teacher turnover rate.

Powerful Teaching and Learning – The UPCMS instructional program delivers powerful teaching and learning throughout our community. To assess the power or impact of our teaching and learning we begin with an empirical foundation of data. Our administrators and faculty convene structured, data-rich meetings to benchmark performance and evaluate progress. Department team meetings, grade-level team meetings and inquiry groups inform our instructional decision-making and shape our approach to ongoing schoolwide impact analysis. Two cornerstones of our work are Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) and our Problem-Solving methodology. Our ICT model places two certified teachers (one general education, one special education) in a single classroom. The model increases the individual attention for students, reduces our teacher-to-student ratio, and leverages the skills of highly-trained special education teachers in building comprehensive and collaborative solutions for all learners. The model also allows students with IEPs to receive instruction from a content specialist rather than a special educator.

The core of University Prep Middle School’s (UP Middle) academic work is threefold: to prepare students to discuss big ideas; to defend their own and others’ opinions; and to find joy in reading and thinking. UP Middle is a knowledge-led school—the goal of the school is to teach a broad, in-depth set of cultural and historical knowledge that is challenging and vital and that students can successfully commit to long-term memory through instruction and assessment. To achieve this, our teachers will work closely in teams—across grades and within departments— to create, practice, teach, and analyze lessons with shared ideas and concepts across courses, based on an idea that is simple but powerful—that knowledge builds on knowledge.

The most important aspect of UP Middle’s design is that it is purposeful in employing a curriculum that is specific, sequenced, and aligned. The curriculum presents a sequence of study that is organized and distinguished in both breadth and depth—what students learn is coherent, cumulative, and content-specific. The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, a K-8 course of study developed and refined by the Core Knowledge Foundation at the University of Virginia and in use by some of the highest performing middle schools in New York City today.

The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn in English, history, geography, mathematics, science, music, and the visual arts. It seeks to identify the content and skills that comprise the foundational knowledge that all students need in order to know a lot about the world, to think and read critically, and to solve problems by learning from the past and using knowledge wisely.

These three broad definitions of what it means for a student to be successful are predicated on the mastery of six core skills or abilities that encompass reading, writing, listening, speaking, and numeracy:

1. Students read grade-level fiction and non-fiction, across content subject areas, selected by both teachers and themselves, every day, for a sustained period of time;
2. Students read fiction and informational texts, across content subject areas, that reflect grade-level complexity and the Common Core State reading standards 1-10;

3. Students demonstrate, through writing and speaking, a high level of comprehension when reading or listening, across content subject areas—understanding context and background knowledge, locating evidence to support answers, and tightly and accurately summarizing material they have read or listened to;
4. Students argue—analyze, evaluate, support, and defend—their positions with evidence when writing and speaking about appropriately complex issues and topics in their classes, across content subject areas;
5. Students learn the core algebra strand defined by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics;
6. Students write expository essays and creative prose that reflect an understanding and mastery of appropriate sentence structure, grammar, usage, and spelling, across content subject areas.

We have also developed several other high impact approaches for students. Faculty hold weekly office hours with students. At UPCMS, students use office hours to build rapport with faculty, to probe deeply and build on knowledge acquired in class, to seek clarification on open questions, and to strengthen bonds within and across the community. We run a Saturday Academy to provide additional academic support for students throughout the year. Our Summer Bridge program, like the composition class, is a formal structure to mitigate the challenges faced by our incoming students. In partnership with CUNY, we offer College Now courses to introduce our students to the expectations and routines of higher education, while earning academic credit. UPCHS students have achieved a 98% graduation rate and 100% college acceptance rate. Across our campus, we expect college enrollment and success. Our teams work internally, and with external partners, to broaden and illuminate the path for our students.

Inclusive School Culture – The integrity of the UPCMS learning community is rooted in our commitment to an inclusive school culture. We affirm “inclusion” as our shared point of departure, or beginning, in all communication and interactions within the community. Inclusion looks and feels like a thoughtful, principled commitment to practice and reinforce our core values by considering and respecting the true diversity (visible and invisible, spoken and unspoken) at UPCMS. Students work towards a set of four core values that keep them on course to be successful at the college of their choice and beyond. “The Core Four” are:

- Accepting Personal Responsibility: students see themselves as the primary cause of their outcomes and experiences
- Discovering Self-Motivation: students find purpose in their lives by discovering personally meaningful goals and dreams
- Mastering Self-Management: students plan for and take purposeful actions in pursuit of their goals and dreams
- Creating Positive Interdependence: students build mutually supportive relationships that help them to achieve their goals and dreams – while helping others do the same

We conduct regular Town Hall meetings. These monthly gatherings are shared celebrations of success within our learning and service communities. We present honor roll certificates and attendance awards. Students also showcase their talents in the performing arts. We have built rich,

layered support structures wherein four counselors provide support services and loop with our students to ensure stability and to strengthen interpersonal connections.

Student Leadership and Character Development – Fulfilling the mission of UPCMS calls for administrators and faculty to embody and instill principles of student leadership and character development. We model our ideals through a daily advisory period wherein students receive explicit instruction on essential skills such as life management, college readiness, and reducing risk factors. We supplement this instruction by providing students with opportunities to lead and demonstrate character through faculty-led clubs and athletics. Clubs include Spanish Honor Society, UPCMS Pillars (Boys Club), Music Club and the Dance and Movement Club. Extensive athletics offerings include basketball and soccer (boys and girls), baseball (boys), softball (girls), and cheerleading. In addition to the opportunities to lead during the academic year, students can demonstrate their acquired skills as Summer Bridge Assistants who welcome and guide incoming students to the UPCMS community.

Family and Community Involvement – At UPCMS, our model of family and community involvement will incorporate five traditional methods of information sharing and collaborative decision-making: parent association meetings, back-to-school night, introduction to college night, enrollment meetings and quarterly parent-teacher conferences. Each of these structured events allow parents and families to be informed members of the school community. To ensure ongoing access to accurate and timely information, we deploy the PowerSchool school information platform and conduct seminars to train parents in using the platform, as well as e-mail.

School Demographics

In the 2020-21 school year, UPCMS enrolled 300 students in grades 5-7. Of the total student body enrolled on BEDS Day, 50.7% were Hispanic, 49% Black, and 0.3% Asian. Almost 94% of students were living in poverty, 19.7% had a disability, and 6.7% were English Language Learners.

Modalities of Instruction during the 2020-21

Instruction at UPCMS was 100% remote for all of the 2020-21 school year. Remote instruction was provided on a regular schedule, with all classes meeting three times a week using a combination of live and asynchronous instruction. Independent reading was required three days a week. For all students who needed additional support, we offered afternoon small-group tutoring sessions lasting for one hour 4 days per week. Students with IEPs met with learning specialists twice per week, and received checklists of work to complete each day.

Students continued to complete homework using the existing homework schedule. Students submitted work on Google Classroom, and teachers returned comments to students on their work. Teachers marked two assignments each week and provided feedback on work at least once a week. Student attendance and work completion was tracked on a daily basis, with outreach made every day to students who did not complete work and/or attend class.

To help sustain mental and emotional health for our students and families, UPCMS implemented a thorough system to monitor and address student mental and physical wellness. All students had individual check-in conversations with their advisers each week for wellness checks and to ensure that families were not suffering from food or housing insecurity. Our partnership with the Morris

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Heights Health Center provided additional support for families in need. Students also met with their counselors on a rotating basis. In addition, students gathered together as a whole school for community-building events each Friday evening at 4 pm for seminars focused on health and wellness. And, finally, the school continued to offer multiple clubs and social activities and strongly encouraged students to participate.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

In the table below, provide the school's BEDS Day enrollment for each school year.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year														
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2016-17														
2017-18														
2018-19														
2019-20						59	96							155
2020-21						62	126	110						298

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at the school will become proficient in reading and reading of the English Language.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned to the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backwards-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the ELA curriculum Reading Reconsidered.

To further support student learning in ELA, UPCMS offers “Reading and Speaking” and “Writing and Language” courses. During Reading and Speaking, students read approximately fifteen to twenty whole grade-level fiction, non-fiction, and dramatic texts; a number of short stories and poems; and many newspaper and magazine articles, all of which are read aloud in the classroom or read partially aloud and silently by students. These read-alouds continue in the school through all grades, based on research that shows students’ comprehension through listening outpaces their comprehension through reading until at least the ninth grade. This reading is close reading, requiring students to annotate and underline passages, read and reread carefully passages for meaning, and summarize passages.

These practices are done to help students understand meaning in texts, and to provide practice in arguing and solving problems based on the material. Students engage in debate during class about essential questions raised by the books they read, and use evidence from texts to support their positions. Students participate in at least three discussions per week about their reading in Reading and Talking.

In Writing and Language, students are expected to write at least three times a week, and to complete one major writing assignment per unit, or approximately two per marking period. These writing assignments include whole-school common page lengths and use a common scoring guide. Major work is written in at least two drafts, and all teachers provide multiple high-quality exemplar papers to provide models for students both before and during the writing process. Finally, students are expected to make presentations based on their written work at least once a marking period. These presentations are opportunities for peers to take notes, open up points of agreement or disagreement about the argument presented, and respond in the spirit of informed debate.

Writing and Language focuses on the development of writing at the level of the sentence, a need shared by many incoming middle schoolers. Grammar includes word study based on word roots, explicit vocabulary development, and the process of learning to develop ever more complex, grammatically sound sentences using the technique of sentence diagramming. Students practice taking apart sentences in texts they are currently reading, and writing new sentences based on similar ideas and content.

Teachers understand how to effectively implement and teach the school’s curriculum by participating preservice professional development focused on the Core Knowledge Curriculum. After learning about the content of the Core Knowledge sequence, each department creates a preliminary map of ten sequential units per grade for each subject area. Over the school year, teachers flesh out the maps generated in UP University by creating detailed instructional, domain-based unit plans that include individual lesson plans. Regularly scheduled planning time across grade levels and within departments supports the successful development and renewal of the maps that are initially written at the start of the year. Professional learning communities also work to revivify aspects of curriculum design and student assessment as the school year progresses and we learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of our students.

Student achievement data in the classroom are the foundation of collective decisions surrounding curricular choices and direction, instructional goals, and intervention and support programs for struggling students. Throughout, the goal of data gathering and sharing is to support best practices

in the classroom and the development in all units of common school-wide formative assessments, or checks for understanding. UPCMS tracks student performance on diagnostic assessments, formative assessments, summative assessments, high-stakes tests, final grades, and D and F (interim and final) grades.

All same-course teachers at UP Middle meet at least two times a week to help design short, regular, and common formative assessments that are used throughout a given unit to guide and improve instruction and student success. Teachers input and share results to compare outcomes, discuss trends, develop action plans for targeted student interventions, and identify pockets of missed comprehension. Students who regularly struggle on many skills on the common formative assessments are identified during the grade team meetings, where the purpose is to address student need and make recommendations for further comprehensive academic intervention and support. Students who are identified as struggling in a number of classes are recommended to the administration for further supports.

For ELA instruction, teachers continued to conduct live instruction via Zoom, as well as read-louds and shared reading. UPCMS continued to use the Reading Reconsidered middle school curriculum. UPCMS continued to ensure ample independent reading time, and students were quizzed on their independent reading. Learning specialists and our ENL teacher team-taught or met with students separately through Zoom.

METHOD

For the first half of the school year, UPCMS evaluated student achievement in ELA through the Star Assessment, an interim assessment that assesses student mastery of New York State standards. Scoring is norm-referenced, allowing for a comparison of student performance with that of other students across the US. UPCMS administered the Star Assessment for Reading once in December 2020. However, the school leadership made the decision to switch to NWEA MAP mid-year in order to get a higher degree of validity and to utilize an internal assessment that is more commonly used by charter schools and more closely aligned to SUNY/CSI data requirements. The school will continue to use NWEA as our internal ELA assessment moving forward.

UPCMS also assessed student achievement in ELA through summative assessments, which are aligned to the New York State standards. The assessments administered at the conclusion of each unit taught over the year, and evaluated against a target of 75% of students passing. Students were asked to solve a challenging and messy problem using skills and knowledge developed over the course of the unit. Some of these assessments also asked students to respond to an argument with evidence either in support of or against a position. In ELA, the novel study units used Reading Reconsidered Teach Like a Champion Middle School English Curriculum.

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in ELA: STAR and NWEA MAP

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RESULTS AND EVALUATION

UPCMS students fell short of the target on the Star Assessment in ELA administered in December 2020. The mean grade equivalent (GE) for 5th grade students was 4.4, which is .6 GE lower than the target of 5.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent (GE) for 6th grade students was 5.04, which is 0.96 lower than the target of 6.0 GE. The mean grade equivalent (GE) for 7th grade students was 5.15, which is -1.85 points lower than the target of 7.0 GE.

Performance on the Star Exam
in ELA By Grade in October 2019

	Mean GE	Target GE	Difference to Grade Level GE
5 th grade	4.4	5.0	-.6
6 th grade	5.04	6.0	-0.96
7 th Grade	5.15	7.0	-1.85

NWEA

As UPCMS administered the MAP ELA only once in April, the median growth percentile cannot be measured.

2020-21 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment End of Year Results

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards.	2+ students	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A
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The table below shows the end of year performance on the MAP ELA assessment for all students as well as those students who attended the school for two consecutive years. As all 5th Graders were new to the school this year, no comparisons can be drawn. However, the performance of 6th Grade students in their second year of enrollment was 2.2 percentage points higher than all students. For 7th Grade, the performance of students in their second year of enrollment was 1.2 percentage points higher than all students.

End of Year Performance on 2020-21 NWEA MAP 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 Proficient ¹	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3				
4				
5	13%	54	N/A	N/A
6	17.8%	118	20%	45
7	8.2%	110	9.4%	85
8				
All	13.1%	282	13.1%	130

As UPCMS administered the MAP ELA only once in April, End of Year Growth cannot be measured.

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 NWEA MAP ELA Assessment By All Students

Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3		
4		
5	N/A	N/A
6	N/A	N/A
7	N/A	N/A

¹ Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.

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8		
All	N/A	N/A

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Multi-year comparisons cannot be made as UPCMS transitioned from STAR to NWEA MAP during the 2020-21 school year. In addition, UPCMS is only in its second year of operation.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

As evidenced from UPCMS's end of year performance on the NWEA MAP ELA assessments, UPCMS did not meet the Absolute Measure of 75% of students enrolled in at least their second year performing at or above the equivalent of grade level standards. We are unable to measure whether we met the Growth Measure or Gap Closing Measure due to our transition from the STAR assessments to NWEA MAP.

ACTION PLAN

In the 2021-22 school year, UPCMS will be making strategic curricular changes in ELA and History to address learning loss experienced by our students due to the pandemic. We will continue to prioritize uniform literacy (writing and reading) practices across all classes—specifically Everybody Writes, Show Call, Sentence Stems, shared reading, guided reading, and reading for homework as pre-work for the next day's classwork. We will be adding a 4 year US History sequence that will enable our students to take the US History Regents at the end of the 8th Grade.

Additionally, UPCMS will continue to enhance and extend independent practice in the coming school year and use Accelerated Reader to ensure that students get credit for the books they read. The school will help build students' home libraries with rich, engaging books that their parents can read alongside, with, or to them, and that siblings can read and benefit from, as well. In addition to further expanding and curating classroom libraries, UPCMS will continue to provide students with access to a considerably greater array of books through OverDrive, an ebook and audiobook reading application.

UPCMS is also working to achieve higher growth with students who are behind grade level in reading. Zero Period, our period dedicating to helping lagging readers make more progress to get on grade level, will be part of a set regular schedule in the 2021-22 year, and will include regular checks for student growth. All students who are 1.25 years behind will be required to attend. Teachers and leaders at the school have been working during the summer of 2021 to design a new Zero Period curriculum that focuses on close reading and shared reading. The new curriculum will also incorporate a series of assessments that will allow the school to track growth in reading level proficiency over the course of the school year. This data will be shared with both students and parents throughout the year.

Professional Development for content and learning specialist teachers will continue to be a priority in 2021-22. UPCMS will focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula, especially as we grow to include 8th Grade. UPCMS has established a set schedule for collaboration in for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as and through inter-visitations.

Lastly UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year through the use of NWEA MAP assessments and curriculum unit assessments. Outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year. Independent reading progress will be tracked by pages and words read, and compared against targets based on reading level. The 2022 New York State ELA examination results will also provide a critical look into student growth since the last time we administered the tests for our students was in 2019.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

All students at the school will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematics computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned to the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backwards-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the math curriculum Eureka’s Great Minds program.

The Mathematics program at UP Middle has two strands: one that focuses on mastering foundational procedures, and another that focuses on algebraic problem solving and mathematical reasoning. First, to build the vital foundation necessary for success in high school and college, we dedicate much of our math instruction to solidifying procedural knowledge. We emphasize the development of strong number sense, excellent mental-math skills and a deep understanding of place value. Students engage in daily timed procedural drills that allow students to gain fluency in operation sense and computational skills.

Second, our mathematics curriculum relies on the belief that every student should be exposed to algebraic mathematical thinking skills starting in the fifth grade. Starting in the early years, students will exercise in algebraic reasoning skills and practice algebraic notation. Throughout middle school, students are provided with increasingly more frequent opportunities to solve complex problems and to independently draw conclusions. With this technique, all students will have learned the core algebra strand defined by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics by the end of eighth grade. Additionally, students that excel in mathematics during sixth and seventh grades will have the opportunity to enroll in a regent's level algebra course for their eighth grade year

Teachers understand how to effectively implement and teach the school's curriculum by participating preservice professional development focused on the Core Knowledge Curriculum. After learning about the content of the Core Knowledge sequence, each department to creates a preliminary map of ten sequential units per grade for each subject area. Over the school year, teachers flesh out the maps generated in UP University by creating detailed instructional, domain-based unit plans that include individual lesson plans. Regularly scheduled planning time across grade levels and within departments supports the successful development and renewal of the maps that are initially written at the start of the year. Professional learning communities also work to revivify aspects of curriculum design and student assessment as the school year progresses and we learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of our students.

Student achievement data in the classroom are the foundation of collective decisions surrounding curricular choices and direction, instructional goals, and intervention and support programs for struggling students. Throughout, the goal of data gathering and sharing is to support best practices in the classroom and the development in all units of common school-wide formative assessments, or checks for understanding. UPCMS tracks student performance on diagnostic assessments, formative assessments, summative assessments, high-stakes tests, final grades, and D and F (interim and final) grades.

All same-course teachers at UP Middle meet at least two times a week to help design short, regular, and common formative assessments that are used throughout a given unit to guide and improve instruction and student success. Teachers input results from these common assessments in a GoogleDrive spreadsheet to compare outcomes, discuss trends, develop action plans for targeted student interventions, and identify pockets of missed comprehension. Students who regularly struggle on many skills on the common formative assessments are identified during the grade team meetings, where the purpose is to address student need and make recommendations for further comprehensive academic intervention and support. Students who are identified as struggling in a number of classes are recommended to the administration for further supports.

For Math instruction, teachers continued to conduct live instruction via Zoom and used video-casting software for direct and shared instruction with iPads. Students also used Khan Academy lessons for practice and review. Learning specialists and our ENL teacher team-taught or met with students separately through Zoom.

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METHOD

In past years, UPCMS evaluated student achievement in mathematics through the Star Assessment, an interim assessment that assesses student mastery of New York State standards. Scoring is norm-referenced, allowing for a comparison of student performance with that of other students across the US. However, the STAR assessments were not administered in the 2020-21 school year as originally planned. The school leadership made the decision to switch to NWEA MAP mid-year in order to get a higher degree of validity and to utilize an internal assessment that is more commonly used by charter schools and more closely aligned to SUNY/CSI data requirements. The school will continue to use NWEA as our internal Math assessment moving forward.

UPCMS also assessed student achievement in mathematics through summative assessments, which were administered at the conclusion of each unit taught over the year. The assessments are aligned to the New York State standards. Students were asked to solve a challenging and messy problem using skills and knowledge developed over the course of the unit. Some of these assessments also asked students to respond to an argument with evidence either in support of or against a position. In mathematics, the units used Eureka-Great Minds (Engage NY) math curriculum.

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in mathematics: **NWEA MAP**

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

NWEA

As UPCMS administered the MAP Math assessment only once in June, the median growth percentile cannot be measured.

2020-21 NWEA MAP Math Assessment End of Year Results

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be greater than 50. Student growth is the difference between the beginning of year score and the end of year score.	All students	50	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 2: Each year, the school's median growth percentile of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students whose achievement did not meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent in the fall will meet or exceed 55 in the spring administration.	Low initial achievers	55	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Measure 3: Each year, the median growth percentile of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities	[X]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will meet or exceed the RIT score proficiency equivalent according to the most recent linking study comparing NWEA Growth to New York State standards.	2+ students	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A

The table below shows the end of year performance on the MAP Math assessment for all students as well as those students who attended the school for two consecutive years. As all 5th Graders were new to the school this year, no comparisons can be drawn. However, the performance of 6th Grade students in their second year of enrollment was 1.2 percentage points lower than all students. For 7th Grade, the performance of students in their second year of enrollment was 1.7 percentage points lower than all students.

End of Year Performance on 2020-21 NWEA MAP Math Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient ²	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3				
4				
5	0%	48	N/A	N/A
6	8.2%	110	7%	43
7	15.6%	96	13.7%	73
8				
All	9.4%	254	11.2%	116

As UPCMS administered the MAP Math assessment only once in June, End of Year Growth cannot be measured.

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 NWEA MAP Mathematics Assessment By All Students

² Proficient is defined as scoring at or above the grade-level RIT score cut score according to the most recently available linking study found [here](#). Refer to pages 15-16, tables 3.5 and 3.6.

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Grades	Median Growth Percentile	Number Tested
3		
4		
5	N/A	N/A
6	N/A	N/A
7	N/A	N/A
8		
All	N/A	N/A

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Multi-year comparisons cannot be made as UPCMS transitioned from STAR to NWEA MAP during the 2020-21 school year. In addition, UPCMS is only in its second year of operation.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

As evidenced from UPCMS's end of year performance on the NWEA MAP Math assessments, UPCMS did not meet the Absolute Measure of 75% of students enrolled in at least their second year performing at or above the equivalent of grade level standards. We are unable to measure whether we met the Growth Measure or Gap Closing Measure due to our transition from the STAR assessments to NWEA MAP.

ACTION PLAN

In the 2021-22 school year, UPCMS will be making strategic curricular changes in Math to address learning loss experienced by our students due to the pandemic and to ensure coherent and coordinated practice across grades.

UPCMS is also working to achieve higher growth with students who are behind grade level in Math by expanding Zero Period, our period dedicated to helping struggling learners make more progress. In 2021-22, Zero Period will be part of a set regular schedule, and will include regular checks for student growth. All students who are 1.25 years behind will be required to attend. In the forthcoming year, the school will also add a two-hour Saturday morning academy that will be done virtually. This will provide support to students to all subject areas. In January of 2022, these sessions will become in person and they will support preparation for the state exams in the spring of 2022. The school also intends to begin a tutoring program, GatorCorps, that makes use of UPCHS current students and alumni who are at college. This program will offer individual and small-group tutoring and academic support to students in all subject areas in the evenings during the week and on Friday afternoons when students have early dismissal.

In the upcoming school year, UPCMS will continue to focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula. UPCMS has established a set schedule

for collaboration in for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as and through inter-visitations.

Lastly UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year through the use of NWEA MAP assessments and curriculum unit assessments. Outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year. The 2022 New York State mathematics examination results will also provide a critical look into student growth since the last time we administered the tests for our students was in 2019.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

All students at the school will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

BACKGROUND

The foundation of all curricular activities at the school is the Core Knowledge sequence, which is fully aligned to the New York State Standards. The Core Knowledge sequence outlines content and skills that every child should learn. The Core Knowledge curriculum is taught to students, grade by grade, year by year, in a coherent, age appropriate sequence. In this way, ideas and concepts—organized in “domains,” or areas of study that have a related set of language and vocabulary—can be logically shared between classes and among grades. Teachers at UPCMS supplement the ideas and concepts taught in the Core Knowledge sequence with their own lessons and backwards-designed units and project-based performance tasks. UPCMS has also chosen to use the science curriculum Amplify Science.

Effective instruction in science requires, first and foremost, hands-on experience and observation from a student’s very first day in school, and this is reflected in the practices in science education at UP Middle. Students apply the scientific method of inquiry to critically assess ideas presented by others and to gain insights into natural phenomena. Students ask questions to think critically about the world and bring a healthy skepticism to differing perspectives derived from extensive content knowledge. They conduct research, fully prepared to seek appropriate sources and comprehend grade level informational texts to supplement what they already know during inquiry work. After conducting research, they construct testable hypotheses. They experiment, carrying out both proper scientific investigation and collect both quantitative and qualitative data. They analyze results by assessing data and observations, drawing conclusions from results. They evaluate and defend their positions using evidence. Students at UP Middle can communicate the results of their inquiry when both writing and speaking.

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For Science instruction in 2020-21, teachers continued to conduct live instruction via Zoom and used the digital resources from Amplify to conduct virtual experiments. Students used completed work in investigation notebooks at home while completing and submitting work on Google Classroom, including performance tasks for new units. Learning specialists and our ENL teacher team-taught or met with students separately through Zoom.

METHOD

UPCMS assessed student achievement in science through unit assessments, which were administered at the conclusion of each unit taught over the year. The assessments are aligned to the New Generation Science Standards. Students were asked to solve a challenging and messy problem using skills and knowledge developed over the course of the unit. Some of these assessments also asked students to respond to an argument with evidence either in support of or against a position.

We plan to use MWEA MAP for Science assessments beginning in the 2021-22 school year.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

No formal summative assessments were administered for Science in the 2020-21 school year, so we are unable to measure year-end performance results against our accountability goal. We know from our unit assessments, however, that continual progress and growth was made during the school year.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

No formal summative assessments were administered for Science in the 2020-21 school year, so we are unable to measure year-end performance results against our accountability goal.

ACTION PLAN

In 2021-22, UPCMS will continue using the Amplify Science middle school curriculum, as it has demonstrated success.

UPCMS will also continue to focus on ensuring that teachers work together to improve the alignment and coordination of their curricula. UPCMS is establishing a set schedule for collaboration in for both content and grade-level teacher teams, as well as and through inter-visitations. UPCMS is also working to onboard new teachers to become part of UPCMS's shared culture and develop ownership of building a strong school culture.

Lastly UPCMS will have an increased focus on the intentional, regular collection of quantifiable data in the coming school year, through the use of NWEA MAP Science assessments and unit assessments. UPCMS has redesigned its curricula to include a pre- and post-assessment for at least

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five units in each content area, and outcomes will be tracked and reported to students and families throughout the school year.

GOAL 4: ESSA

Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent changes to the state's testing, accountability, and federal reporting requirements, the 2020-21 school accountability statuses are the same as those assigned for the 2019-20 school year. The 2019-20 accountability statuses were based on 2018-19 exam results. Assigned accountability designations and further context can be found [here](#).

Goal 7: Absolute Measure

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.

METHOD

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.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

UPCMS is in Good Standing

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

2019-20 was UPCMS' inaugural year. We have been in Good Standing for our first two years of operation.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	N/A
2019-20	In Good Standing
2020-21	In Good Standing

