

**Merrick Academy-Queens Public
Charter School**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY
PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

August 27, 2021

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2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Stephanie Mauterstock, 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)
Gerald Karikari	Chair	Finance/Operations Committee; HR Committee, Executive Committee
James Ding	Trustee	Academic Committee, Executive Committee
Cameil Dalgetty-Jarvis	Trustee	Finance/Operations Committee; HR Committee, Executive Committee
Tatum Boothe	Trustee	Academic Committee, Executive Committee
Nicole C. Blair-Barzey	Trustee	Academic Committee, Executive Committee

Stephanie Mauterstock has served as the Executive Director since July 20, 2020.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The State University of New York Board of Trustees approved the Merrick Academy – Queens Public Charter School (Merrick Academy or the School) in June of 2000. Located in Community School District 29 in Queens Village, New York City, the School opened in September 2000, with an enrollment of 121 students in grades K – 2. In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy had an enrollment of 275-285 kindergarten through fifth grade students.

Our mission: Merrick Academy is a STEAM based school that cultivates critical thinking, problem solving and inquiry amongst all learners in an environment that provides extensive whole-child support based on ensuring equity and empowerment for all learners through effective and innovative approaches to teaching and learning fostered by a world class faculty. Merrick Academy recognizes that in order to be successful, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with parents will make a great difference in a child’s education. As partners, we at Merrick Academy, share the responsibility for our children’s success and want all stakeholders to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities.

We, at Merrick Academy, pursue excellence in our all-inclusive learning community of students, educators, parents and community members. We work towards the common purpose of providing an excellent educational experience for all students. Through our high degree of individualized instruction, increased time on the task of learning and innovative academic curriculum, we will ensure that all of our students are college and career ready.

Overall, Merrick Academy’s motto “in pursuit of excellence” is a constant reminder of the expectations we set for our learning community.

The focus of the Merrick Academy is on the core skills of reading, language and mathematics. Merrick Academy is organized to provide an extended day, a high degree of individualized instruction and an innovative research-based academic curriculum.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2016-17	79	112	83	83	112	84	1 (UGE)	554
2017-18	82	79	109	90	90	103	N/A	553
2018-19	98	83	80	97	79	86	N/A	523
2019-20	80	107	88	83	98	82	N/A	538
2020-21	94	103	117	97	87	101	N/A	599

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students enrolled in the Merrick Academy-Queens Public Charter School will become proficient in reading and writing of the English language.

BACKGROUND

Merrick Academy has a literacy rich design where reading and writing exists in every subject area. There are authentic texts and opportunities to read. All are reading with purpose and making connections to self, the community, and the world. All are making connections across content areas.

The School's ELA curriculum is rooted in the following principles:

1. Read and Write Critically- summarize, interpret, critique and make connections across all disciplines by reading and writing in response to informational, technical and fictional texts
2. Engage the Writer's Process
3. Construct logical arguments that utilizes evidence from multiple points of views
4. Speak with confidence, clarity and discernment about a wide range of topics demonstrating the use of effective research techniques with various pieces of media and a synthesis of the information
5. Listen to others and be able to break down what is said to either critique, question and/or challenges by providing logical explanation or refutation
6. Identify and convey a strong understanding of the interconnectedness between themes, genres and central ideas
7. Demonstrate knowledge of the difference between writing informally and formally by selecting appropriate styles, expressions, and vocabulary

The ELA curriculum relies on a balanced literacy approach that incorporates authentic texts, guided reading, centers, independent reading, and writing. In grades K-2, students learn handwriting, phonemic awareness, concepts about print, and phonics.

Summary of the school's modality changes during 2020-21: Similar to many NYC charter schools, Merrick Academy's program was fully remote in 2020-21. However, we did open a Learning Center at our building with "student pods" run by operational staff to support our highest need students, such as those living in temporary housing, requiring child care as their parents were essential workers, students who did not have a parent at home that spoke English and could not effectively support them in completing remote instruction; and, high need special education students, often those who required a 1:1 paraprofessional as mandated by their Individualized Education Plans. The Learning Center opened in December 2020 and served 120 students through June 2021.

The school's remote schedule offered professional development for teachers every Wednesday afternoon for 3 hours. The professional development provided was led by the CAO/Principal, Assistant Principal of Mathematics, Assistant Principal of ELA, and the Director of Student Support Services. The Director of Student Support Services is responsible for social emotional learning at Merrick and manages special education and supports students who are below grade level. Professional development was also provided by an ELA consultant, Math consultant, DEIA consultant, STEAM consultant and ANet, who provided data training to teachers.

The school also served 270 students during a summer program, which was 50% academically focused and both prioritized students whose i-Ready results indicated they were below grade level and included emerging kindergarten students. The summer program was run and operated by the school, to ensure health and safety protocol were followed.

METHOD

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

MERRICK ACADEMY ADMINISTERS THREE I-READY ASSESSMENTS TO MONITOR STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS EACH ACADEMIC YEAR. WITHOUT NYS ASSESSMENT DATA TO ASSESS THE SCHOOL'S PROGRESS AGAINST OUR CHARTER APPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY GOALS, AND WITH I-READY'S RESEARCH- PROVED ALIGNMENT TO NYS STANDARDS, MERRICK ACADEMY USED THE I-READY RESULTS TO ASSESS AND EVALUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR.

i-Ready Diagnostic describes¹ its services for reading/ELA as an effective, research-based, web-based diagnostic assessment for students in grades K–12. Using a compatible computer with internet access and a headset, students take the online Diagnostic that assesses performance overall and down to the sub-skill level. i-Ready's sophisticated computer adaptive algorithms ensure learners are assessed efficiently across a number of knowledge domains. The questioning format adapts as students respond to each question—getting more or less challenging as needed—to complete the diagnosis and identify each child's performance level. The adaptive nature of the assessment meets students at their own skill level, so they experience success as well as challenge while i-Ready accurately measures their mastery of New York State Learning Standards.

i-Ready includes a powerful management and reporting suite for delivery of essential performance information at the school, class, and student/group levels. Actionable, real-time reports guide educators in identifying the instructional needs and abilities of individual students and instructional groups, and also include explicit next steps for remediating areas of academic weakness.

i-Ready Diagnostic is strongly aligned to the New York State Learning Standards for ELA. The independent Educational Research Institute of America conducted a research study evaluating the relationship between i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2016 New York State end-of-year assessments.

¹ <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/iready-slo-assessment-form-c-and-h.pdf>.

The research found a high correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and the New York State assessments. i-Ready was also shown to accurately predict end-of-year proficiency rates based on students' fall, winter, and spring Diagnostic performance. The strong correlations between the spring i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2016 New York State assessments—with overall correlations of .81 for ELA for all students across grades 3–8—exceed the Center on Response to Intervention's recommended .70 threshold for correlations. Additionally, Curriculum Associates partnered with leading academics to develop a regression-based model for predicting New York State Assessment proficiency rates. i-Ready proficiency prediction from fall, winter, and spring Diagnostic results proved to be highly accurate and remarkably consistent with observed (actual) NYSTP proficiency rates— often within one percent of observed proficiency for the sample. Plus, i-Ready accurately identified individual student needs on the standards to drive targeted instruction—both student- and teacher-led.

RESULTS AND EVALUATIONMNA

End of Year Performance on 2020-21 i-Ready ELA Assessment
 By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year
 Goal: 75% of all 3rd-8th Grade Students Enrolled for 2 Years will Perform At of Above Grade Level

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested
3	36%	85	40.3%	72
4	27%	85	29.7%	74
5	21%	95	21.6%	88
All	28%	265	29.9%	234

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its absolute measure of 75% of 3rd through 5th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school performing at or above grade level standards on the English language arts assessment. Overall, nearly 30% of students enrolled at the school for two or more years performed at or above grade level on the i-Ready spring English language arts assessment, almost two percentage points above the school average for all 3rd through 5th grade students.

Merrick Academy’s 3rd grade had the highest percentage of students attending the school for two or more years performing at or above grade level on the i-Ready spring English language arts assessment. Third grade students enrolled at the school for at least two years had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level compared to all 3rd grade, 40.3% compared to 36%. This trend of students enrolled at the school for at least two years having a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the i-Ready English language arts spring assessment continued at the 4th and 5th grades.

Percentage of Merrick Academy Students Performing at Mid/Above Level on the i-Ready English Language Arts Assessments						
	2019-20			2020-21		
Grade	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3
K	N/A	25%	89%	N/A	58%	74%
1st	10%	27%	77%	34%	47%	49%
2nd	8%	21%	52%	27%	44%	42%
3rd	9%	18%	50%	17%	27%	36%
4th	13%	31%	50%	10%	18%	27%
5th	9%	14%	21%	13%	22%	21%

Comparing the results of the 2019-20 school year English language arts i-Ready assessments to the 2020-21 assessments yields several interesting results. First, as discussed in detail below, i-Ready updated their national norms in August 2020, resulting in students needing to score higher on the 2020-21 assessments to be considered at or above grade level compared to previous years. Also, in the 2020-21 school year, i-Ready’s fall norming window was moved up from the beginning of the school year through November 30 to the beginning of the school year through November 15. Couple these changes in i-Ready assessment analysis with the shifting learning models students have been subjected to during COVID-19, it could logically be expected that the percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the fall English language arts assessment would have been higher in the pre-COVID 2019-20 school year compared to the fall 2020-21 assessment. However, with the exception of Merrick Academy’s 4th grade, each grade level tested on the fall 2020-21 i-Ready English language arts assessment had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level compared to the fall assessment administered in the 2019-20 school year. Impressively, Merrick Academy’s 1st and 2nd grade had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level, 24- and 19-percentage-points respectively, compared to the 1st and 2nd grade in the 2019-20 school year.

Similarly, again with the exception of the school’s 4th grade, the percentage of Merrick Academy students performing at or above grade level on the winter i-Ready English language arts assessment was higher in the 2020-21 school year compared to the 2019-20 school year. Like the 2019-20 school year fall assessment, the 2019-20 winter assessment was unaffected by COVID, as the school’s transformation to remote learning post-dates the end of the winter norming window. The most impressive growth on the winter assessment occurred among kindergarten students, who more than doubled the percentage of students performing at or above grade level between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. Also impressive was the results among the school’s 1st and 2nd grades, where there was a 20- and 24- percentage point increase, respectively, in the percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the winter assessment between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

When assessing longitudinal growth, Merrick Academy has impressive results over the past two school years. The cohort of students who took the fall English language arts assessment as 1st graders in the 2019-20 school year had a higher percentage of students performing at or above

grade level, 17-percentage-points, when they took the fall assessment as 2nd graders in the 2020-21 school year. There was also longitudinal growth among the cohort of students who took the fall English language arts assessment as 2nd graders in 2019-20 when they took the assessment as 3rd graders in 2020-21, nine-percentage-points, a one point improvement in the cohort of students who took the fall English language arts assessment as 3rd graders in the 2019-20 school year when they took the exam as fourth graders in the 2020-21 school year, and no change in the percentage of students achieving proficiency among the cohort of students who took the assessment as fourth grade students in the 2019-20 school year, when they took the assessment in the fall of the 2020-21 school year as 5th grade students.

On the winter English language arts i-Ready assessment, there was longitudinal growth at each measurable grade, except for the cohort of students who took the winter assessment as 4th graders in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 5th graders in the 2020-21 school year. The greatest longitudinal increase among student cohorts between the i-Ready winter 2019-20 assessment and the 2020-21 assessment occurred in the cohort of students who took the 2019-20 winter assessment as kindergarteners when they took the winter English language arts exam as first graders in the 2020-21 school year. Impressively, similar growth occurred among the cohort of students who took the winter assessment as 1st grade students in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 2nd grade students in the 2020-21 school year, as well as among the cohort of students who took the assessment as 2nd graders in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 3rd grade students in the 2020-21 school year.

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 i-Ready ELA Assessment
By All Students

Goal: Students will grow at a normed rate according to beginning of the year baseline score
(Median Percent Annual Growth of 100% or more)

Grade s	Median Percent of Annual Typical Growth	Number Tested
3	118%	85
4	76%	85
5	35%	95
All	79%	265

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its growth goal of all 3rd through 5th grade students growing at a median percent annual growth of 100% or more. The only individual grade to meet this goal was the school’s 3rd grade, where the median percent of annual typical growth among all tested students was 118%, exceeding the goal by 18-percentage points. The school’s 4th grade missed this growth goal by 24-percentage points and the 5th grade missed the goal by 65 percentage points. As a whole, the school’s 3rd through 5th grade missed the growth goal by 21 percentage points.

Median Annual Typical Growth Percentage on i-Ready Spring Reading Diagnostic

Goal: Growth of students with low initial absolute achievement is greater than the target, median percent annual growth of 110% or more.	
Grade Level	2020-2021
3 rd	145%
4 th	118%
5 th	0%
Total	101.5%

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its growth goal of all 3rd through 5th grade students with low initial absolute achievement attaining a median percent annual growth of 110% or more on the spring assessment. Although the school did not meet the overall goal, both the 3rd and 4th grades exceeded this growth goal, by 35 and eight percentage points, respectively. In fact, despite the 5th grade’s median percent annual growth of zero, the grades analyzed here were only eight-and-a-half percentage points away from meeting this goal.

Median Annual Typical Growth Percentage on i-Ready Spring Reading Diagnostic				
Goal: Growth of students with disabilities is greater than the growth of general education students.				
Grade Level	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	All	Students with Disabilities	All	Students with Disabilities
K	212%	197%	57%	61%
1st	191%	220%	40%	54%
2nd	143%	174%	62%	63%
3rd	196%	163%	118%	108%
4th	177%	283%	83%	71%
5th	131%	150%	35%	0%
Total	177%	174%	62%	61%
Total 3rd-5th Grade	165%	162%	90%	64.5%

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not meet its growth goal of having the percentage of students with disabilities in the 3rd through 5th grades performing at or above grade level be greater than the growth of the school’s general education 3rd through 5th grade students between the fall and spring English language arts assessments. Looking at 3rd through 5th grades, the growth of general education students on the i-Ready Spring reading diagnostic was 90% compared to the fall assessment. For the cohort of students identified as having a disability, the growth was only 64.5%. Among all grade levels assessed, but not considered for the purposes of measuring this growth goal, the school’s kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades’ students with disabilities showed greater growth on the i-Ready reading diagnostic between the fall and spring assessments when compared to the school’s general education students.

Merrick did administer the NYS ELA Assessment. However, having been remote all year, there was low attendance for the exam and the NYS assessment results are not yet available.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Merrick enrolls a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities. In the 2019-20 school year, 80% of Merrick’s students were economically disadvantaged and 20% were identified as having a disability, five and two percentage points, respectively, higher than the district average. While learning during the pandemic has had negative effects on most students, the student population Merrick serves has been hit particularly hard. A report released by the federal Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights found “that the pandemic has negatively affected academic growth, widening pre-existing disparities” and in core subject areas like reading “there are worrisome signs that in some grades students might be falling behind pre-pandemic expectations.” United States Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, *Education in a Pandemic: The Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on America’s Students*, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/20210608-impacts-of-covid19.pdf>.

Further, “[A]cademic progress for students of color appears to have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.” United States Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, *Education in a Pandemic: The Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on America’s Students*, at p. 5, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/20210608-impacts-of-covid19.pdf>. Indeed, a Renaissance Star report issued in the middle of the 2020-21 school year noted, “[S]tudents of color were even further from meeting pre-pandemic growth expectations than they were in the beginning of the school year,” warning, “‘students with slower-than-typical within-year growth rates’ . . . were all disproportionately ‘at-risk for falling farther behind.’” *Id.* at pp. 16-17.

Compounding the impact that COVID-19 has had on academic achievement, the national norms that i-Ready uses to assess student achievement were updated in August 2020 and are currently based on data from the 2018-19 school year. Curriculum Associate Research Report, *i-Ready Diagnostic National Norms Tables for Reading and Mathematics for Grades K-8 2020-21*, August 2020, available at: <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/iready-norms-tables-K-8-2020.pdf>. In other words, the norms that are now being used to assess student achievement do not take into consideration the disruption in the traditional learning model most students in this country have experienced in the last two school years. In fact, the norms used this year are more stringent than those used for the 2019-20 school year, resulting in students being expected to achieve at a higher level, while having experienced 18-months of academic disruption because of COVID-19.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick did not meet its English language arts assessment goals. However, given the ongoing pandemic and the impact it has had on academic achievement, particularly among the student population Merrick serves, Merrick’s English language arts assessment results should be considered satisfactory. As described in detail in the action plan

below, we intend to close the achievement gaps created by the pandemic, so long as we are able to maintain in in-person learning for the entirety of the 2021-22 school year.

2020-21 i-Ready ELA Assessment End of Year Results					
Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school’s median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.	All students	100%	234	79%	No
Measure 2: Each year, the school’s median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students who were two or more grade levels below grade level in the fall will be equal to or greater than 110% by the spring assessment administration.	Low initial achievers	110%	234	101.5	No
Measure 3: Each year, the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.	Students with disabilities ²	90% ³	66	64.5%	No
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will score at the <i>mid on-grade level</i> or above scale score for the year-end assessment.	2+ students	75%	234	29%	No

ACTION PLAN

The School will be implementing a number of new initiatives during the 2021-22 school year to improve ELA student achievement. The core beliefs under-pinning our academic planning for our post-pandemic return include, but are not limited to:

² Schools may elect to report the aggregated data for a different subpopulation of students if the total tested number of students with disabilities is 5 or fewer, or if the school’s mission aligns to serving a different specific subpopulation. For schools that choose a different subpopulation (e.g. English language learners, homeless students, etc.), please explain the rationale in the narrative section

³ Target should reflect the median percent of progress to Annual Typical Growth for all general education students. In the case that the school elects to measure the achievement of a different subpopulation, the target should reflect the median percent of progress to Annual Typical Growth of all students at the school not included in that subpopulation.

- We teach every student grade-level content standards and we meet students where they are;
- Our programs and offerings are responsive to the most current and accurate data;
- We must intentionally plan to “teach and insist.” Teachers and leaders need high-quality, aligned, and consistent training and support in order to deliver on a robust plan for unfinished learning AND grade level learning;
- We believe that the whole community will work together to help our students grow;
- Strengthening and aligning our current resources and building more effective and consistent systems and processes that lead to teacher, leader, and student achievement; and
- We believe that accomplishing our goals requires intentionality in a way that allows us to approach academics in a tiered and purposeful plan that closes gaps and keeps us on track for long term goals.

Our theory of action, which is based on research, case studies, school visits, and interrogations, is simple: If we deliver rigorous on grade-level instruction, And we create the structures necessary to execute on impactful remediation and acceleration And we build teacher and leader content knowledge and capacity to provide effective instruction, Then,

- Students will continue to build content knowledge on grade-level standards while simultaneously receiving academic intervention support to close foundational learning gaps and make up for unfinished learning; and
- Our staff and school community will have the tools, knowledge, experiences, and resources necessary to execute our school’s instructional vision (short-term and long term).

In order to address unfinished learning among our students, we will implement the following acceleration, remediation, and enrichment strategies:

- **Deliver Strong Tier I instruction:**

1. Strong instructional delivery of grade level content through effective execution of the new curriculum.

- **Acceleration Blocks**

1. Daily 40-minute small-group instruction targeted toward accelerating core foundational skills in literacy;
2. Classrooms and class structures that include daily [Tier 2 strategies](#) to address foundational skills acceleration. (Targeted smaller groups);
3. Extend and reorganize math and literacy blocks to include time for intentional spiraling of unfinished content into grade level content and delivery;
4. Internalize and implement Daily Execution Protocol for Humanities Block; and
5. Reorganizing ELA curriculum scope and sequence charts to ensure the efficacy and efficiency of the delivery of unfinished learning strategies as well as grade level content.

- **Strong Start (Phase I and II)**

1. “All hands on deck” approach gathering both summative and formative data for students;
2. Implement new Student Information System(s) to efficiently and effectively house and communicate student data;
3. Community urgency and celebrations that center progress and excitement instead of “loss” or “being in deficit”; and
4. Update and beautify hallways, classrooms, and common areas to build excitement and support immersion.

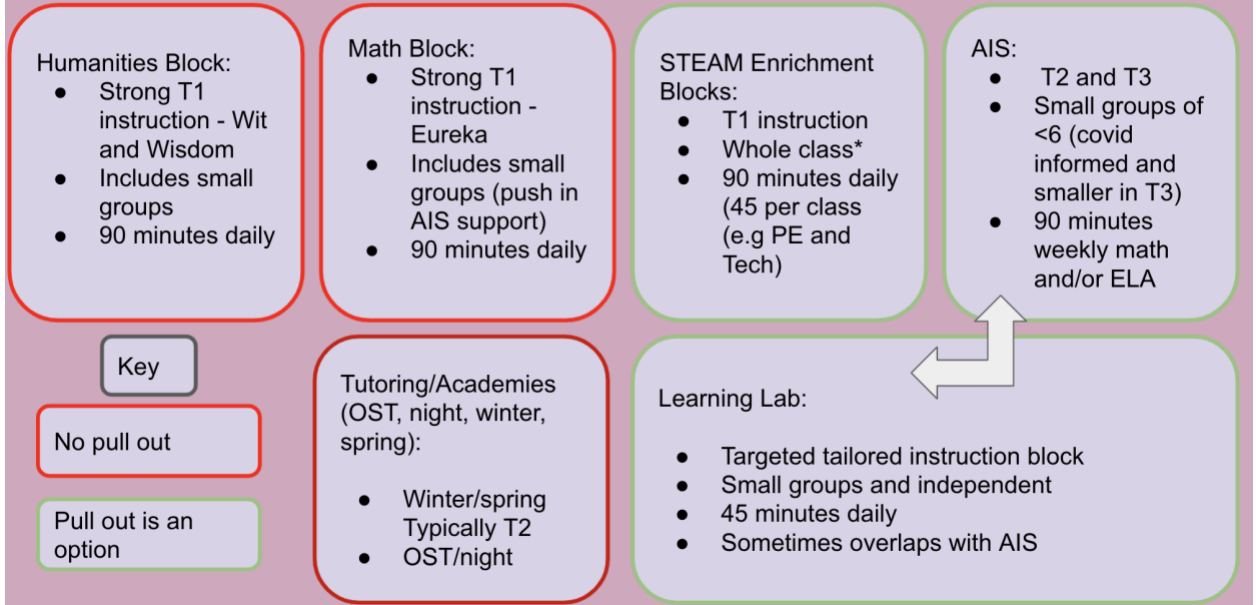
- **Ongoing Implementation and monitoring of [RTI](#)**

1. Conduct weekly meetings with consistency and fidelity and communicate clear strategies and next steps for all stakeholders;
2. Alignment of interventions to students’ specific gaps;
3. RTI/MTSS materials archived: calendar, meeting notes;
4. Instructional leaders engage in RTI walkthroughs to monitor and Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions;
5. Restructuring of our 40-minute academic support block to “Student Learning Lab.” A Student Learning Lab is an intervention block where scholars receive support based on the area of need. AIS providers will also push in during this time; and
6. Including “High dosage tutoring” for our students who are most academically at-risk. Examples include after school at least 3 times a week 3:30 pm -5:30 pm and Saturday school 9 am-12pm.

An example of high-dosage tutoring planned for 2021-2022, called Academic Intervention Services at Merrick, is below. For ELA, the curriculum and time planned for students at risk is the following:

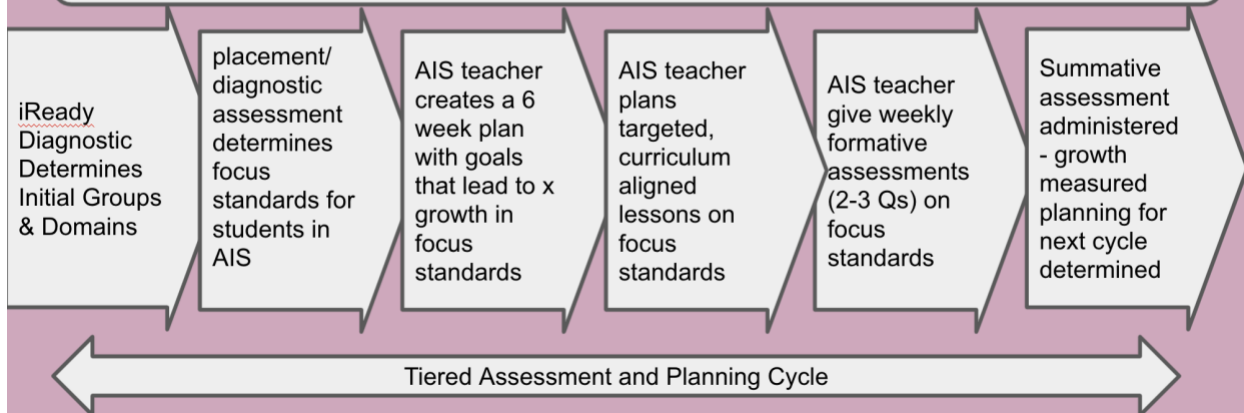
- Raz-Kids
- Up to 90 minutes a week for at-risk/qualifying students

How AIS fits into MACS academic program:



AIS Data, It's Utility and AIS Program Evaluation

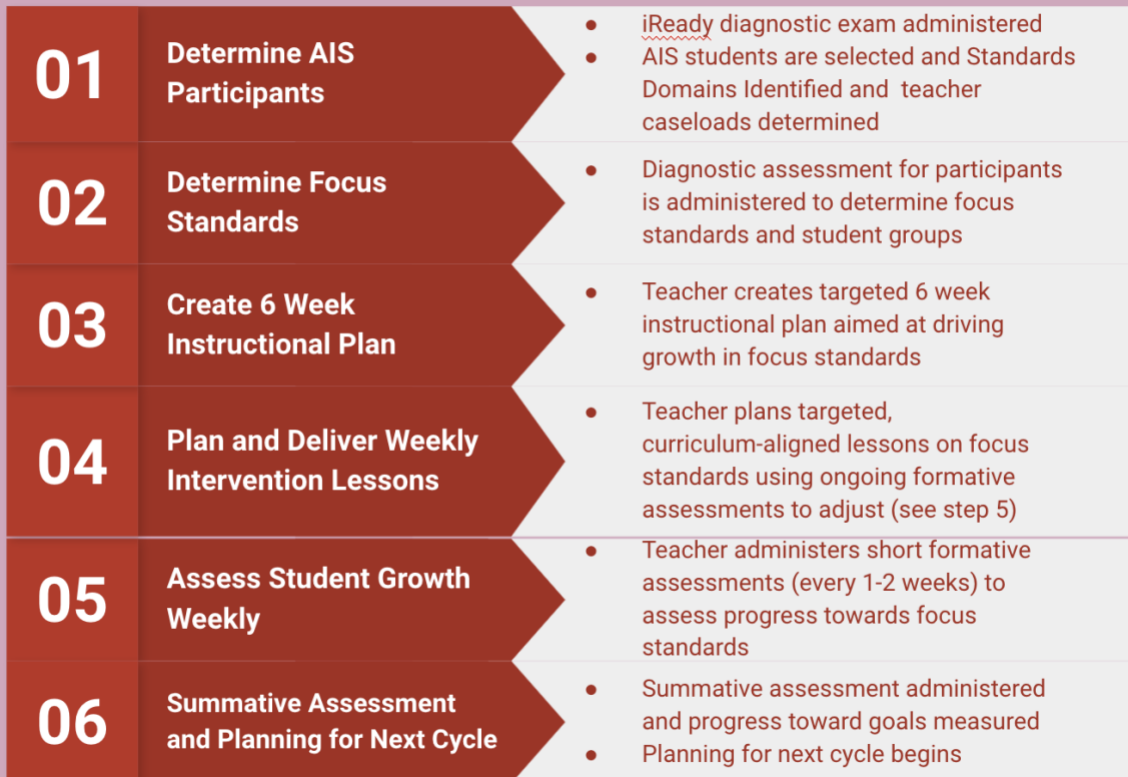
To achieve gap-closing growth with their student caseload an AIS teacher's primary goal is twofold: 1) support student access to T1 content through acceleration and 2) to intentionally plan to support remediation of foundational skills



AIS in MACS Academic Program

Program Element	Tier and Purpose	Instructional Mode	Time	Notes
Mathematics Block	Tier 1, Grade Level, Standards-Based Instruction	Whole Class & Small Group Instruction	90 Minutes Daily	Push in supports from AIS teachers can happen to support T2/T3 student access to grade-level content, no students are pulled out
Humanities Block	Tier 1, Grade Level, Standards-Based Instruction	Whole Class & Small Group Instruction	90 Minutes Daily	
STEAM Enrichment Block	Tier 1, Grade Level	Whole Class Instruction	2x 45 minute periods daily (e.g. 45 mins. of tech and 45 mins. of P.E.)	While not preferred, T2/T3 students may be pulled out for AIS services if needed
Learning Labs	All tiers 1-3, targeted and tailored instruction based on student need	Small Group Instruction	45 Minutes Daily	Many students receive AIS services during learning labs
Academic Intervention Services (AIS)	Tiers 2 and 3, Acceleration and Foundational Skill Building	Small Group Instruction, Groups of < 6 students	90 Minutes Weekly of ELA and/or Math	Delivered as a push in or pull out support

AIS Cycle



- **Data Cycles**

1. Proactively monitor and respond to data:
 - a. Student Individual Learner Profiles and on-going use and ownership of the plans;
 - b. Daily exit tickets and debriefs; and
 - c. Strengthening our data cycle system of reporting to ensure that teachers have a deeper and better view of their students' growth on a dashboard and/or digital binders that teachers can easily access.

- **Building Teacher and Leader Capacity and Accountability**

1. Instructional Leaders engage in RTI walk throughs to monitor Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions;
2. Time in weekly "Learning Lab" for check-ins on strategies and results of students in Tier 1 and Tier 2; and
3. "Front loading" professional development for teachers on key instructional strategies for Tier 1 and Tier 2 during Pre-Service as they are planning for initial grade-level curricular units. Revamping and archiving observation and feedback protocols and tools, lesson plans, and trackers to specifically monitor progress in this area and provide stronger opportunities for coaching and professional development.

Strategic Approach for Content Knowledge Building and Implementation of New Curriculum

- **Accelerated Implementation of a researched based curriculum**

1. Development of an implementation plan that is designed for effective internalization, delivery, and high-level implementation that garners student growth and achievement. Including immersion, implementation, reshaping to meet needs, etc.;
2. Implementing a curriculum pacing and implementation tracker that is aligned and housed alongside curriculum maps, professional development calendar, assessments. [Flow of the Day](#); and
3. Intentionality with informational and professional development events to get student, teacher and family buy-in, support and feedback.

- **Teacher and Leader Development and Capacity Building**

1. Weekly Learning Labs ([Lesson Learning Lab Model](#)) for teachers that include: check-ins on pacing, understanding, peer and expert feedback, planning and practice for teachers;
2. Bi-weekly professional development in key teacher and leader actions that lead to successful implementation of curriculum while building content knowledge and high leverage teacher/classroom strategies;

3. Bi-weekly one-on-one coaching sessions that ensure that teachers get feedback in aligned areas of instruction. [Coaching and Feedback Cycle AP and Coach Meeting Protocol](#);
 4. Regular teacher step-backs and data days where teachers receive professional development in key areas of growth for their students while creating action-plans;
 5. Tiered professional development that is responsive to teacher and leader needs. [Arc of the Year \(PD\)](#); and
 6. Clearer alignment and coherence of the tools leaders use to provide feedback and support. ([Get Better Faster](#) and Instructional Practice Guide rubrics [IPG](#))
 7. Merrick Academy had two ELA coaches in 2019-20, which were terminated after the 2019-20 school year due to budget constraints, requiring a heavier lift for our Assistant Principal responsible for ELA. The school, reconsidering the need of coaches, has hired an ELA coach for 2021-2022.
- **Strong Start**
 1. “All hands on deck” approach to building routines and rituals that build Socio-emotional learning through strong academic practices; and
 2. “Teach and Insist”-after diagnostics jump right into grade level curriculum with clear plans for spiraling in cumulative review.
 - **Departmentalization in the testing grades to allow teachers to focus more on content area depth and breadth**
 - **Strengthening and streamlining data cycles**
 1. Streamlining PD calendar, timely data distribution and support for teachers, assessment calendar and data meetings.
 - **Strengthening community investment and knowledge of what is being taught and why.**
 1. Develop and implement a Communication Plan that organizes and captures key communication strategies in order to improve transparency about the Teaching and Learning Cycles, communicate progress, celebrate community, and on-going feedback on the impact of the program

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

BACKGROUND

Merrick Academy’s mathematics curriculum is rooted in the following principles:

1. Develop and apply multiple strategies to solve routine problems
2. Apply methods of problem solving to complex problems requiring various methods
3. Ability to increase precision and accuracy through approximating
4. Utilize of inductive and deductive reasoning to solve problems; multi step, abstract and complex real-world problems
5. Represent mathematical problems in multiple formats such as analytic, numerical and geometrical

Merrick Academy’s mathematics curriculum is a comprehensive approach to the subject. Students are engaged in math review, problem solving, conceptual understanding, and mastery of math facts. In grades K-5, students participate in guided math instruction and centers, as well as number stories and practice in foundational skills.

METHOD

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

IN THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR, MERRICK ACADEMY ADMINISTERED THREE I-READY MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT EXAMS TO STUDENTS IN ALL GRADES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF KINDERGARTEN, WHICH WAS ONLY GIVEN THE SECOND AND THIRD ASSESSMENT.

i-Ready Diagnostic describes⁴ its services for math as an effective, research-based, web-based diagnostic assessment for students in grades K–12. Using a compatible computer with internet access and a headset, students take the online Diagnostic that assesses overall performance and sub-skill levels. i-Ready’s sophisticated computer adaptive algorithms ensure learners are assessed efficiently across a number of knowledge domains. The questioning format adapts as students respond to each question—getting more or less challenging as needed—to complete the diagnosis and identify each child’s performance level. The adaptive nature of the assessment meets students at their own skill level, so they experience success as well as challenge while i-Ready accurately measures their mastery of New York State Learning Standards.

i-Ready includes a powerful management and reporting suite for delivery of essential performance information at the district, school, class, and student/group levels. Actionable, real-time reports guide educators in identifying the instructional needs and abilities of individual students and

⁴ <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/iready-slo-assessment-form-c-and-h.pdf>.

instructional groups, and also include explicit next steps for remediating areas of academic weakness.

The i-Ready Diagnostic is strongly aligned to the New York State Learning Standards for math. The independent Educational Research Institute of America conducted a research study evaluating the relationship between i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2016 New York State end-of-year assessments. The research found a high correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and the New York State assessments. i-Ready was also shown to accurately predict end-of-year proficiency rates based on students' fall, winter, and spring Diagnostic performance. The strong correlations between the spring i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2016 New York State assessments—with overall correlations of .84 for mathematics for all students across grades 3–8—exceeded the Center on Response to Intervention's recommended .70 threshold for correlations. Curriculum Associates partnered with leading academics to develop a regression-based model for predicting New York State Assessment proficiency rates. i-Ready proficiency prediction from fall, winter, and spring Diagnostic results proved to be highly accurate and remarkably consistent with observed (actual) NYSTP proficiency rates—often within one percent of observed proficiency for the sample. Plus, i-Ready accurately identified individual student needs on the standards to drive targeted instruction—both student- and teacher-led.

Summary of the school's modality changes during 2020-21: Similar to many NYC charter schools, Merrick Academy's program was fully remote in 2020-21. However, we did open a Learning Center at our building with “student pods” run by operational staff to support our highest need students, such as those living in temporary housing, requiring child care as their parents were essential workers, students who did not have a parent at home that spoke English and could effectively support them in completing remote instruction; and, high need special education students, often those who required a 1:1 paraprofessional as mandated by their Individualized Education Plans. The Learning Center opened in December 2020 and served 120 students through June 2021.

The school's remote schedule offered professional development for teachers every Wednesday afternoon for 3 hours. The professional development provided was led by the CAO/Principal, Assistant Principal of Mathematics, Assistant Principal of ELA, and the Director of Student Support Services. The Director of Student Support Services is responsible for social emotional learning at Merrick and manages special education and supports students who are below grade level. Professional development was also provided by an ELA consultant, Math consultant, DEIA consultant, STEAM consultant and ANet, who provided data training to teachers.

The school also served 270 students during a summer program, which was 50% academically focused and both prioritized students whose i-Ready results indicated they were below grade level and included emerging kindergarten students. The summer program was run and operated by the school, to ensure health and safety protocol were followed.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

End of Year Performance on 2020-21 i-Ready Mathematics Assessment
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Grade s	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested
3	21%	76	23.5%	68
4	16%	85	17.6%	74
5	26%	93	25.6%	86
All	21%	254	22.4%	228

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its absolute measure of 75% of 3rd through 5th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school performing at or above grade level standards on the mathematics assessment. Overall, 22.4% of students enrolled at the school for two or more years performed at or above grade level on the i-Ready spring mathematics assessment, over one percentage point above the school average for all 3rd through 5th grade students.

Merrick Academy’s 5th grade had the highest percentage of students attending the school for two or more years performing at or above grade level on the i-Ready spring mathematics assessment. Third grade students enrolled at the school for at least two years had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level compared to all 3rd grade, 23.5% compared to 21%. This trend of students enrolled at the school for at least two years having a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the i-Ready mathematics spring assessment continued at the 4th grade and when assessing the all 3rd through 5th grade students.

Percentage of Merrick Academy Students Performing at the Mid/Above Level on the i-Ready Mathematics Assessment						
Grade	2019-20			2020-21		
	Fall Assessment	Winter Assessment	Spring Assessment	Fall Assessment	Winter Assessment	Spring Assessment
K	N/A	19%	89%	N/A	89%	67%
1st	2%	10%	68%	26%	34%	37%
2nd	1%	10%	43%	21%	25%	27%
3rd	1%	5%	28%	5%	10%	21%
4th	1%	11%	48%	5%	7%	16%
5th	5%	7%	19%	5%	13%	26%

Comparing the results of the 2019-20 school year mathematics i-Ready assessments to the 2020-21 assessments yields several interesting results. First, as described above and addressed again below, i-Ready updated their national norms in August 2020, resulting in students needing to score higher on the 2020-21 assessments to be considered at or above grade level compared to previous years. Also, in the 2020-21 school year, i-Ready’s fall norming window was moved up from the beginning of the school year through November 30 to the beginning of the school year through

November 15. Couple these changes in i-Ready assessment analysis with the shifting learning models students have been subjected to during COVID-19, it could logically be expected that the percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the fall mathematics assessment would have been higher in the pre-COVID 2019-20 school year compared to the fall 2020-21 assessment. However, except for Merrick Academy's 5th grade, which had the same percentage of students performing at or above grade level in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, each grade level tested on the fall 2020-21 mathematics assessment had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level compared to the fall assessment administered in the 2019-20 school year. Impressively, Merrick Academy's 1st and 2nd grade had a higher percentage of students performing at or above grade level, 24- and 20-percentage-points respectively, compared to the 1st and 2nd grade in the 2019-20 school year.

Similarly, except for the school's 4th grade, the percentage of Merrick Academy students performing at or above grade level on the winter i-Ready mathematics assessment was higher in the 2020-21 school year compared to the 2019-20 school year. Like the 2019-20 school year fall assessment, the 2019-20 winter assessment was unaffected by COVID-19, as the school's transformation to remote learning post-dates the end of the winter norming window. The most impressive growth on the winter assessment occurred in kindergarten, where the percentage of students performing at or above grade level between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years grew by 70-percentage points. Also impressive was the results among the school's 1st and 2nd grades, where there was a 24- and 15-percentage point increase, respectively, in the percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the winter assessment.

When assessing longitudinal growth, each cohort of students who took the fall mathematics assessment in the 2019-20 school year showed growth when they took the fall assessment the next grade level up in the 2020-21 school year. The cohort showing the largest increase in the percentage of students performing at or above grade level between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years was the cohort who took the fall mathematics assessment as 2nd graders in the 2020-21 school year. From the 2019-20 school year, when they took the fall mathematics assessment as 1st graders to the 2020-21 school year, when they took the fall assessment as 2nd graders, the percentage of students performing at or above grade level in this cohort increased 19-percentage points. There was also significant longitudinal growth among the cohort of students who took the fall mathematics assessment as 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders in 2019-20 when they took the assessment as 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders in 2020-21, a four-percentage point improvement among each cohort of students.

On the winter mathematics i-Ready assessment, there was longitudinal growth at each measurable grade, except for the cohort of students who took the winter assessment as 2nd graders in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 3rd graders in the 2020-21 school year. The greatest longitudinal increase among student cohorts between the i-Ready winter 2019-20 assessment and the 2020-21 assessment occurred in the cohorts of students who took the 2019-20 winter assessment as kindergarteners and 1st graders when they took the winter mathematics assessment as first and second graders in the 2020-21 school year, a 15-percentage point increase. Similarly impressive growth occurred among the cohort of students who took the winter assessment as 3rd grade students in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 4th grade students in the 2020-21 school year, as well as among the cohort of students who took the

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

assessment as 4th graders in the 2019-20 school year when they took the assessment as 5th grade students in the 2020-21 school year.

End of Year Growth on 2020-21 i-Ready Mathematics Assessment By All Students

Goal: Students will grow at a normed rate according to beginning of the year baseline score
(Median Percent Annual Growth of 100% or more)

Grade s	Median Percent of Annual Typical Growth	Number Tested
3	47%	76
4	39%	85
5	67%	93
All	50%	254

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its growth goal of all 3rd through 5th grade students growing at a median percent annual growth of 100% or more.

Median Annual Typical Growth Percentage on i-Ready Spring Mathematics Diagnostic		
Goal: Growth of students with low initial absolute achievement is greater than the target, median percent annual growth of 110% or more.		
Grade Level	2019-2020	2020-2021
1 st	358%	144%
2 nd	174%	82.5%
3 rd	120%	63%
4 th	171%	30%
5 th	113%	75%
Total	154%	59%
3rd-5th Grade Total	144%	42%

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not achieve its growth goal of all 3rd through 5th grade students with low initial absolute achievement attaining a median percent annual growth of 110% or more on the spring assessment. Of all the grades eligible for assessment of this goal, only the school's 1st grade exceeded the annual growth goal of 110%.

Median Annual Typical Growth Percentage on i-Ready Spring Mathematics Diagnostic				
Goal: Growth of students with disabilities is greater than the growth of general education students.				
Grade Level	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	All	Students with Disabilities	All	Students with Disabilities

K	208%	159%	54%	28%
1st	224%	183%	50%	74%
2nd	144%	85%	50%	32%
3rd	104%	55%	40%	78%
4th	139%	144%	57%	0%
5th	83%	105%	72%	56%
Total	144%	128%	53%	39%
3rd-5th Grade Total	108%	105%	57%	35.4%

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick Academy did not meet its growth goal of having the percentage of students with disabilities in the 3rd through 5th grades performing at or above grade level be greater than the growth of the school’s general education 3rd through 5th grade students between the fall and spring mathematics assessments. Looking at all 3rd through 5th grade students, the growth of general education students on the i-Ready Spring mathematics diagnostic was 57% compared to the fall assessment. For the cohort of 3rd through 5th grade students identified as having a disability, the growth was only 35.4%. Among all grade levels assessed, the school’s 1st and 3rd grades’ students with disabilities showed greater growth on the i-Ready mathematics diagnostic between the fall and spring assessments when compared to the school’s general education students.

Merrick did administer the NYS Mathematics Assessment. However, having been remote all year, there was low attendance for the exam and the NYS assessment results are not yet available.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Studies have found that the pandemic has had the most negative effect on student achievement in mathematics. United States Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, *Education in a Pandemic: The Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on America’s Students*, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/20210608-impacts-of-covid19.pdf>.

(“This and other early reports suggest that trends may vary by subject, with math skills generally slipping more than reading, perhaps substantially so.”).

Indeed, a July 2021 report by McKinsey & Company found that on average the pandemic left students five months behind in math. The report further noted that “The pandemic widened preexisting opportunity and achievement gaps, hitting historically disadvantaged students hardest. In math, students in majority Black schools ended the year with six months of unfinished learning, students in low-income schools with seven. McKinsey & Company, *COVID-19 and Education: The Lingering Effects of Unfinished Learning*, July 27, 2021, available at <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>.

Compounding the impact that COVID-19 has had on learning and academic achievement, the national norms that i-Ready uses to assess student achievement were updated in August 2020 and are currently based on data from the 2018-19 school year. Curriculum Associate Research Report, *i-Ready Diagnostic National Norms Tables for Reading and Mathematics for Grades K-8 2020-21*, August 2020, available at: <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/iready-norms->

tables-K-8-2020.pdf. In other words, the norms that are now being used to assess student achievement do not take into consideration the disruption in the traditional learning model most students in this country have experienced during the last 18-months. In fact, the norms used this year are more stringent than those used for the 2019-20 school year, resulting in students being expected to achieve at a higher level, while having experienced 18-months of academic disruption because of COVID-19.

Merrick Academy had one Math coach in 2019-20, who was terminated after the 2019-20 school year due to budget constraints, requiring a heavier lift for our Assistant Principal responsible for Math. The school, reconsidering the need of coaches, has hired an ELA and a Math coach for 2021-2022.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

In the 2020-21 school year, Merrick did not meet its mathematics assessment goals. However, given the ongoing pandemic and the impact it has had on academic achievement, particularly among the student population that Merrick serves, the school’s mathematics assessment results should be considered satisfactory. As described in detail in the action plan below, we intend to close the achievement gaps created by the pandemic, so long as we are able to maintain in-person learning for the entirety of the 2021-22 school year.

2020-21 i-Ready Mathematics Assessment End of Year Results					
Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results	Met?
Measure 1: Each year, the school’s median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.	All students	100%	254	50%	No
Measure 2: Each year, the school’s median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3 rd through 8 th grade students who were two or more grade levels below grade level in the fall will be equal to or greater than 110% by the spring assessment administration.	Low initial achievers	110%	254	42%	No
Measure 3: Each year, the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or	Students with disabilities ⁵	57% ⁶	66	34.5%	No

⁵ Schools may elect to report the aggregated data for a different subpopulation of students if the total tested number of students with disabilities is 5 or fewer, or if the school’s mission aligns to serving a different specific subpopulation. For schools that choose a different subpopulation (e.g. English language learners, homeless students, etc.), please explain the rationale in the narrative section

⁶ Target should reflect the median percent of progress to Annual Typical Growth for all general education students. In the case that the school elects to measure the achievement of a different subpopulation, the target should

greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3 rd through 8 th grade general education students at the school.					
Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will score at the <i>mid on-grade level</i> or above scale score for the year-end assessment.	2+ students	75%	228	22.4%	No

ACTION PLAN

The School will be implementing the following initiatives during the 2021-22 school year to improve student achievement in math: The core beliefs under-pinning our academic planning for our post-pandemic return include, but are not limited to:

- We teach every student grade-level content standards and we meet students where they are;
- Our programs and offerings are responsive to the most current and accurate data;
- We must intentionally plan to “teach and insist”. Teachers and leaders need high-quality, aligned, and consistent training and support in order to deliver on a robust plan for unfinished learning and grade level learning;
- We believe that the whole community will work together to help our students grow;
- Strengthening and aligning our current resources and building more effective and consistent systems and processes that lead to teacher, leader, and student achievement; and
- We believe that accomplishing our goals requires intentionality in a way that allows us to approach academics in a tiered and purposeful plan that closes gaps and keeps us on track for long term goals.

Our theory of action, which is based on research, case studies, school visits, and interrogations, is simple: If we deliver rigorous on grade-level instruction, and we create the structures necessary to execute on impactful remediation and acceleration and we build teacher and leader content knowledge and capacity to provide effective instruction, Then:

- Students will continue to build content knowledge on grade-level standards while simultaneously receiving academic intervention support to close foundational learning gaps and make up for unfinished learning; and
- Our staff and school community will have the tools, knowledge, experiences, and resources necessary to execute our school’s instructional vision (short-term and long term).

reflect the median percent of progress to Annual Typical Growth of all students at the school not included in that subpopulation.

In order to address unfinished learning among our students, we will implement the following acceleration, remediation, and enrichment strategies:

- **Deliver Strong Tier I instruction:**
 1. Strong instructional delivery of grade level content through effective execution of the new curriculum.
- **Acceleration Blocks**
 1. Daily 40-minute small-group instruction targeted toward accelerating core foundational skills in literacy and/or Math;
 2. Classrooms and class structures that include daily [Tier 2 strategies](#) to address foundational skills acceleration. (Targeted smaller groups);
 3. Extend and reorganize math and literacy blocks to include time for intentional spiraling of unfinished content into grade level content and delivery;
 4. Internalize and implement Daily Execution Protocol for Math Block; and
 5. Reorganizing Math and ELA curriculum scope and sequence charts to ensure the efficacy and efficiency of the delivery of unfinished learning strategies as well as grade level content.
- **Strong Start (Phase I and II)**
 1. “All hands on deck” approach gathering both summative and formative data for students;
 2. Implement new Student Information System(s) to efficiently and effectively house and communicate student data;
 3. Community urgency and celebrations that center progress and excitement instead of “loss” or “being in deficit”;
 4. Update and beautify hallways, classrooms, and common areas to build excitement and support immersion.
- **Ongoing Implementation and monitoring of [RTI](#)**
 1. Conduct weekly meetings with consistency and fidelity and communicate clear strategies and next steps for all stakeholders;
 2. Alignment of interventions to students’ specific gaps;
 3. RTI/MTSS materials archived: calendar, meeting notes;
 4. Instructional leaders engage in RTI walkthroughs to monitor and Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions;
 5. Restructuring of our 40-minute academic support block to “Student Learning Lab.” A Student Learning Lab is an intervention block where scholars receive support based on the area of need. AIS providers will also push in during this time; and

6. Including “High dosage tutoring” for our students who are most academically at-risk. Examples include after school at least 3 times a week 3:30 pm -5:30 pm and Saturday school 9 am-12pm.

Please see Academic Intervention slides provided above for ELA, that describes Merrick’s approach to high-dosage tutoring.

For math, the curriculum and time planned for students at-risk of meeting standards is the following:

- Zearn
- Up to 90 minutes a week for at-risk/qualifying students
- **Data Cycles**
 1. Proactively monitor and respond to data:
 - a. Student Individual Learner Profiles and on-going use and ownership of the plans;
 - b. Daily exit tickets and debriefs; and
 - c. Strengthening our data cycle system of reporting to ensure that teachers have a deeper and better view of their students’ growth on a dashboard and/or digital binders that teachers can easily access.
- **Building Teacher and Leader Capacity and Accountability**
 1. Instructional Leaders engage in RTI walk throughs to monitor Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions.
 2. Time in weekly “Learning Lab” for check-ins on strategies and results of students in Tier 1 and Tier 2
 3. “Front loading” professional development for teachers on key instructional strategies for Tier 1 and Tier 2 during Pre-Service as they are planning for initial grade-level curricular units. Revamping and archiving observation and feedback protocols and tools, lesson plans, and trackers to specifically monitor progress in this area and provide stronger opportunities for coaching and professional development.

Strategic Approach for Content Knowledge Building and Implementation of New Curriculum

- **Accelerated Implementation of a researched based curriculum**
 1. Development of an implementation plan that is designed for effective internalization, delivery, and high-level implementation that garners student growth and achievement. Including immersion, implementation, reshaping to meet needs, etc.;

2. Implementing a curriculum pacing and implementation tracker that is aligned and housed alongside curriculum maps, professional development calendar, assessments. [Flow of the Day](#); and
 3. Intentionality with informational and professional development events to get student, teacher and family buy-in, support and feedback.
- **Teacher and Leader Development and Capacity Building**
 1. Weekly Learning Labs ([Lesson Learning Lab Model](#)) for teachers that include: check-ins on pacing, understanding, peer and expert feedback, planning and practice for teachers;
 2. Bi-weekly professional development in key teacher and leader actions that lead to successful implementation of curriculum while building content knowledge and high leverage teacher/classroom strategies;
 3. Bi-weekly one-on-one coaching sessions that ensure that teachers get feedback in aligned areas of instruction. [Coaching and Feedback Cycle AP and Coach Meeting Protocol](#);
 4. Regular teacher step-backs and data days where teachers receive professional development in key areas of growth for their students while creating action-plans;
 5. Tiered professional development that is responsive to teacher and leader needs. [Arc of the Year \(PD\)](#); and
 6. Clearer alignment and coherence of the tools leaders use to provide feedback and support. ([Get Better Faster](#) and Instructional Practice Guide rubrics [IPG](#)).
 7. Merrick Academy had one Math coach in 2019-20, which the school was able to retain after the 2019-20 school year due to budget constraints, requiring a heavier lift for our Assistant Principal responsible for Math. The school, reconsidering the need of coaches, has hired a Math coach for 2021-2022.
 - **Strong Start**
 1. “All hands on deck” approach to building routines and rituals that build Socio-emotional learning through strong academic practices; and
 2. “Teach and Insist”-after diagnostics jump right into grade level curriculum with clear plans for spiraling in cumulative review.
 - **Departmentalization in the testing grades to allow teachers to focus more on content area depth and breathe**
 - **Strengthening and streamlining data cycles**
 1. Streamlining PD calendar, timely data distribution and support for teachers, assessment calendar and data meetings.

- **Strengthening community investment and knowledge of what is being taught and why.**
 1. Develop and implement a Communication Plan that organizes and captures key communication strategies in order to improve transparency about the Teaching and Learning Cycles, communicate progress, celebrate community, and on-going feedback on the impact of the program

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

Merrick Academy's science curriculum is rooted in the following principles:

1. Inquiry-based
2. STEAM Literacy
3. Spiraled and interdisciplinary
4. Developing curiosity through the world around us
5. Using data and evidence to make claims based on relevant learning experiences

The science curriculum provides authentic learning opportunities fueled by scholar curiosity and the scientific method. Students learn about the key scientific principles through inquiry, reading, writing, and mathematical concepts. Students make connections with what they are discovering to other subject areas. The curriculum spirals and builds upon content as the students move on to different grade levels at the school.

METHOD

Merrick Academy did not administer an interim science assessment exam in the 2020-21 school year.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Merrick Academy did not administer an interim science assessment exam in the 2020-21 school year. Merrick did administer the NYS Science Assessment. However, having been remote all year, there was low attendance for the exam and the NYS assessment results are not yet available.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Merrick Academy did not administer an interim science assessment exam in the 2020-21 school year.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

Merrick Academy did not administer an interim science assessment exam in the 2020-21 school year. Merrick did administer the NYS Science Assessment. However, having been remote all year, there was low attendance for the exam and the NYS assessment results are not yet available.

ACTION PLAN

Merrick Academy is committed to student achievement in science, as most recently evidenced by the renewal of the school's charter in June 2020 and incorporating a STEAM focus into its mission for the next five years, with dedicated STEAM blocks built into the 2021-22 school schedule. In the 2020-21 school year, steps towards this mission will include science infused into mathematics and humanities instruction and the addition of a STEAM expert consultant, who will, in particular, train the Science Teacher, and who will oversee the program.

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

Merrick Academy was in good standing pursuant to the state's ESSA accountability system in the 2020-21 school year.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The School has been in good standing for the past three school years.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	Good standing
2019-20	Good standing
2020-21	Good standing