



**DREAM Charter School  
Mott Haven**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

August 23, 2021

By Jamie Platzer, Principal

411 Wales Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10454

347-573-9388

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The school leadership team 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)
Ashish Doshi	Chair	Finance
Michele Joerg	Vice Chair	
Peter Daneke	Member/Trustee	Finance
Vik Sawhney	Member/Trustee	Finance
Jonathan Gyurko	Member/Trustee	
Jonathan E. Schmerin	Member/Trustee	

**Jamie Platzer has served as the school principal since 2019.**

### SCHOOL OVERVIEW

DREAM Charter School – Mott Haven is a replication of DREAM Charter School, which began in 2008 and will be serving students at full capacity of K-12 in 2020-21 and graduating the first class of seniors. The intent of our replicating schools was to further the successes of DREAM Charter School. We are replicating our most prominent characteristics of a successful first decade. We continue to engage families, offer exceptional instruction and use data to make important decisions that will bring the South Bronx the same academic results our students received since 2008 in Harlem.

DREAM, the non-profit network that manages our multiple schools, will be scaling to add capacity to oversee the schools' academic programs. Effective in 2018-19, DREAM added an entire academic department reporting to the DREAM Executive Director. DREAM maintains its other four departments of finance, development, talent and recruitment as well as a chief of staff.

The engagement of DREAM since 2008 has allowed our charter school to thrive in concentrating on academics and culture, leaving peripheral functions to DREAM. This arrangement will continue for the benefit of our academic program and our finances.

The mission of DREAM Charter School is to prepare students for high-performing high schools, colleges and beyond through a rigorous academic program that develops critical thinkers who demonstrate a love of learning, strong character, and a commitment to wellness and active citizenship. DREAM Charter School inspires all students to recognize their potential and realize their dreams.

DREAM Charter School's key design elements are:

- An innovative curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and questioning
- A co-teaching model that reduces the teacher-to-student ratio and integrates special needs students into the general school population
- A robust data cycle that uses data to inform all aspects of teaching and learning
- A whole child approach to teaching and learning that deeply integrates health, wellness, music and the arts into the overall school program
- An extended day and an extended year model that maximizes learning hours
- An active family engagement program that fosters parent/guardian participation, leadership and advocacy
- A focus on teacher motivation, development, and retention
- A universal Pre-kindergarten program that ignites learning in children

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

### *Educational Philosophy*

The curriculum draws from published programs and materials modified or created by DCS. Students receive a rich educational experience driven by the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS), academic excellence, and social-emotional health. All curricular materials are rooted in a constructivist approach to learning in which students struggle through problems and questions in order to gain a deeper, lasting understanding of the content. Over the course of DCS's operation, the school has continuously updated all core curricula to ensure close alignment with the NYSLs.

### *Instructional Planning*

In operation more than 10 years, DCS has refined its model and developed a set of best practices that provide instructional norms and a system for data-based planning, while allowing for teacher creativity. DCS currently provides normed scope and sequencing, assessments, and lesson plans across all schools, grades, and content areas. This ensures that every student is on track for success, teachers have access to vetted and effective planning materials, and that school academic culture is consistent across campuses.

In addition to these norms, teachers are encouraged to adjust lesson plans based on coaching from academic deans and on the data, they are receiving about growth in individual students and cohorts. DCS is committed to students receiving the individualized support they need to succeed. Encouraging teachers to adjust lesson plans means that special education teachers and whole classroom teachers are providing the individualized attention necessary for their students and classrooms. In tandem, if teachers are struggling with content or their general practice, coaching from academic deans and access to exemplar lesson plans provide the necessary tools for professional growth and instructional effectiveness.

### *New York State Learning Standards Alignment and Effectiveness Review*

DCS aims to provide vertical and horizontal alignment across schools and grades and to ensure that the curriculum is NYSLs-aligned and supports academic growth. To achieve this, DCS uses the following approaches:

- End-of-Unit Reflections: leads data-based reflections at the end of each unit.
- Weekly Professional Development: DCS leadership provides weekly professional development time for teachers and academic deans to review student data and identify the strengths and weaknesses in each unit, subject, and grade.
- End-of-Year State Exam Analysis: The results of the New York State (NYS) exams are used to adjust the curriculum for the following year. DCS's Managing Director of Strategy, Performance, and Impact leads this process with principals and academic deans. The Managing Director of SPI is currently a DCS staff member. In DREAM's integrated model, this role became part of the central office and supports data analysis for DREAM MH. This happens for two weeks after scores are received (usually August). Results are reviewed grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject, and trends across grades, curricula, and subjects are identified and addressed. Principals and academic deans then bring these findings and solutions back to their schools to create success plans tailored to the unique needs of each school.

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

To prioritize community building and social emotional development, all students will participate in a 40 minute Morning Meeting daily. During Morning Meeting there will be a 2:28 teacher to student ratio. On Mondays, the Morning Meeting will use the RULER curriculum to deliver an anchor SEL lesson that launches a theme that is revisited throughout the week.

### ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

School Enrollment<sup>1</sup> by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2019-20	59									59
2020-21	64	68								132

#### *Enrollment of Subgroups*

Economically Disadvantaged (ED): 88%

English as a New Language (ENL) : 7%

Students with Disabilities (SWD) : 22%

Homeless: 14%

---

<sup>1</sup> Enrollment as of BEDS Day in October of each school year.

## GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at the DREAM Charter School Mott Haven will become proficient in reading and writing of the English Language.

#### BACKGROUND

English language arts (ELA)

The elementary school ELA curriculum includes six thematic units in each grade, drawing from *The Wheatley Portfolio* curriculum maps. Teachers and academic leaders use these maps to create unit plans, with adaptations for individual cohorts of students. Students read a canon of texts to create a foundational bank of shared literary experiences. Together, the six units expose students to a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. Texts read within the thematic units will provide an interdisciplinary connection between content. DCS uses Wilson's *Foundations* for phonics instruction and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project for writing and reading.

In grades K-2, DCS students take the Fountas & Pinnell assessment to track literacy growth as well as the NWEA MAP assessments in both ELA and Math. Fountas & Pinnell provides an accurate, normed assessment to identify the reading levels of students and track progress through one-on-one assessment. Students are then "leveled" and choose from books that match their level until they are ready to move onto the next reading level. The NWEA MAP assessments in Math and ELA are aligned with NYSLs (as are the NYS tests) and nationally benchmarked. Both aspects allow for everyone at DCS—from head of school to the student—to understand how students (individually and collectively) are progressing toward success on the spring NYS test.

#### METHOD

DREAM CS – MH administered the NWEA ELA MAP and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment to all participating Kindergarten and first grade students in 2020-21.

#### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

30% of DREAM Mott Haven scholars performed at or above the 50th percentile on the Spring 2021 NWEA ELA MAP Assessment, and 41% of scholars scored at or above their Fountas & Pinnell EOY reading benchmark. By grade level, 34% of KG students tested Independent at Level D or higher and 48% of 1st grade students tested at level I or higher (their respective benchmarks).

#### ACTION PLAN

We will continue to create instructional plans to reflect a delivery model that leverages both in person instruction and remote instruction due to the dynamic nature and risk of COVID-19 and to ensure that all DREAM students learn as much as they would in a typical school year, despite any changes in landscape due to COVID-19.

Strategies to improve student achievement:

- hired 2 MH ES academic deans to provide additional instructional coaching capacity
- hired additional reading interventionists and utilizing research-based tier 2 intervention programs (Leveled Literacy Intervention and Wilson Foundations Double Dose)
- professional development and accountability structures to maximize efficacy of co-teaching
- intellectual preparation cycle that prepares teachers to scaffold grade-level content through effective backwards planning and just in time intervention

## GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

#### Goal 2: Mathematics

All Students at the DREAM Charter School Mott Haven will become proficient in Mathematics.

#### BACKGROUND

To develop scholars' in-depth mathematical understanding, DCS uses an inquiry-based math curriculum built on the belief that scholars need to understand problems and develop their own problem-solving strategies. Scholars are challenged to reflect upon and defend their strategies, analyze the strategies of others, and explain mathematical concepts and ideas. DCS achieves this through three mathematics blocks per day: Story Problem, Math Workshop, and Math Routines. Within each block, teachers facilitate meaningful discussion through careful questioning to help scholars develop and solidify their own understandings about math. The math curriculum is rooted in Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), which builds students' intuition and number sense. Portions of Investigations are also used to guide math instruction and supplemented with in-house materials and alterations.

For remote learning, we have purchased DreamBox Learning, a K-8 digital math program that independent studies have found to raise student achievement and better prepare children for future success.

#### METHOD

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess K-1 student growth and achievement in mathematics: NWEA MAP

#### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

32% of Mott Haven K-1 scholars performed at or above the 50th percentile on the Spring 2021 NWEA mathematics MAP assessment.

#### ACTION PLAN

Please refer to the aforementioned strategies that will be implemented going forward.

## GOAL 3: SCIENCE

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

#### Goal 3: Science

All students at DREAM Charter School Mot Haven will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

#### BACKGROUND

##### Science and Specials

Elementary school scholars receive two daily instructional periods in Science, Physical Education, Art, and Music. DCS refers to these courses as the “Science and Specials program.” The science program is inquiry-based, draws from *Foss* resources, and the New York State Science Learning Standards. DCS students explore science concepts through real-world, hands on experiences. It is through our Science and Specials program that we accomplish our goal of providing scholars a well-rounded education that includes science, technology and the arts.

#### METHOD

Our Kindergarten and first grade students were not assessed in science in 2021.



## 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 4: 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

DREAM CS – MH has not been identified for comprehensive or targeted improvement. The ESSA accountability system has been using the 2018-19 designations, but DREAM CS – Mott Haven opened in 2019-20.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing