



Amber Charter School East Harlem

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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Ms. Sashamani Elliott prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Soledad Hiciano	Board Chair, Executive Committee and Ad hoc member of all board committees
Frank Aldridge	Treasurer, Executive and Finance Committee Chair
John Gutierrez	Executive Committee, Vice Chair, Education Committee; Nominating Committee Chair
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Kelly Combs	Member, Facilities Committee
Brian Quillin	Teacher representative, Education Committee
Brad Olsen	Member, Finance Committee
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Mercedes Minaya	Parent Representative, Development Committee [resigned August, 2020]
Miguelina Germán	Member, Education Committee
Robyn Epps	Parent Representative, Development Committee

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Lindsay Long	Member, Development Committee
Li'Esha Garcia	Member, Finance Committee
Rebecca Isaac	Member, Development Committee
Timothy Day	Member, Facilities Committee
Vasthi Acosta	Member, Ad hoc member of all board committees
Michael Stolper	General Counsel to the Board

Mr. Matthew Bull has served as the school leader since 2019.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Founded in 2000, Amber's mission reads:

Our mission - to provide our students with an academically rigorous and well-rounded education, along with strong character development, enabling them to prosper in future endeavors.

Amber East Harlem served 489 students for the 2020-21 in grades K-5. Our students were approximately 28% African American, 67% Latino, and 5% White/Asian/Multi-racial and other, with 91% eligible for free and reduced lunch. There were 51% male and 49% female students.

This year we had 20 classes in grades K-5. The final student body count was 477 students in June.

In literacy the curriculum was *Into Reading* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. In math the curriculum was *Into Math* and for Science, *Fusion Science*--also from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. The social studies curriculum entitled *New York Social Studies* is published by McGraw-Hill. In addition, Amber continued to offer specialty classes in reading intervention, technology, Spanish, visual arts, music, and physical education.

Amber continued to serve the whole child by offering virtual enrichment opportunities including blocks dedicated to Social Emotional Learning support for trauma stemming from the COVID-19. We continue to use Sanford-Harmony as our foundational SEL program. We also offered virtual book clubs, virtual lunch bunches and more.

Aware that all staff members suffered great loss and a work shift as well, we offered listening circles so staff could make connections with each other in intimate settings like before physical distancing mandates. We hosted "Unconferences" where staff dropped their professional selves to work on their personal selves in order to feel whole during a difficult time. As an organization, we held weekly community calls for the entire organization where we could shout out 'kudos' recognizing the hard work of individuals, share in celebrations, and ensure we were all still aligned to our mission. Community is a character trait of the Amber Way and it is what holds all stakeholders together.

In this unprecedented school year, we still managed to have our students accepted into top middle schools in the city, schools like East Harlem Exodus, Young Women's Leadership, Patrick Henry Preparatory School and Manhattan Arts and Sciences. They have also been accepted into preparation programs such as Prep for Prep. All our students were admitted into great charter and district middle schools--including our newest addition to the network, Amber Kingsbridge Middle School-- meeting our mission to have our students "prosper in future endeavors".

School year 2020-21 continued where school year 2019-20 left off--deeply impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The communities we serve continue to be disproportionately impacted by this crisis. As an organization, we prioritize our approach to psychosocial health, systematically gathering information from our families and staff members about their challenges and concerns and working to meet their needs. Fostering and maintaining connections between students, with families and amongst our staff continues to be our focus.

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Amber started the year 100% remote as we worked hard to best ensure the safety for our children, families and staff. Taking the many lessons learned from the prior school year, we were adamant about offering a robust virtual learning environment that captured the rigor and magic of our in-person instruction, yet capitalized on the technological advances education made over the past year.

Our remote schedule gave students at minimum four hours of live, synchronous instruction per day. Our children still took part in specials including physical education, art, music, technology and Spanish daily. Students with disabilities received mandated sessions for SETSS, occupational therapy, physical therapy and counseling virtually.

In March of 2021, a year after we closed our physical doors and opened virtual zoom rooms, we offered hybrid learning to our families. 181 of our Amber Stars or 38% of the population returned to our bi-weekly in-person model. Students were separated into pods to maximize physical distancing mandates and were tested weekly to keep our community safe. For the final seven weeks of school, we had no positive detections or pod closures. This is a direct result of our community keeping each other safe and is aligned with our newest mantras, “detect and protect” and “keep the lights on and keep everyone safe”.

We were aware of the sacrifice families made while working from home and assisting their virtual learners. To support them, we held over 75 virtual family town halls in English and Spanish. Topics ranged from administering the iReady assessment to parenting in a pandemic. We adjusted the topics to meet the needs of our families as they changed.

Amber once again offered a virtual summer program through Varsity Tutors. All families current and incoming have the option to partake in this free program to help mitigate summer learning loss. Students receive 1:1 tutoring with a Varsity Tutor professional at no cost to our families.

Despite the complex challenges our schools, communities, city and country faced since March 2020, and continue to endure, our leaders and teachers have learned, stretched and iterated in a variety of ways as we continue to strive to achieve our mission. We did this work daily, collaboratively, and with great intensity, throughout the spring. This summer, we continue to leverage what worked and address what did not. This has made Amber all the more prepared to serve more students, more effectively, and truly achieve our mission.

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2016-17	114	91	92	76	63	60	497
2017-18	101	104	84	80	69	55	495
2018-19	117	102	92	81	69	65	526
2019-20	98	89	97	78	70	65	497
2020-21	85	86	91	89	72	66	489

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at Amber Charter School will be proficient readers and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of English-language reading skills.

BACKGROUND

Amber Charter Schools utilized Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's [INTO Reading](#) curriculum programs for core English language arts instruction. This program is Common Core State Standards and New York Learning Standards-aligned and received "meets expectations" ratings from EdReports.¹ Instructional staff members are familiar with the previous version of this program, Journeys, and teachers in grades 3 and 4 piloted the INTO programs during the 2019-20 school year. Additionally, in the spring of 2020, these piloting teachers received training and rolled out the HMH remote learning platform, [Ed: Your Friend in Learning](#), was utilized across all grades, at both of our schools, starting in the fall of 2020. This was used daily during remote learning and lessons were taught digitally by teachers using this digital learning platform.

To supplement our core programs, all students engage in [Ready ELA](#) computer-based lessons, which are aligned to our IReady diagnostic assessments. [Raz Kids](#), which offers tailored and targeted learning experiences, will also continue to be utilized. Amber Charter School Kingsbridge students are familiar with both of these platforms.

¹ [EdReports INTO Reading 2020](#), [EdReports INTO Math 2020](#)

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Professional development to the faculty was offered during our August Summer Institute as well as throughout the school year. A professional development plan is designed every school year to address the individual needs of each faculty member and ensure their professional growth. Particular attention was paid to the adjustment to virtual instruction and best practices surrounding the learning curve associated with virtual learning. We focused on first the role of our effective technology usage and then students and staff were equipped with the tools to take advantage of the digital curriculum. Additional digital platforms were used to support English Language Arts instruction like Google Classroom, Nearpod, and Google Slides.

Method

IReady ELA diagnostics were administered within the first few weeks of the school year, as our urgency around assessing and addressing needs was even greater than ever before. The data collected from IReady was used to help tier students for learning grade level content and plan for targeted interventions, as the platform generates actionable reports for teachers. Student performance on these diagnostics also informed the personalized learning path for each student on IReady computer-based lessons. IReady assessments were also administered again in January and May.

Throughout the year, students were assessed at the beginning, midpoint, and end of each learning module. The schedule of these assessments varies according to grade, content area, standard and length of each module.

This year, we administered the September and January assessments remotely, over a two-week period, with teacher supervision, which involved live video monitoring on Zoom and the use of Go Guardian. For the May assessment we administered the assessment in person to those students who attended in-person learning, and remotely for those who remained remote for the school year.

All assessment data, including module assessments, is housed in Illuminate, our school and network-wide learning platform. Across all assessments, 80% indicates mastery of a standard. Teachers used data to adjust instruction, typically within their grades and classrooms, and this year within their hybrid and remote pods. Weekly data meetings with school-based data managers and staff developers provide protected, collaborative time to analyze and plan to meet students' needs.

Measure 1: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.

Our 216 students missed this measure by 15%. Considering that the school year had significant challenges, we are happy that annual typical growth was well within their reach.

Measure 2: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3rd through 8th 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.

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Goal met. Students who were 2 or more grade levels exceeded the annual typical growth target by 2% more.

Measure 3: Each year, the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.

Students missed this target by 18%.

Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3rd through 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will score at the *mid on-grade level* or above scale score for the year-end assessment.

The students at Amber for 2 or more years missed this target by 42%. This is the measure that will be the most challenging to reach.

i-READY

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%	216	85%	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%	54	112%	Yes
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	88%	46	70%	No

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

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Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3 rd through 8 th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will score at the <i>mid on-grade level</i> or above scale score for the year-end assessment.	2+ students	75%	211	33%	No
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End of Year Performance on 2020-21 i-Ready ELA Assessment By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested	Percent Mid-On Grade Level or Above	Number Tested
3	45%	82	46%	79
4	28%	69	28%	68
5	23%	65	22%	64
All	32%	216	32%	211

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

Grades	Median Percent of Annual Typical Growth	Number Tested
3	92%	82
4	65%	69
5	100%	65
All	86%	216

Results and evaluation

We are only scratching the surface in quantifying the short-term and long-term academic impacts of COVID-19. While we plan to return 100% in person, and our teachers have gained more experience with remote learning than when the pandemic forced schools to close in Spring 2020, the collective shock we are experiencing is ongoing.

We will continue to examine students; academic progress throughout the 2021-22 school year to understand how recovery and growth unfold amid an ongoing pandemic given these results are not reflective of what we historically have evaluated in the past. Thankfully, we know much more about the impact the pandemic has had on student learning than we did even a few months ago. However, that knowledge makes clear that there is work to be done to help our students get back on track.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

The measures outlined for iReady are set for typical growth and achievement in a school year that was anything but typical. We succeeded tremendously in establishing a testing program for a virtual school that turned hybrid, but unfortunately did not meet the mark. Early barriers to our fall testing included inflated scores due to family assistance, trouble acquiring technology and preserving a traditional testing environment in over 400 homes. In the spring, we adopted Go Guardian, a small group format of testing, and somewhat returned to normal testing for one-fourth of our students because they were in-person.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Amber met one of its iReady ELA measures. Our lower initial achievers exceeded the goal. 5th graders hit 100% of median percent of annual typical growth with 3rd grade missing that mark by 8%. 4th graders made 65% of their typical annual growth. While disappointed with the results overall, it is difficult to quantify student achievement using typical measures in a year that was anything but typical. We succeeded tremendously in establishing a testing program for a virtual school that turned hybrid in March 2021, but unfortunately did not meet the mark in English Language Arts.

Early in the school year we encountered technical difficulties and learning home environments that did not serve as a traditional testing environment. As we approached our Spring diagnostic assessment we introduced Go Guardian, which supported small group format testing, and close monitoring. Also, we were able to launch our Hybrid return which allowed 42% of our students to test in person.

Our 2020 -21 iReady results will serve as a baseline for the upcoming school year as we rally to exceed the expectations set forth. [Curriculum Associates](#) has recently published reports that reflect nationally what we have seen internally--less than typical results. Over the summer, we will leverage what worked and address what did not. We are ready to launch the year with the necessary resources, with plans to develop the skills and knowledge of our teachers, and with a framework to guide us. First and foremost, we aim to improve teaching and learning, in a manner that will afford us the flexibility to be responsive to these uncertain, changing circumstances.

Regardless of the irregularities or the inconsistencies in educational environments, our staff will continue to press on as the new school year kicks off. As students return, we will continue to focus on the whole child. This will be done with care, attention, resilience and hard work as we serve the students who have endured so much over the past year.

ACTION PLAN

Amber will continue its use of *Into Reading*. This curriculum has a strong alignment to the common core standards. The materials and instructional pacing are focused, the overview and lessons promote coherence and opportunity for both fluency and deeper understanding. The materials are comprehensive and easy to use. They provide the proper level and type of scaffolding,

differentiation, intervention, and support for a broad range of learners. In addition, response to intervention is embedded to support diverse learners.

We have dates in place for publisher recommended consultants to assist our staff with lessons learned throughout the pandemic and share new features designed to accelerate learning.

For the past six years, we have implemented station learning. Teachers begin instruction with a quick mini-lesson and then student's transition to stations where the work is tailored to their small groups' needs. Children can apply skills at their level and the teacher can adjust the stations accordingly if a student needs to be challenged or brought up to speed.

Amber will continue to use i-Ready as a diagnostic assessment. Testing will be conducted three times during the school year to measure student progress in all grades, K-5. The data from this assessment will be examined by the classroom teachers, instructional leadership, and the board. The data will drive instructional practice and academic interventions. Focal points include alignment with curriculum, other standardized assessments, comparison of in-class performance to the i-Ready assessments, and the validity of i-Ready's ability to prepare students for New York State assessment student performance.

The DRA, Developmental Reading Assessment, will continue to provide strong data for literacy student interventions. Therefore, we use this assessment to determine intervention needs for students in first, second and third grade.

The design of the school day will have students begin each morning with a predictable routine, and then a teacher-directed ELA mini-lesson, which will include the presentation of a learning standard, modeling and "we do." Students will then work independently or in small groups, initially focused on the ELA learning target and then transitioning to targeted ELA station learning, interventions, iReady and IEP-mandated and ELL services.

As in years past, we will apply a Response to Intervention framework to determine student levels of academic need, based on diagnostics administered. Academic intervention staffing at both schools remains intact, including SETSS, ESL, AIS, Tutoring, and Title I reading teachers, as well as teacher assistants in grades K-2 and Great Oak Fellows / tutors in grades 3-6. We will provide additional professional development during our August Summer Institute, this approach will afford classroom teachers and interventionists more opportunities for coordination and collaboration, and an even smaller teacher/interventionist to student ratio than our typical groupings.

ACS will continue to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, as we are legally required to do by Child Find. All enrolled students will be monitored closely by classroom teachers, certified special education teachers and other interventionists. Our special education coordinators at each school are charged with ensuring students are evaluated and serviced in alignment with all IEP mandates, and they work closely with our operations staff to determine whether newly enrolled students have been formerly identified with disabilities (through searching the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools system, following up with former schools, etc.).

Similarly, students who require English as a Second Language [ESL] services, determined by NYSITELL/NYSESLAT levels of proficiency, will receive this instruction during the ELA, math and intervention blocks while in school. Staff developers will work with a Manager of English Language Learner Services, to ensure ESL compliance, refine pacing calendars based on instructional priorities and sessions per week.

We have supported the psychosocial needs of our students in the past, and seek to establish a more comprehensive approach that is both preventive and responsive. We are thoughtfully considering our students' and families' experiences with COVID-19 and the additional stressors arising out of the broader pandemic experiences, as well as the decreased or complete elimination of typical developmental learning and life experiences.

We expect that our youngest students, especially our new kindergarten and first grade students, will need significant training, practice, and ongoing support to become engaged learners.

Because all of our students will be so closely monitored, we will be able to quickly identify and address stumbling blocks. For example, if an emerging reader is demonstrating difficulties with literacy lessons, teachers may decide to gather a set of authentic literature or aligned, paper-based curriculum materials and send them to the student's home.

As a school that continuously outperformed schools in our district, we look forward to working with our families, students and staff to meet the i-Ready goal measures.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics: All students at Amber Charter School will become proficient in math and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of mathematical skills.

BACKGROUND

[Into Math](#) from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is the curriculum implemented at Amber East Harlem. This curriculum has a strong alignment to the Next Generation State Standards. This program received “meets expectations” ratings from [EdReports](#). The materials and instructional pacing are focused, the overviews and lessons promote coherence and opportunities for both fluency and deeper understanding. The materials are also comprehensive and easy to use. They provide the appropriate level and type of scaffolding, differentiation, intervention and support for a broad range of learners. In addition, response to intervention is embedded in the program to support diverse learners. Another important factor is using this program is its robust technology component called [Ed Your Friend in Learning](#). While students did receive hardcopies of curriculum materials, students engaged with their books in a digital and interactive way.

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Amber East Harlem continues to partner with the [National Training Network](#) to provide professional development to teachers around best practices in mathematics instruction.

Professional development to the faculty was offered during Summer Institute as well as throughout the school year. A professional development plan is designed every school year to address the individual needs of each faculty member and ensure their professional growth. Particular attention was paid to the adjustment to virtual instruction and best practices surrounding the learning curve associated with virtual learning. We focused first on the effective roll-out of technology usage and then students and staff were equipped with the tools to take advantage of the digital curriculum.

Back in the 2019-20 school year, Amber adopted the i-Ready diagnostic assessment for the first time. Testing was conducted three times during the school year to measure student progress in all grades, K-5. The data from this assessment was examined by the classroom teachers, instructional leadership, and the board. The data drove instructional practice and academic interventions. Focal points included alignment with curriculum, other standardized assessments, comparison of in-class performance to the i-Ready assessments, and the validity of i-Ready's ability to prepare students for New York State assessment student performance. Since the initial school in March 2020, Amber continued to use i-Ready online lessons. This school year we took on the task of administering the diagnostic assessments while fully remote in September and February. During our final iteration of the diagnostic in May, we were able to offer the assessment to our hybrid students in-person and continued assessing our students who were remote full-time.

In January, Amber partnered with the Great Oaks Fellows through AmeriCorps to provide additional tutors for each of our third through fifth grade classes--each class already has part-time tutors assigned in September. Our goal was to provide high-dose tutoring for as many students as possible to accelerate learning. Most classrooms benefited from having up to three adults servicing students throughout the school day. These small group sessions were fully remote throughout the school year.

Fellows joined their cooperating teachers in virtual professional development sessions hosted by Houghton-Mifflin and Curriculum Associates as they too learned more about how to best use their assessments and curriculum remotely.

METHOD

During 2020-21, Amber East Harlem used the i-Ready diagnostic to assess student growth and achievement in mathematics. It was administered three times (Fall, Winter, Spring). Because this assessment had not been developed for remote learning, it was heavy lift to prepare our families and staff. We held town halls for families sharing what the i-Ready assessment is and how they could best support their children. We reiterated the importance of accurate data to assess student learning. Right away, we noticed that some student data was outside of what i-Ready labeled as typical with our youngest students considerably above the achievement norm. For the second administration, we implemented Go Guardian and organized small groups of testing that were monitored by various adults on staff. It was truly an all-hands on deck experience. For the final diagnostic, hybrid students received their diagnostic in-person--making this the first time an Amber student had taken an iReady diagnostic in a school building since March 2020.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The results we observed this past school year are not reflective of the results we usually see at Amber. We are sure that the pandemic and the extreme learning curve that came along with it deeply impacted our scores. These results will serve as a baseline for the upcoming school year as we rally to exceed the expectations set forth. [Curriculum Associates](#) has recently published reports that reflect nationally what we have seen internally--less than typical results.

Measure 1: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students will be equal to or greater than 100%.

The annual typical growth for our students was just below 50% not meeting the target. There were many factors that we know contributed to this result. Students' initial baseline assessments were skewed by several external factors including assistance from families, the internet and the fact that the testing environments for students varied. When taking this abnormal circumstance into consideration, we were not surprised, but were disappointed in the results. Students' scores did fall as a result of Go Guardian implementation and tighter testing practices. This helped us see true student scores without the influence of help from home. We observed this in many instances.

Measure 2: Each year, the school's median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of all 3rd through 8th 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.

Students who were two or more grade levels below initially missed the typical measure by just 30%. These 63 students, however, made significant progress.

Measure 3: Each year, the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade students with disabilities at the school will be equal to or greater than the median percent progress to Annual Typical Growth of 3rd through 8th grade general education students at the school.

Our students with disabilities made just below half of the growth expected.

Measure 4: Each year, 75% of 3rd through 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year at the school will score at the *mid on-grade level* or above scale score for the year-end assessment.

Students who have attended Amber for 2 or more years prior to testing also did not meet the goal.

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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%	217	48%	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%	63	71%	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 ³	56%	45	22%	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%	212	13%	No

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

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	13%	82	13%	79
4	17%	70	16%	69
5	12%	65	11%	64
All	14%	217	13%	212

³ 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

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

Grades	Median Percent of Annual Typical Growth	Number Tested
3	35	82
4	65	70
5	56	65
All	52%	217

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

The measures outlined for iReady are set for typical growth and achievement in a school year that was anything but typical. We succeeded tremendously in establishing a testing program for a virtual school that turned hybrid, but unfortunately did not meet the mark in mathematics. Early barriers to our fall testing included inflated scores due to family assistance, trouble acquiring technology and preserving a traditional testing environment in over 400 homes. In the spring, we adopted Go Guardian, a small group format of testing and somewhat returned to normal testing for one-fourth of our students because they were in-person.

SUMMARY OF MATHEMATICS GOAL

Amber fell short of its iReady math measures in the 2020-21 school year. While disappointed with the results, it is difficult to quantify student achievement using typical measures in a year that was anything but typical. The data for this school year will serve as a baseline as we push forward towards accelerating student learning in our return to the school building. This is not data that Amber usually produces and we look forward to sharing data more reflective of our students' achievement and growth.

ACTION PLAN

Amber will continue its use of *Into Math*. This curriculum has a strong alignment to the common core standards. The materials and instructional pacing are focused, the overview and lessons promote coherence and opportunity for both fluency and deeper understanding. The materials are comprehensive and easy to use. They provide the proper level and type of scaffolding, differentiation, intervention, and support for a broad range of learners. In addition, response to intervention is embedded to support diverse learners.

We have dates in place for publisher recommended consultants to assist our staff with lessons learned throughout the pandemic and share new features designed to accelerate learning.

For many five years, we have implemented station learning. Teachers begin instruction with a quick mini-lesson and then student's transition to stations where the work is tailored to their small groups' needs. Children can apply skills at their level and the teacher can adjust the stations accordingly if a student needs to be challenged or brought up to speed.

Amber will continue to use i-Ready as a diagnostic assessment. Testing will be conducted three times during the school year to measure student progress in all grades, K-5. The data from this

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assessment will be examined by the classroom teachers, instructional leadership, and the board. The data will drive instructional practice and academic interventions. Focal points include alignment with curriculum, other standardized assessments, comparison of in-class performance to the i-Ready assessments, and the validity of i-Ready's ability to prepare students for New York State assessment student performance.

Academic Intervention will continue to be provided through two SETSS teachers and After School tutoring. Part-time tutors continue to be used in the upper grades to assist with lowering teacher student ratio and provide targeted remediation. We will also continue our partnership with Great Oaks Fellows and plan to have them in-person along with our students. We will implement an intervention curriculum through our tutors and fellows to remediate any skills that need reinforcement.

Common preparation periods amongst grade teams and content areas; and focused data conversations among teachers are other methods we will use in the upcoming school year to drive student achievement.

Over the summer, we sought to leverage what worked and address what did not. We are ready to launch the year with the necessary resources, with plans to develop the skills and knowledge of our teachers and with a framework to guide us. First and foremost, we aim to improve teaching and learning, both virtually and in-person, in a manner that will afford us the flexibility to be responsive to these uncertain, changing circumstances.

All students will learn English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies grade level content on a daily basis, whether in school or remote. Specialized instruction will be offered remotely, which includes art, music, physical education, technology, and Spanish.

Our pacing calendars and scope and sequence have all been revised to focus on the major learnings of each grade and to ensure that there is enough time to cover the material. Lesson plan requirements will shift in the upcoming school year to reflect more intellectual preparation time for teachers where formative assessments will drive instruction.

We are also aware that the data we receive from our fall iReady assessment in September may not be aligned with the assessment data presented here. We are ready to be nimble to respond to whatever needs are presented.

As a school who continuously outperformed schools in our district, we look forward to working with our families, students and staff to meet the i-Ready goal measures.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

All students at Amber charter will become proficient in science and will make strong yearly progress toward mastery of scientific skills.

BACKGROUND

Amber East Harlem switched to use Science Fusion in 2017-18. Science Fusion offers students the opportunity to ask and answer questions, investigate and draw conclusions through textbook reading, digital lessons, and virtual labs. Units within each book are divided into lessons which are done weekly. Supplemental science materials used are trade books and other resources identified by the teachers to enhance the units of study covered by the curriculum. The in-house staff developer provides guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum and supplemental resources.

METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4th grade in spring 2019. The school converted each student's raw score to a performance level and a grade-specific scaled score. The criterion for success on this measure requires students enrolled in at least their second year to score at proficiency.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Amber East Harlem 4th grade students did extremely well on the NYS Science test with a majority scoring at the highest level. 89% of our students reached proficiency.

2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT AND EVIDENCE

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Proficiency and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students					
	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Charter School	District	Charter School	District	Charter School	District
4	100%	*			89%*	*
8			No Test due to COVID-19 Pandemic			
All	100%	*			89%*	*

*District Science scores have not been made public therefore a comparison is not possible.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

Amber has met its goal in Science. It is impossible to know if Amber has met the comparative measure since district scores were not made public. Although, with 89% proficiency it is most likely that Amber met the comparative goal as well.

ACTION PLAN

Amber's high scores on the NYS Science exam demonstrate that the curriculum and teaching methodologies used are effective. Yet with the new Science standards published by the State, Amber is researching a new curriculum for science to ensure our students learn these standards and are prepared for the new 5th grade science exam in the 2022-23 school year. The current curriculum, *Science Fusion*, has proven effective. *Science Fusion* is a state-of-the-art science program designed for building inquiry and STEM skills and optimized for learning in the classroom or at home, on a laptop, tablet, or using a science textbook. The digital curriculum, virtual labs, hands-on activities, and write-in science textbook develop important critical-thinking skills that prepare students for success in future science courses and in the workplace.

Each classroom has:

- Digital lessons, write-in Student Edition, and hands-on labs
- Hands-on activities and virtual labs for every lesson or every day of the week
- Leveled Readers and Video-based Projects to reinforce and enrich important concepts.

The in-house staff developer provides guidance on the implementation of the new science curriculum and supplemental resources. Going into the school year, we have revamped the

pacing to strengthen our vertical alignment and better meet the needs of the 4th and upcoming 5th grade assessment based on a year of experience. Our goal is to continue to maintain the high proficiency Amber students have demonstrated in the past years.

The Amber staff developers provide guidance on the implementation of the science curriculum and supplemental resources. Going into the school year, we have revamped the pacing to strengthen our vertical alignment and better meet the needs of the 4th and upcoming 5th grade assessment based on a year of experience. Our goal is to continue to maintain the high proficiency Amber students have demonstrated in the past years.

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

Amber East Harlem is in Good Standing.

Accountability Status by Year

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