



**Central Queens Academy
Charter School**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

July 31, 2021

By Ashish Kapadia

55-30 Junction Blvd. Elmhurst, NY 11373
88-24 Myrtle Avenue Glendale, NY 11385

(718) 271-6200

(718) 850-3111

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Ashish Kapadia, Executive Director of CQA, 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)
Arunabha Bhounik		Marketing Task Force
Megha Jain	2021-22 Secretary	Personnel and Executive Committees
Année Kim		Fundraising Task Force
Maribel Lara		Marketing Task Force
Michael Lee		Fundraising Task Force
Tom Ng		Education Accountability Cmte
David Nitkin		Education Accountability Cmte
Sonia Park	2021-22 Co-Vice Chairperson	Education Accountability and Executive Committees
Rick Ruvkin	Treasurer	Finance and Executive Committees
Bruce Saber		Facility Task Force
Sabir Semerkant		Marketing Committee
Cathy Tse	2021-22 Co-Vice Chairperson	Finance and Executive Committees
Joyce Wu	2021-22 Chairperson	Fundraising and Executive Committees
Michael Zisser	2020-21 Chairperson	Facility Task Force

Ashish Kapadia has served as the Executive Director since 2021.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Central Queens Academy Charter School opened in 2012. As a middle school, it serves grades 5-8 in two buildings. It serves approximately 400 scholars who are mainly first and second-generation immigrants from over 30 different nations who speak over 20 different languages. The school is about 70% Hispanic, 15% Asian, and 15% black. Annually, about 85% of CQA scholars qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The school's mission is to prepare students for success in education, the workforce, and the community through a school that integrates literacy, standards-based academics, and culturally responsive support services. In addition to the three just mentioned above, the school's key design elements include:

- frequent assessments to foster growth;
- focus on teacher development;
- more time on task, longer school day, and longer school year; and
- emphasis on social-emotional support to teach character and community.

During the 2020-2021 school year, CQA implemented a hybrid learning model for about 70% of its scholars. In this model, scholars came into the school buildings every alternate day. The scholars in this program maintained a daily schedule with a fixed set of teachers whether they were in the school building or at home. CQA separately ran a fully-remote microschool for about 30% of its scholars. This program was taught by a combination of administrators, instructional coaches, and newly-hired teachers. Whether part of the hybrid program or the remote program, scholars received 5.5 hours of daily live instruction in the core academic subjects of ELA, math, science, and social studies.

During the 2020-2021 school year, CQA focused on academic remediation as well as social-emotional support. All teachers provided small-group instruction and office hours to teach or re-teach the grade level skills and content that scholars were to master. Just as importantly, the school implemented a new instructional period dedicated to social-emotional learning. These lessons were mainly led by counselors and administrators. Additionally, the school created SEL days where scholars participated in teambuilding activities and supportive activities. Our school counselors provided intensive individual, group, and at times family counseling in order to minimize isolation and pandemic-related anxiety, stemming from Elmhurst, Corona, and Woodside being the epicenter of pandemic in 2020. Finally, the school created a food pantry program for food insecure CQA families and for local families connected to other Queens charter schools, like Elm, Forte Prep, and Valence Charter Schools. Over the course of the school year, CQA gave out over 15,000 meals to families.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

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						104	97	96	96					393
2017-18						106	106	105	86					403
2018-19						110	105	104	101					420
2019-20						106	104	102	95					407
2020-21						102	101	108	91					402

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

CQA students will become proficient readers and writers of the English language.

BACKGROUND

The ELA curriculum at Central Queens Academy Charter School (CQA) incorporates the Expeditionary Learning-developed curriculum model which is aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards. The program is built into theme-specific modules, each one with an increasing emphasis on students reading grade-level texts with appropriate scaffolds for both reading and for writing development. ELA instruction currently takes place 2 hours per day in the middle school grades, sometimes with the assistance of a special education teacher for push-in support.

Built into CQA's program is a robust and authentic assessment program that regularly provides individualized student data. As a practice, students receive small group instruction based on their reading levels in accordance with Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P), and the Renaissance STAR Reading Assessment. The frequent assessments allow for flexible and responsive grouping. It also increases accuracy in gauging progress towards CQA's annual reading growth goals. In the elementary school, which we will open in the 2021-2022 school year, ELA will take place 3 hours per day.

During the 2020-2021 school year, ELA instruction continued to implement the school's ELA curriculum in its hybrid modality and separately in its fully-remote modality.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

METHOD

CQA administered a series of assessments over the course of the school year in order to determine student achievement and growth. These assessments include formative and summative assessments created by teachers and aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards, Fountas and Pinnell reading level assessments, and Renaissance STAR assessments that are administered at least four times per year to all of its scholars in order to measure grade level equivalency in English.

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

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

CQA's internal goal for ELA during the 2020-2021 school year was to have at least one year of growth in literacy based on grade level equivalency when measured by STAR assessments. When comparing scholar performance in September and May, CQA saw at least one year of ELA growth in all four grade levels. When factoring in the performance of all scholars in the grade level, the average fifth grade scholars increased grade level equivalency of 1.1 years. Sixth grade scholars increased grade level equivalency of 1.6 years. Seventh grade scholars increased 1.3 years of grade level equivalency. Eighth grade scholars increased exactly 1 year of grade level equivalency.

STAR English Assessment Data 2020-2021				
	<u>Grade 5</u>	<u>Grade 6</u>	<u>Grade 7</u>	<u>Grade 8</u>
Sept. Avg. Grade Level Equivalency	3.8	5.0	5.8	7.6
May Avg. Grade Level Equivalency	4.9	6.6	7.1	8.6
TOTAL AVG GLE GROWTH (years)	1.1	1.6	1.3	1.0

Knowing that our incoming fifth grade scholars entered CQA without six consecutive months of literacy instruction, virtually all of these CQA scholars came to our school significantly below grade level in the Fall of 2020. On average, they finished the school year one year below grade level and we believe we can get these scholars caught up to grade level over the next three school years so that they are ready for high school by the end of eighth grade. The same is true for our sixth grade scholars who finished the 2020-2021 school year closer to reaching grade level. Our seventh grade scholars continue to be almost one grade level behind in literacy. These scholars will receive intensive literacy support during the upcoming school year in order to be ready for high school on time.

STAR English Growth Data 2020-2021				
	<u>Grade 5</u>	<u>Grade 6</u>	<u>Grade 7</u>	<u>Grade 8</u>
Percent of all scholars who showed one year of growth	64%	65%	64%	44%
Average growth of special education scholars (years)	0.6	1.1	1.4	2.0

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Average growth of ELL scholars (yrs)	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.7
Avg. growth of FRPL scholars (yrs)	1.2	1.5	1.3	0.9

Based on the STAR assessments, scholars with disabilities in grade five only grew 0.6 years. Clearly, this is a group that CQA will focus on with its remediation efforts in the 2021-2022 school year. CQA's sixth grade special education scholars grew 1.1 years on average in literacy. While impressive, that is lower than the average increase in the grade of 1.6 years. CQA's seventh grade scholars with disabilities grew 1.4 years, which was more than the average grade level growth. The school's eighth grade scholars with an IEP grew twice as much as the average growth of all eighth graders.

CQA's English language learners grew one year in fifth grade, which was just below the average growth of all fifth grade scholars. In sixth grade, CQA's ELLs grew 1.2 years, but that too was lower than the average growth of all sixth grade scholars. The school's seventh grade English language learners grew 1.4 years on average, which was more than the average grade level growth. Finally, CQA's average eighth grade ELLs grew 1.7 years in literacy while the entire grade level average growth was just 1 year.

Based on the STAR reading assessments, CQA saw very small differences between scholars who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch and all other scholars. This is because about 85% of CQA scholars fall into this sub-group. Scholars in grade 5 who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch outperformed their peers by growing 1.2 years as opposed to 1.1 years for all scholars. Scholars in grade six in this sub-group grew 1.5 years while the entire grade level grew 1.6 years. Seventh grade scholars in this sub-group grew 1.3 years, the same as their peers in the grade level. Eighth grade scholars in this sub-group grew 0.9 years while the entire grade grew 1.0 years.

PERCENT OF CQA SCHOLARS WHOSE GLE IN READING WAS IN THEIR PROPER GRADE LEVEL

	ALL	SPED	ELL	FRPL
Grade 5	45%	11%	9%	49%
Grade 6	59%	14%	22%	56%
Grade 7	51%	17%	0%	50%
Grade 8	58%	17%	40%	54%

Finally, the STAR assessments administered in May 2021 were able to show how many scholars in each grade level were reading in their grade level. 45% of fifth grade scholars ended the year on their grade level while 59% of sixth grade scholars were doing so. 51% of seventh grade scholars were on a seventh grade level and 58% of eighth grade scholars ended their year on grade level.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

CQA's scholars, on average, grew more than 1 year in literacy. More than half of CQA scholars were on grade level by the end of the school year in reading. In the absence of state exams that provide reliable student achievement data, we believe we have partially met our literacy goal.

ACTION PLAN

Despite the troublesome 18 months that COVID-19 presented, CQA scholars demonstrated substantial gains in its student reading levels. We also understand that there is room to grow further. Our program will implement the following for the 2021-22 school year:

- Implementation of a fully-in-school instructional modality.
- Continued use of baseline and monitoring reading assessments using the Renaissance STAR Reading Assessment. This program simultaneously reports continual growth as well as provide teacher guidance on individualized support for each scholar.
- Early screening of all scholars to establish logical and flexible small reading groups.
- Intensive small group instruction and literacy intervention for at-risk scholars.
- The elementary school will incorporate weekly blocks of “CORE Time” where scholars work in differentiated groupings on essential reading and writing skills.
- The middle school will incorporate weekly blocks of structured independent reading and/or executive functioning study skills for literacy.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

CQA students will become proficient in the application of mathematical skills and concepts.

BACKGROUND

CQA has built its math program with a conceptual, inquiry-based approach. Scholars engage in hands-on problem-solving every day while building conceptual mathematical understanding. Teachers value the process in addition to the product of scholar work. Through this approach, scholars understand the concepts behind the math while also building automaticity or fluency in math facts. Built into CQA’s program is a robust and authentic assessment program that regularly provides individualized student data. As a practice, students receive small group instruction based on their math levels in accordance with IXL diagnostic and benchmark assessments. The frequent classroom assessments allow for flexible and responsive grouping. It also increases accuracy in gauging progress towards CQA’s annual math growth goals.

In the middle school grades, CQA intentionally uses multiple curricula. In fifth grade, CQA utilizes the Singapore Math curriculum from Math in Focus. This is because the majority of incoming students enter fifth grade below grade level in math. CQA believes the Singapore Math curriculum does a better job of teaching and reinforcing number sense than other curricula. In grades 6 and 7, CQA utilizes the Eureka Math curriculum from [engageny.org](https://www.engageny.org/) in order to ensure that its scholars can learn using a rigorous curriculum that is closely aligned to New York State’s Next Generation Learning Standards for math. The coursework in middle school is accelerated culminating in the NYS high school Algebra I Regents course (with the subsequent Regents exam). The single period

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

daily math block is paired with a block of Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS). IDS is an application-based class for scholars to apply the skills that they are learning in math to real world or tactile problems for part of the school year.

During the 2020-2021 school year, math instruction continued to implement the school's regular math curriculum in its hybrid modality and separately in its fully-remote modality.

METHOD

CQA assessed its middle school scholars during the 2020-2021 school year using a variety of teacher-designed formative and summative assessments like performance tasks, quizzes, and tests that are aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards, and IXL assessments administered four times per year to all of its scholars.

Further, in grade 8, our scholars took the high school Algebra I course that normally ends in a Regents exam. Because the exam was scheduled for after our last day of school, our scholars did not take the exam. They received high school Regents exam and course credit if they passed the course for the year. In June 2021, the eighth grade scholars also took an internal benchmark assessment which was a mock Regents exam. This was their final exam in math. It was a previously-administered state Regents exam.

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

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

During the 2020-2021 school year, CQA's internal goal was to have its average scholar growth by grade level be 1.0 years on the IXL assessments. In fifth, sixth, and seventh grades, CQA achieved its goal as the school saw 1.7 years, 1.2 years, and 1.5 years of growth, respectively. CQA only saw 0.8 years of average growth in eighth grade in mathematics, however, the average grade level equivalency was already in ninth grade.

IXL Math Assessment Data 2020-2021				
	<u>Grade 5</u>	<u>Grade 6</u>	<u>Grade 7</u>	<u>Grade 8</u>
Sept. Avg. Grade Level Equivalency	3.7	5.1	5.9	8.3
May Avg. Grade Level Equivalency	5.4	6.3	7.4	9.1
TOTAL AVG GLE Growth (years)	1.7	1.2	1.5	0.8

Similar to what it saw in ELA, the average grade level equivalency for its incoming fifth grade scholars was far below grade level as those scholars received six months of minimal math instruction before arriving to the school. These scholars saw the greatest growth. Meanwhile, scholars in sixth and seventh grades saw their average grade level equivalency as being in the middle of their grade, similar to what we saw with fifth grade scholars at the end of the school year. Meanwhile, eighth grade scholars saw an average grade level equivalency of 9.1 at the end of the year.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

IXL Math Growth Data 2020-2021				
	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Percent of all scholars who showed one year of growth	86%	65%	82%	43%
Average growth of special education scholars (years)	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.2
Average growth of ELL scholars (yrs)	1.5	1.3	2.2	1.0
Avg growth of FRPL scholars (yrs)	1.6	1.1	1.4	0.6

CQA's fifth grade special education scholars grew 1.4 years in math on the IXL assessments. While that was good, it was less than the 1.7 years that the average fifth grade scholar grew. In grade six, CQA's scholars with IEPs grew 1.8 years, more than half a grade level more than the average sixth grade scholar. CQA's seventh grade students with disabilities grew 1.6 years, slightly more than the average seventh grade scholar. The school's eighth grade special education scholars grew 1.2 years, which is 4 months more than the average eighth grader.

English language learners at CQA showed notable math growth as well. Fifth grade ELLs grew 1.5 years though the grade level grew on average 1.7 years. Sixth grade scholars who are English language learners grew 1.3 years on average, just over the entire grade level average. In seventh grade, ELLs grew over 2 years in math, significantly more than the average seventh grader. In eighth grade, ELLs grew one year, which was two months more than the average scholar in the grade level.

Scholars who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch showed significant growth during the 2020-2021 school year. Note that the vast majority of CQA scholars, about 85% of the total, are part of this sub-group. Fifth grade CQA scholars in this sub-group grew 1.6 years in math as the whole grade level grew 1.7 years. Sixth grade CQA scholars in this sub-group grew 1.1 years while the whole grade level grew 1.2 years. Seventh grade CQA scholars in this sub-group grew 1.4 years while the whole grade level grew one month more. In eighth grade, scholars in this sub-group grow 0.6 years but it is worth keeping in mind that the average grade level equivalency for eighth graders was 9.1.

PERCENT OF CQA SCHOLARS WHOSE MATH GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCY WAS IN THEIR PROPER GRADE LEVEL

	ALL	SPED	ELL	FRPL
Grade 5	78%	78%	55%	78%
Grade 6	74%	14%	23%	73%
Grade 7	77%	50%	83%	76%
Grade 8	87%	100%	80%	86%

Using our IXL assessments, we could see that 78% of our fifth-grade scholars were on grade level by the end of the 2020-2021 school year. In grade six, 74% of our scholars ended the year on grade

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

level. In grade 7, 77% of our scholars were on grade level and 87% of our eighth grade scholars were on grade level by May 2021.

Algebra I	ALL	SPED	ELL	FRPL
Mock Regents Exam	91%	100%	100%	89%

On the June 2021, Algebra I final exam, which was a mock Regents exam from a previously-administered New York State Regents Exam, 91% of all eighth grade scholars passed the assessment though 70% of those scholars passed the course and received high school course and Regents Exam credit.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

CQA believes it has met its math goals based on: the average grade level growth of more than one year for CQA scholars in grade 5, 6, & 7; achievement level of eighth grade scholars on the IXL assessments; and strong performance on the mock-Algebra I Regents exam.

ACTION PLAN

Despite the troublesome 18 months that COVID-19 presented, CQA scholars also demonstrated substantial gains in their student math levels. We also understand that further development is needed. Our program will implement the following for the 2021-22 school year:

- For the 2021-2022 school year, the elementary and middle school plan to only implement a fully in-school modality.
- The new incorporation of periodic math assessments using the Renaissance STAR Math Assessment. This program simultaneously reports continual growth as well as provide teacher guidance on individualized support for each scholar.
- Continued use of IXL and Castle Learning, both student practice-based programs that target specific skills and highlight process mistakes for scholars.
- Continued intensive Algebra Summer Bridge Program, a 60 hr. course built to bridge the skill gap between our accelerated seventh grade curriculum and our Algebra I Regents course in eighth grade.
- The reincorporation of weekly alumni Algebra tutors.
- In the elementary grades the math curriculum will consist of 2 programs: Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI- inquiry based problem solving) and Contexts for Learning Mathematics (CFL-math concepts in context). The CFL block will be 45 minutes per day and the CGI block will be 35 minutes per day.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

CQA students will use technology, scientific concepts, principles and theories to conduct and analyze investigations.

BACKGROUND

Similar to math, CQA has built an accelerated science program with a conceptual, inquiry-based approach. Scholars engage in hands-on problem solving while building conceptual understanding of basic scientific constructs. CQA strives to build the understanding through the hands-on experimentation rather than prior to experimentation.

In the middle school grades, we use the Savvas Interactive Science Curriculum with an accelerated pacing calendar culminating in the New York State high school Earth Science course in eighth grade. The Earth Science curriculum has been built in-house at CQA.

During the 2020-2021 school year, science instruction continued to implement the school's regular science curriculum in its hybrid modality and separately in its fully-remote modality.

METHOD

CQA administered its own teacher-developed formative and summative assessments including performance tasks, quizzes, and tests. These assessments are aligned to New York State learning standards for science. Based on these assessments, scholars received quarterly report card grades which were averaged into final grades at the end of the school year where 70% is considered passing in grades 5, 6, and 7.

Eighth grade scholars took the high school Earth Science course that typically ends in a Regents exam. Because the state exam was scheduled after the end of the CQA school year, scholars did not take the exam but they did take a mock Regents exam that was a previously administered Regents exam. This served as an internal benchmark assessment. Scholars who passed the course with 65% or higher received high school course and Regents credit.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Similar to what we have seen in ELA and math, our fifth grade scholars struggle in their first year at CQA. Only 55% of our fifth grade scholars passed the accelerated science course with special education and English language learners struggling even more. However, scholars in their second, third, or fourth year at CQA performed significantly better. 81% of sixth grade scholars, 68% of seventh grade scholars, and 84% of eighth grade scholars passed their science courses.

On the eighth grade mock Earth Science Regents Exam, 83% of scholars passed the exam, including two-thirds of special education scholars and all English language learners.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

SCIENCE COURSE AND MOCK REGENTS EXAM PASSING RATES

Grade	ALL	SPED	ELL	FRPL
Grade 5 Course	55%	33%	26%	55%
Grade 6 Course	81%	57%	65%	78%
Grade 7 Course	68%	42%	43%	66%
Grade 8 Course	84%	67%	100%	82%
Grade 8 Earth Sci Mock Exam	83%	67%	100%	83%

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

While the school believes it did not meet its goal for grades 6 and 7, based on the high performance of its eighth grade scholars in earning high school course credit and based on those scholars' performance on the school's benchmark assessment, which was a mock Earth Science Regents Exam, CQA believes it has partially met its science goal.

ACTION PLAN

The COVID-19 pandemic had the greatest effect on our science program, greatly limiting the amount of hands-on learning that we heavily invest in and depend on. As a result, we saw a decrease in the total percent of scholars passing the Earth Science Regents course from 90+% to 76%. To bridge that gap in 2021-22 our program will implement the following:

- The reintegration of a fully-functioning lab-based model of learning.
- Continued use of Castle Learning, a student practice-based programs that targets specific skills and highlight process mistakes for scholars.
- The reincorporation of weekly alumni Earth Science tutors.
- In the elementary grades we will use the Amplify Science curriculum with 3-4 blocks per week.

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.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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

CQA's ESSA status is good standing for the 2020-2021 school year. It has always been in good standing.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

CQA's ESSA status has always been in good standing, including for the entire charter period.

Accountability Status by Year

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

Appendix A is deleted as CQA did not administer NWEA or iReady assessments.