



# **Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School**

## **2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

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## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Jennifer Fedele prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Phyllis Thorne	Chair, Academic Committee Chair
Sr. Patricia Broderick	
Peter Quinn	Treasurer; Finance Committee Chair
Reva Gershon Lowy	Secretary
Dunica Charles	
Joy DeVries	
James McCarthy	
William Ursillo	

**Jennifer Fedele has served as the Principal since October 2018.**

### SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The mission of Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School (CMCCS) is to address the academic, social-emotional and developmental needs of its students in a safe, supportive and trauma-informed learning environment in order to better enable them to learn and succeed academically. The school is committed to serving at-risk students experiencing trauma, including children in foster care and students receiving prevention services. Through a rigorous program of instruction utilizing a trauma-informed, Sanctuary Model approach and by providing a wide range of wraparound support services, CMCCS will help each student become more resilient, independent and academically successful.

The school model implemented at CMCCS integrates evidence-based Sanctuary Model principles and wraparound services with a rigorous academic program. This approach enables us to meet the needs of our uniquely at-risk student population by addressing social-emotional concerns so that they are able to learn while simultaneously implementing a rigorous curriculum closely aligned to New York State Learning Standards. Each student has an Individual Growth Plan for Success and is provided with therapeutic assistance and counseling in close collaboration with classroom teachers and other instructional staff.

In alignment with our mission and core vision, key design elements of our school model include:

- Integration of the principles and practices of the **Sanctuary Model**, an evidence based model that cultivates a trauma informed environment in which at-risk youth can maximize their potential to learn, heal and grow, into the academic program.
- **A rigorous standards-aligned and data-informed academic program** utilizing effective instructional methods and curriculum
- **Intensive instruction and extended day programming** to ensure that each student's needs are addressed, and
- **Comprehensive wraparound services** for students to support their social-emotional, developmental and behavioral growth and to help them build resilience and capacity to cope effectively with problems

The school opened in August 2019, serving 144 Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students. On BEDS day, the school population was 18% Black, 76% Hispanic, 3% multiracial, and 3% Native American. In addition, 98% of students were from low-income families, 20% were English Language Learners, and 19% were Students with Disabilities. The school will add one grade per year until reaching full capacity of 450 K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade students in 2023-2024.

During this tumultuous time of the pandemic, our organization had to pivot its standard operations to make certain to:

- continue to educate our students safely
- provide social and emotional support effectively with our trauma informed approach
- maintain a dynamic academic environment where children feel empowered to grow with support regardless of educational model, virtual or in person instruction
- continue to add value to our community at all-times even during this unprecedented event as the current Covid-19 situation.

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

In response to the COVID 19 pandemic and the subsequent school closure, our team put together a number of supports for our families to assist them with navigating this difficult time. First and foremost during the school closure when we were fully remote, we kept in constant contact with our families. Classroom teachers and TA's made daily phone calls to parents to offer continual reassurance and support. Parents were new to the experience of teaching their own children. With this in mind we kept channels of communication open in order to offer as much support and guidance as possible. When we first began the remote learning experience, parents were confused and were having difficulties navigating our virtual lessons. One of our teachers created several 'how to' videos to support parents. In addition, he made his phone number available so that he could work with parents one on one when needed. Parents were comforted in knowing that they were not alone in this process and that others were struggling as well. In addition, our strong level of visibility let our parents know that we were all in this together.

During the school closure when school was fully remote, teachers held socialization meetings twice a week. The sole purpose of these meetings was to allow students to remain in touch with each other and have the opportunity to connect with classmates and friends. Our school also sponsored several Friday night movie nights and story book readings. School staff made themselves available to host these events for students to allow them to participate in a fun evening event. In cooperation with our partner agency, we also hosted several craft events. Supplies were sent home with families and the event was conducted on ZOOM.

A list of available resources was shared with families as well as posted on our website. We researched and made available information regarding the need for food, counseling, COVID testing and emergency shelters.

Our principal held multiple town hall meetings in order to reassure parents as well as keep them up to date on the latest news and developments. Our school social worker spent a great deal of time in communication with our families. She had discussions surrounding their concerns and difficulties. She also offered support to struggling students who needed a little extra help.

In conjunction with Dignity of Children, a social services agency, our school offered three parent summits. The titles of the workshops were *Meeting the Social and Emotional Needs of Children and Youth*, *Real Talk! Developing Emotional Intelligence for Our Kids Sake*, and *Creating a Learning Environment at Home*. These workshops were offered as a support to parents to assist them with managing their children as well as their emotional state during this time. Workshops were offered in both English and Spanish.

As an organization that is seeking to become Sanctuary certified we are committed to supporting all members of our school community in any way that we can. Sanctuary is a trauma informed model that supports the social emotional wellbeing of all members of the school community. We participated in these practices prior to the onset of the pandemic and fully intend to continue with them for the life of our school.

## ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2019-20	91	53												144
2020-21	79	87	60											226

As part of the student recruitment process, CMCCS reached out to several entities with strong ties to the immigrant community and Special Education services to ensure inclusion of these groups.

These efforts included but were not limited to:

- All recruitment materials were provided in multiple languages to include non-English speakers
- Hosting virtual open houses in multiple languages
- Speaking and presenting school information to Pre-K/Head Start programs providing Special Education services
- Worked with existing immigrant parent groups for word-of-mouth recruitment
- Reaching out to daycares in the local area, which has been identified as economically distressed

## GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students at Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School will demonstrate growth in ELA proficiency and will meet grade-level proficiency standards in ELA each year.

### BACKGROUND

During the 2020-2021 academic school year, Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School utilized a comprehensive English Language Arts program that is aligned with New York State's Common Core Learning Standards for Kindergarten through second grade. The reading program provides students with a research-based curriculum that enables students to develop a strong foundation. The reading program implemented in the 2020-2021 school year balances the necessary components for young readers including phonemic awareness, phonics, the encoding and decoding of words and fluency development; and the essential components of comprehension.

The PAF Reading Program was used in all grades. This program is a research-based, multi-sensory reading program that incorporates reading, spelling, and handwriting instruction into unified lessons that benefit all children, and can prevent reading failure in at-risk children. The PAF Reading Program provides children with the building blocks they need to learn in a logical order which results in minimum frustration — and maximum success. The step-by-step

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

progression leads not only to improvement in basic skills but to an increased sense of mastery and self-esteem. Students are taught how to encode and decode words and students learn how to read accurately and fluently using phrases, sentences and stories that contain only sounds and words that have already been learned (decodable text). Finally, the students learn how to apply comprehension strategies to help them understand what they read. As part of the program, the students are assessed regularly based on curriculum based proficiency tests to monitor progress and student achievement.

The PAF Reading Program is supplemented by the EngageNY Listening Learning Curriculum, the EngageNY Skills program and read alouds that expose students to authentic text as well as fiction and non-fiction topics. The combination of these programs provides students with a rigorous inquiry and language intensive academic experience. To support teachers throughout the year, professional development workshops and modeling of instructional practices are provided by consultants and the instructional leadership team.

This reading program is effective because of the instructional strategies utilized. Kindergarten students receive 140 instructional minutes in ELA daily, and first grades receive 150 instructional minutes in ELA each day. Specifically, students are placed into flexible leveled reading groups and receive direct support from teachers. To develop students' critical thinking skills, teachers use multiple levels of questions to support the needs of all students. The direct instruction model allows teachers to monitor student progress throughout each lesson, and provide targeted feedback to students. The writing program is supported by the EngageNY Skills program for the development of pre-writing skills and directly supported by the PAF Reading Program as students write daily as part of the lesson format. The students receive immediate feedback from instructional staff to support student's correct use of English written language, with an emphasis on writing mechanics, syntax and form.

To address learning gaps due to COVID-19, the ELA program will include time for the remediation of reading and writing skills as needed. Time will also be built into the schedules for online assessments to establish benchmarks. Teachers will use multiple platforms and online resources to facilitate remote learning.

### METHOD

To assess and evaluate student achievement in ELA the school administered the Preventing Academic Failure (PAF) Test of Single Word Reading following the use of EngageNY Skills curriculum to develop pre-reading and pre-writing skills. THE PAF Test combined with oral reading of the readers, can be used for placement of new students as well as to measure ongoing gains. It assesses a student's ability to read single words in isolation. The ability to read single words automatically, at the word-recognition level, is crucial for maximizing comprehension. The test also provides an opportunity to show quantitative growth in reading from year-to-year. It offers an alternative assessment tool for students who cannot yet read the uncontrolled text on standardized reading tests. The PAF Test of Single Word Reading consists of 240 words divided into twelve subtests based on phonetic patterns that follow the PAF

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

sequence. Progress is demonstrated by a student reading more words accurately from year-to-year or recognizing more words automatically, rather than having to sound them out.

Unfortunately due to COVID-19, an end of year PAF assessment was not administered.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, CMCCS did not administer an end of year PAF exam and therefore cannot specifically address this metric at this time. However, the school did introduce the NEWA assessment. Our scores listed below demonstrate that our students have struggled significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic to meet grade level standards. While we imagine that our scores look similar to those of similar student groups (low income, majority minority, large special populations), we are unable to compare without publicly available state testing data. However, regardless of where our students fall in the distribution of state scores, we know that they have the capacity to reach greater achievement through targeted intervention, moving forward.

Kindergarten Reading	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	5%	19%	43%	19%	14%	76%	24%
Winter	33%	31%	16%	9%	10%	35%	64%
Spring	40%	23%	23%	6%	8%	37%	63%
1st Grade Reading	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	58%	21%	13%	4%	4%	21%	79%
Winter	69%	19%	9%	3%	1%	13%	88%
Spring	70%	17%	8%	5%	0	13%	87%
2nd Grade Reading	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	37%	19%	23%	13%	8%	44%	56%
Winter	49%	23%	21%	4%	2%	27%	72%
Spring	47%	21%	23%	6%	2%	31%	68%

### ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our young students' ability to consistently access instruction on a daily basis. Although the school provided laptops to students, remote and blended learning presented challenges for the students and instructional staff. While our students were learning remotely, they had to contend with many challenges including poor internet/WIFI connectivity, inconsistent adult guidance to support online learning, and intensified stress caused

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

by concerns related to the Covid-19 outbreak that made learning more difficult. Furthermore, since students were learning the very basics of reading, writing, math and other foundational skills, they were dependent on explicit teacher support that could not be delivered in the same manner it would have been in the classroom.

All testing was administered in the building with a member of the staff proctoring each exam. Students who were fully remote were invited to attend each testing session if they felt comfortable being in a classroom with a reduced number of students. Blended students participated in testing while they were in the building. It was determined that in order to obtain an accurate assessment of students' levels, testing would not be done remotely. The end of year testing window was shorter than the previous testing windows which we believe impacted the total number of students we were able to test. In addition, a number of remote students were not available to participate in in-person testing because they were not residing at their home address at that time.

### ACTION PLAN

As our school was unable to administer the EOY PAF assessment, we recognize that determining new baseline levels for students in the fall of 2021 and tailoring supports based on this new data will be paramount to ensuring student success in reading moving forward. Reading support will be prioritized for all students and further differentiated for tier 2 and 3 students, based on actual need.

## GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

### Goal 2: Mathematics

Students at Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School will demonstrate growth in Math proficiency and will meet grade-level proficiency standards in Math each year.

### BACKGROUND

With 50 minutes allocated for Math instruction in Kindergarten, 60 minutes in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School used a New York State Common Core aligned math program that provided students with primary components of math instruction including computational, procedural and conceptual skills. The EngageNY "A Story of Units" curriculum provides a sequenced and comprehensive mathematics program that builds students' conceptual and practical math skills from one year to the next. The "Story of Units" program provides students with direct experience in problem solving with concrete-pictorial and abstract learning in a carefully sequenced program that included curriculum based progress monitoring.

During each lesson, students are provided the opportunity to develop their basic skills to a level of automaticity to allow for exploration of more complex mathematical concepts. The focus is on developing a solid mathematical foundation and mathematical fluency. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the development of mathematical vocabulary the oral and written language of math.



## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Progress monitoring interim assessments in math are based on mid-module and end of module assessments from the “Story of Units” curriculum to determine student proficiency and instructional pacing.

Throughout the year, professional development provided support to teachers with the implementation of the curriculum and modifications to best meet the needs of the students.

To address learning gaps due to remote learning in the previous year, the Math program included time for the remediation of skills and content as needed. Time was also be built into the schedules for online assessments to establish benchmarks.

### METHOD

In addition to the curriculum-embedded assessments mentioned above, CMCSS also uses the NWEA MAP assessment to measure student achievement against national norms.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The following table highlights student performance on the NWEA MAP assessment:

Kindergarten Math	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	5%	29%	23%	21%	23%	67%	34%
Winter	28%	31%	18%	15%	7%	40%	59%
Spring	38%	25%	20%	7%	9%	36%	63%
1st Grade Math	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	36%	36%	13%	10%	6%	29%	72%
Winter	68%	22%	3%	7%	0%	10%	90%
Spring	66%	19%	8%	6%	2%	16%	85%
2nd Grade Math	Lo <21%	Lo Avg %21-40	Avg %41-60	Hi Avg %61-80	Hi %>80	% average or above	% below average
Fall	36%	30%	9%	15%	9%	33%	66%
Winter	57%	17%	13%	11%	2%	26%	74%
Spring	53%	21%	11%	13%	2%	26%	74%

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

### ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CMCCS experienced some attrition in the number of students tested between the fall and spring administrations of the MAP assessment.

Fall Testing Participation	83%
Winter Testing Participation	83%
Spring Testing Participation	75%

[echoing our response to ELA]: The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our young students' ability to consistently access instruction on a daily basis. Although the school provided laptops to students, remote and blended learning presented challenges for the students and instructional staff. While our students were learning remotely, they had to contend with many challenges including poor internet/WIFI connectivity, inconsistent adult guidance to support online learning, and intensified stress caused by concerns related to the Covid-19 outbreak that made learning more difficult. Furthermore, since students were learning the very basics of reading, writing, math and other foundational skills, they were dependent on explicit teacher support that could not be delivered in the same manner it would have been in the classroom.

All testing was administered in the building with a member of the staff proctoring each exam. Students who were fully remote were invited to attend each testing session if they felt comfortable being in a classroom with a reduced number of students. Blended students participated in testing while they were in the building. It was determined that in order to obtain an accurate assessment of students' levels, testing would not be done remotely. The end of year testing window was shorter than the previous testing windows which we believe impacted the total number of students we were able to test. In addition, a number of remote students were not available to participate in in-person testing because they were not residing at their home address at that time.

### ACTION PLAN

As the school was not able to fully implement its math program with fidelity due to COVID-19, we have little student achievement data with which to make informed changes and program improvements moving forward. Therefore, the school will utilize the same curriculum and assessments once the school returns to standard operations. In addition, minor curriculum changes may be made to address areas where specific skills and content were not adequately addressed in the 2020-2021 school year.

### GOAL 3: SCIENCE

#### Goal 3: Science

Students at Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School will demonstrate growth in Science proficiency and will meet grade-level proficiency standards in Science each year.

### BACKGROUND

The Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School science program is based on New York State Science Learning Standards. The science program focuses on three primary strands including the physical environment, earth and space, and the living environment. The program is supported by key domain areas in the EngageNY Listening and Learning curriculum, read aloud books that explore science based topics, and teacher led demonstrations. Instruction emphasizes the development of vocabulary and language development. Furthermore, the program builds personal connections to science to provide a grounding of the topics. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding orally, and through drawing and writing.

The science curriculum is a multisensory program that provides students with an understanding of the world around them with the express goal of building their observational and critical thinking skills.

### METHOD

To measure student progress in Science, students will take curriculum-embedded assessments. However, due to COVID-19, interim assessments were not administered.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Not Applicable. Science assessments were not administered due to the school's COVID-19 closure.

### ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

As 2019-20 was the first year of operation for CMCCS and interruptions related to COVID-19 have persisted, no year-to-year comparisons can be made.

### ACTION PLAN

As the school was only able to implement the Science program with fidelity for a limited portion of the year due to COVID-19, we have little student achievement data with which to make informed changes and program improvements moving forward. Therefore, the school will utilize the same curriculum and assessments once the school returns to standard operations, with modifications made to accommodate effective remote instruction before then. In addition, minor curriculum changes may be made to address areas where specific skills and content were not adequately addressed in the 2020-2021 school year.

### GOAL 4: ESSA

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

#### Goal 4: ESSA

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

### 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

CMCCS is in Good Standing.

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Not Applicable. 2019-20 was CMCCS' first year of operation.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	Not applicable
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing