



**G.C.A. CHARTER SCHOOL**

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**GRAND CONCOURSE ACADEMY  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2015-16 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Ira Victor, Principal**, prepared this 2015-16 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Joyce Higginson-Davis	Chair
Howard Banker	Treasurer
Linda Manley	Secretary
Jeannette Engels	Trustee
Ms. Arlene Hall-Waisburd	Trustee

**Ira Victor has served as the school leader since 2004.**

## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School (GCACS) is to create a challenging learning environment that addresses and meets the learning needs of students in New York City, especially those at risk of academic failure.

In a concentrated effort to prepare our students for entry into the very best high schools in New York City, GCACS will seek to foster a sense of strong character, ethics, and personal responsibility, as well as high expectations for academic success.

GCACS will place a strong emphasis on the CORE subject areas, as well as offering focused enrichment in sports, music, art, drama, STEM activities, and critical thinking skills through chess,. The Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will diligently seek to prepare students to meet and/or exceed New York State Common Core performance standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, GCACS students will demonstrate advanced skills in the arts and will begin developing conversational skills in Spanish. The school will align and adjust student learning to the State performance standards, and use a variety of assessments to measure student progress in skills and content learning.

GCACS will support and encourage professional development opportunities aligned to the instructional program and will diligently seek and encourage active parental involvement and participation in the academic goals of the student. In addition, the school will seek to involve and engage a variety of community organizations and community leaders as partners to enhance the academic success of every student.

### OUR PHILOSOPHY

The fundamental belief at the Academy is that ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN. All children have the right to attend schools in which they can progress and learn. They shall have a real opportunity to learn equally rigorous content. We hold our school accountable to the same standards as those of the highest performing schools in our state.

The Academy encourages teachers to engage in “Performance-based/Mastery” instruction, so that our students learn both the basics and the higher-level skills they will need after graduation. Performance-based classes are more difficult to design and teach than the lecture approach, but they help children learn better and become excited about learning. Children learn by doing. Students are required to prove, through their projects and presentations, that they have mastered knowledge and skills in language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science.

Our school slogan is *“Young children...Great Visions...Extraordinary Achievements”*

## INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, GCACS leased significant space on the campus of Monsignor Scanlon High School. GCACS currently serves grades K-6. In the 2016-17 school year, GCACS will welcome our first seventh grade class. We will continue to grow to ultimately serve grades K-8 in 2017-18. Our new facility accommodates the additional grades. It also provides a gym, athletic fields, and space for enrichment.

The new campus is five miles away from our previous location. Although our school remains in the Bronx, it is no longer located in New York City Community School District #9. Our new district is New York City Community School District #8. To ensure retention of current GCACS families, the school leased a private bus to provide student transportation. For the 2016-2017 school year, we will lease a bus for our Grade 7 students, as NYC Department of Pupil Transportation does not provide free school bus service for Grade 7 students. Those students will receive Metro cards to provide free transportation to a common bus pick up and drop off site. Demand for the GCACS program remains strong evidenced by the current waiting list of over 1,500 students.

By moving to a Campus setting, and utilizing our environmental resources, we are able to provide our students with many opportunities for discovery to assist in developing evidenced-based strategies and activities, critical thinking strategies, advanced reasoning skills, as well as, leadership, and organizational skills. Joining clubs, serving as class officers, participating on sports teams (e.g., soccer and basketball), and student-initiated activities, are some of the ways to contribute to the GCA campus community while learning valuable life skills. This campus setting is the perfect backdrop for the myriad extracurricular, co-curricular, and social activities that build and sustain the community life of our school. Students focus on healthy choices (e.g., anti-bullying, character-building, conflict resolution, good eating habits, and exercise) as students grow and develop emotionally and academically. Students learn to reflect on learning, develop advanced study skills, set realistic personal and academic goals, and research concepts and topics using technology. Staff members can sponsor clubs and teams, and these will serve as springboards for authentic problem-solving, good sportsmanship, and character-building skills. This component will serve as a cohesive bond among all the integral constituents of our school life on campus, developing a true partnership among students, parents, and staff.

In our Early Childhood Department (Grades K-1), it is necessary to teach the foundations of numeracy, problem solving, and literacy, as well as, build the foundation to create the possibility for dramatic increases in language and literacy skills, math skills, social-emotional skills, and fine motor skills that are critical building blocks to later success. Every kindergarten class has a full time teacher and an additional certified Teacher for Reading, Math, and ESL, where necessary, as well as additional support from a Classroom Aide. Grade 1 classes have a General Education Teacher full time, a certified Teaching Assistant for sixty (60) to ninety (90) minutes daily to support ELA and Mathematics, and ESL where necessary. All Integrated Co-teaching Classes are supported by a Special Education Teacher for at least three (3) hours a day and in the Middle School for three and one half (3.5) hours daily. Children have many opportunities for healthy outdoor and indoor play, as

Grand Concourse Academy Charter School 2015-16 Accountability Plan Progress Report

## INTRODUCTION

there are outdoor fields, and a large indoor gymnasium. Outdoor play areas provide a rich arena for natural exploration and physical development.

The GCACS community is enjoying the enhancements that our new space provides our academic program, as well as, the expanded options for sports and other enrichment activities.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2011-12	63	90	78	53	45	51		380
2012-13	63	78	105	72	41	33		392
2013-14	49	63	86	100	60	32		390
2014-15	44	59	66	83	85	51		388
2015-16	101	68	67	65	73	81	44	499

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: English Language Arts

All students at the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School (GCACS) will become proficient in reading and writing of the English Language.

### BACKGROUND

Grand Concourse Academy Charter School uses Common Core-aligned curricula for all grades. GCA utilizes Pearson ***Reading Street*** Common Core as the primary reading component of our English Language Arts Curriculum in Grades K-5. In September 2015, we introduced Grade 6 students to Houghton Mifflin's ***Journeys***. After reflection, as well as, teacher input, we decided to use a Middle School Close Reading Program (***Collections***) in Grades 6 and 7.

Additionally, we revised our Literacy Curriculum maps for Grades 3-5, and students will begin with literature in Reading Street that is grouped by genre in Book 1 for the first seven (7) week cycle, shift to Book 2 for the second cycle, and then move students, where data supports, to the Book 1 of the next grade. For example, Grade 5 will begin with Book 1, shift to Book 2 for two or three cycles and end with Journeys, which is 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.

We believe strongly that our core language arts instruction, with regular internal assessments driving differentiation, remediation, and enrichment, has been the driving factor behind the multi-subject successes we have had in Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. It is apparent that Grand Concourse Academy Charter School has placed the teaching of literacy at the forefront of our instructional goals, and ensures that all of the elements of language arts are addressed with the dedication and intensity they warrant. In the past eight (8) years of NYS Testing in ELA and Mathematics, our instructional program has prepared our student body to place GCA among the better performing charter schools in New York State.

In 2014-2015, we began to supplement the Reading Street Program with a research-based program, ***Explode the Code***, in grades K-2 and for at-risk students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners, in grades 3-5, and we will continue to use this program during the 2016-2017 school year. ***Explode the Code*** offers consistency to those who require remediation throughout their years at GCACS. The program includes 30 minute daily ongoing systematic, direct phonics and phonemic awareness instruction, provides daily practice in matching sounds to symbols and accurate pronunciation. It also addresses phonemic awareness difficulties and articulation issues.

The primary writing focus at GCA has been the three (3) Common Core "Power Standards," (Informational, Argument /Opinion, and Narrative). Students are encouraged to write throughout the day, and for multiple purposes (responses to literature, journal writing, math responses, etc.)

A classroom library needs assessment was conducted and it was found that, after our move, many books were ripped, torn, outdated. This, along with the addition of Grades 6 and 7, proved that we needed to provide extensive classroom library resources for our students.

Two general education Grade 5 classes departmentalize for Reading/Social Studies and Math/Science. We piloted this in 2015-2016 and found it to be successful. We will continue this practice for the 2016-2017 by departmentalizing in Grades 5-7, including Integrated Co-Teaching Classes.

We purchased new McGraw Hill Education Social Studies textbooks that specifically address New York State Common Core Social Studies Standards. These textbooks were bought for Grades 3-7 and provide the students with project-based common core tasks and research-based projects. The books also provide the students with another opportunity to read nonfiction texts. We have adjusted our Curriculum Maps to reflect this product, as well as, the New York State Common Core Social Studies Standards. The students appear excited over the integration of content area reading and a project-based approach to Social Studies, as well as, Science.

Last school year, GCACS administered ELA cycle tests (every seven (7) weeks) and provided teachers with pre-assessment packages to ensure mastery of specific skills and reading strategies addressed in each curricular cycle. For 2016-2017, we plan to assess students on a more regular basis in order to provide current data in order to address deficiencies immediately.

All classroom teachers, Cluster teachers, and Teacher Specialists at GCA (Grades K-7) have been provided with an additional thirty (30) minute block of time to address the needs of students at-risk of academic failure. Classroom teachers will address the deficiencies in reading and math of their own students. All other pedagogues in the school will be assigned to specific grade levels to support the efforts of classroom teachers in addressing at-risk students. A minimum of three (3) thirty (30) minute periods weekly have been designated to address Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for each student.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State English language arts examination for grades 3-8.

### METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts ("ELA") assessment to students in 3rd through 6th grades in April 2016. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year's test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year (defined as enrolled by BEDS day of the previous school year).

2015-16 State English Language Arts Exam  
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>1</sup>				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	65					65
4	73					73
5	81					81
6	44					44
All	263	0	0	0	0	263

### RESULTS

51 percent of all students and 51 percent of students in at least their second year at GCACS performed at standards 3 and 4 on the 2016 NYS ELA exam.

Performance on 2015-16 State English Language Arts Exam  
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	65%	65	65%	57
4	48%	73	48%	73
5	46%	81	47%	78
6	43%	44	44%	41
All	51%	263	51%	249

<sup>1</sup> Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.



## EVALUATION

GCACS did not achieve this measure. With the exception of grade 3 who had proficiency at 65%, the rest of the students in at least their second year had proficiency rates in the mid-forty percent range. Overall, 51 percent of cohort students achieved standards 3 and 4, 24 percent less than the goal of 75 percent.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The overall percent of two-year cohort students performing at levels 3 and 4 on the ELA exam has been increasing year to year. As evidenced in the table below, the proficiency rate has risen from 34% in 2014 to 42% in 2015, and up to 51% in 2016.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PERFORMANCE BY GRADE LEVEL AND SCHOOL YEAR

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	40%	90	38%	77	65%	57
4	29%	58	54%	85	48%	73
5	30%	30	30%	50	47%	78
6					44%	41
All	<b>34%</b>	178	<b>42%</b>	195	<b>51%</b>	249

### Goal 1: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index ("PLI") on the State English language arts exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective ("AMO") set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.

## METHOD

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state's learning standards in English language arts. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PLI value that equals or exceeds the 2015-16 English language arts AMO of **104**. The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.<sup>2</sup>

## RESULTS

The GCACS Performance Level Indicator in ELA calculates to 144, which is far greater than the AMO of 104.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast to SED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### English Language Arts 2015-16 Performance Level Index

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
263	5%	44%	36%	14%

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 44 & + & 36 & + & 14 & = & 94 \\
 & & & & 36 & + & 14 & = & 50 \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 144
 \end{array}$$

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this outcome measure with a PLI 40 points greater than the target.

### Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

## METHOD

A school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.<sup>3</sup>

## RESULTS

GCA outperformed District 8 by 23% in ELA.

### 2015-16 State English Language Arts Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2nd Year		All District #8 Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	65%	57	28%	2117
4	48%	73	31%	2209
5	47%	78	24%	2217
6	44%	41	20%	1883
All	<b>51%</b>	249	<b>28%</b>	8426

<sup>3</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

## EVALUATION

In Grade 3, GCA students outperformed District 8 students by 37% in ELA. GCA outperformed Grade 4 District 8 students by 17%, Grade 5 District 8 students by 23%, and Grade 6 District 8 students by 24%.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCA has consistently outperformed the local school district each year. We moved from District 9 (a district with a low socioeconomic status) last September, 2015, and our District 9 students continued at GCA at the new site. The new campus is in District 8, a district with an overall higher socioeconomic status. We “backfilled” to a lesser degree from the new district in Grades 3-6, as our classes remained at capacity. Grade 3 had two students from District 8, Grades 5 and six each had three new students from District 8. In conclusion, although most students at GCA are from a lower socioeconomic area (District 9), they still outperformed students in the local district 8, a generally higher socioeconomic area.

English Language Arts Performance of Charter School and Local District  
by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Scoring at or Above Proficiency Compared to Local District Students					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	40%	13%	38%	14%	65%	28%
4	29%	%	54%	13%	48%	31%
5	30%	11	30%	12%	47%	24%
6					44%	20%
All	<b>34%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>28%</b>

### Goal 1: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

## METHOD

The SUNY Charter Schools Institute (“Institute”) conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school’s performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The Institute compares the school’s actual performance to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school’s actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the requirement for achieving this measure.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2015-16 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2014-15 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

### RESULTS

The comparative performance 2014-15 ELA overall effect size was 2.1, greater than the target 0.3.

2014-15 English Language Arts Comparative Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	<b>94</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>1.76</b>
4	<b>89.5</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>2.95</b>
5	<b>88.2</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>
6						
7						
8						
All	<b>90.9</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>2.1</b>

#### School's Overall Comparative Performance:

**Higher than expected to a large degree**

### EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this measure in 2014-15, with an overall effect size of 2.1, far exceeding the target of 0.3.

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS has achieved this measure consistently since 2013.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2012-13	3-5	92.4	142	33.1	17.1	1.36
2013-14	3-5	91.1	187	35.3	19.2	1.23
2014-15	3-5	90.9	216	42.4	17	2.1

## Goal 1: Growth Measure<sup>4</sup>

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

## METHOD

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2014-15 and also have a state exam score from 2013-14 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2013-14 score are ranked by their 2014-15 score and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2015-16 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2014-15 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>5</sup>

## RESULTS

In 2014-15 GCACS continued to demonstrate growth on the ELA exam. Overall, the mean growth percentile was 51.3, exceeding the statewide median of 50.

2014-15 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	53.3	50.0
5	48.0	50.0
6		50.0
All	<b><u>51.3</u></b>	50.0

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this measure.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS has achieved an overall ELA growth percentile greater than 50 since 2013.

<sup>4</sup> See Guidelines for Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan for an explanation.

<sup>5</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Statewide Median
4			53.3	50.0
5			48.0	50.0
All	62.2	54.4	51.3	50.0

### SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

GCACS achieved all measures in ELA, with the exception of having 75% performing at levels 3 and 4. However, GCACS did outperform the average proficiency rates of NYS, NYC District and NYC charter schools.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State English language arts exam for grades 3-8.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state English language arts exam will meet that year's Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state English language arts exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state English language arts exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2013-14 school district results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in English language arts for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved

### ACTION PLAN

To further target student achievement in both ELA and math, GCA will emphasize a school wide focus on analyzing and sharing student data for the 2016-17 school year. Teachers will have an additional thirty (30) minutes daily for parental outreach. Common Planning Blocks will be scheduled for inquiry, analyzing student work, adjusting lessons, materials, and teaching practices by implementing instructional shifts. This inquiry process has given teachers the ability to analyze data and trends and come up with actionable plans. Vertical inquiry teams will meet monthly to analyze and share data. All teachers are invested in analyzing trends on their grade to create

specific activities geared toward those trends. Vertical inquiry teams will also meet monthly to discuss common trends in writing across the school.

GCA has recently reworked our curriculum maps for all subjects, and this effort will continue throughout the 2016-17 school year. This will contribute to stronger vertical alignment of the GCA curriculum. For the 2016-2017 school year, we will begin each grade (Grades 3-5) with the appropriate suggested reader. For example, students in grade 3 will begin with the 3-1 reader, using only selected stories (e.g., folktales, fables, and fairytales) three times a week and authentic literature the other two days (William Steig author study) for the first six-week curricular cycle. For the second and third cycles, the students will move to the 3-2 reader, using it more extensively and for the final cycles they will read from the 4-1 reader, thereby raising rigor and expectations.

Grade 5 students will gradually shift into the Grade 6 **Journeys** collection that we currently use for Grade 6 students.

Grades 6-7 students will continue reading instruction with Houghton Mifflin **Collections**, a research-based reading program that will challenge our Middle School students, and set them apart from the elementary school. **Collections** will provide multiple opportunities for close reading with more challenging texts, and students will also have the opportunity to read authentic literary texts.

It is imperative for a successful school to have strong collaboration among, staff, parents, and students. School priorities should be determined by a team of parents and staff, led by a strong leadership. There must be clear communication and clearly articulated goals and mandated participation and involvement among all members of the school community.

At the heart of these improvements is a shift in our instructional leadership structure. Our teachers are GCACS's most valuable asset and we therefore seek ways to elevate and further professionalize their role. To this end, GCACS has transitioned away from a traditional model of hierarchical leadership and embrace a culture of Shared Decision-Making. GCACS began empowering teachers to have more input in guiding curriculum with sharing decision-making, and sharing accountability for student achievement by developing Professional Learning Communities. Our goal is to empower our staff to guide our students toward the acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and to master the CCSS.

Professional Learning Team Members		
<u>Leadership Support</u>	<u>Assigned Resources</u>	<u>Available Resources</u>
Principal	Part Time Dean	Parents and Guardians
Assistant Principals	Reading Support Teacher	Instructional Coordinator
Classroom Teachers	ESL Coordinator/teacher	ESL Teacher
Grade Leaders	Special Ed Coordinator	Special Education Teachers
	Classroom Aides	Business Coordinators

To ensure that GCACS teachers have the resources needed to make informed and effective decisions going forward, we plan to make the following three changes: (1) Restructure our leadership team to reflect an increased focus on instruction, (2) Empower teachers to become primary decision makers, and (3) Provide increased opportunities for job-embedded professional development. What follows is a description of each change.

*1) Restructuring Instructional Leadership.* This organizational structure will result in increased support for teachers, creating a learning-centered environment where teachers have the requisite tools to drive student academic achievement. In our next charter term, GCACS will transition our leadership team from an oversight-based model to a coaching model. Our principal's position will remain largely unchanged; he will continue to be involved in both instruction and business/operations matters. GCACS has added two leadership positions to our leadership team. The formal titles of "Assistant Principal," will support curriculum, instruction and assessment as well as business and student services. An Instructional Coordinator will also provide direct support for teachers; demonstrating strategies and lessons activities, support planning and professional development while providing leadership for Professional Learning Teams.

*2) Empowering Teachers.* Currently GCACS promotes a culture of collaboration via our PLTs. Our teachers have responded favorably to the support offered by the PLTs. We strive to increase the horizontal leadership that PLTs promote. GCACS instructional leadership will continue to work with teachers throughout the school year, providing informal and formal feedback on teacher work. These evaluations will assign our teachers to one of following categories, Tier 1: Intern/ Developing Teacher, Tier 2: Effective Teacher and Tier 3: Master Teacher. All teachers, regardless of tier, will be directly involved in instructional decision-making and the creation of intervention and enrichment activities. Tier 2 and 3 teachers will be given more autonomy to design instruction, whereas a Tier 1 teacher who is developing skills, will receive more instructional decision making support from a GCACS Instructional Coach, Assistant Principal and Principal. A description of each Tier is below; salary scale will be commensurate with the appropriate tiers.

*Tier 1 - Intern Teachers:* Are newly certified intern teachers. Intern teachers are expected to make professional growth within a two-year probationary period. Tier 1 teachers will work under the guidance of successful, experienced Tier 2 or 3 teachers, and will be supported by the Instructional Coordinator and AP's, and the Principal while they are gaining professional experience to make independent instructional decisions. Tier 1 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. One of the above mentioned mentors will be assigned to all Tier 1 teachers.

*Tier 2 - Effective Teachers:* Are teachers appointed to a high stakes assignments and assume the role of major decision-makers and stakeholders for their students, guide and mentor colleagues, and assume more leadership responsibilities. Tier 2 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. They exhibit professional initiative to ensure student achievement. They achieve consistent, repeated results on an effective level and are key stakeholders in maintaining our status and standing.



*Tier 3 - Master Teachers:* Are teachers appointed to a high stakes assignments and assume the role of major decision-makers and stakeholders for their students, guide and mentor colleagues, and assume more leadership responsibilities. Tier 3 teachers are not bound by time and program constraints, materials, and resources. They possess special training, skills or experience in academic area that will serve as a model for others. They exhibit tremendous professional initiative to ensure student achievement. They achieve consistent, repeated results on a highly effective level and are key stakeholders in maintaining our status and standing.

*3) Job-embedded Professional Development.* GCACS continues to facilitate traditional professional development workshops for our faculty in areas of development that pertain to our entire faculty. Our Principal, Assistant Principals, and Instructional Coordinator lead these workshops. In order to address the unique development needs of different teachers, GCACS' Instructional Coordinator and Assistant Principals oversee job-embedded coaching cycles with our teachers. They infuse differentiated professional development by providing teachers with immediate and specific feedback relevant to their own practice. They also model lessons and strategies for teachers in a classroom setting. GCACS teachers will engage in one-on-one meetings as needed.

Pre-Service Professional Development spans approximately nine days and covers topics which include the reading and math programs, and Science, Social Studies, and Supporting English Language Learners. New Teachers and teachers new to the grade returned for an additional two days to receive differentiated support. Teachers analyzed Spring, 2016 test scores and engaged in a reflective exercise to determine students at risk, trends in progress or decline, and then met as a team with administration to discuss next steps to ensure student progress and academic interventions and support.

## MATHEMATICS

### Goal 2: Mathematics

All students at the Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will become proficient in Mathematics.

### BACKGROUND

Grand Concourse Academy uses Common Core-aligned curricula for all grades. GCA implements a both a direct instruction and constructivist approach in the teaching of Mathematics with a school wide use of the researched-based series, **Pearson enVision MATH Common Core**, and all of its manipulative and classroom supports. enVision MATH Common Core was written specifically for the Common Core State Standards, and is based on critical foundational research and proven classroom results. enVision MATH Common Core provides the same strong development of conceptual understanding through daily Problem-based Interactive Learning and step-by-step Visual Learning, bar diagrams, and solid and effective intervention. All students in Grades 1-6 are provided with supplement mathematics instruction with another research-based program by Houghton Mifflin, OnCore Math, which provides multiple opportunities to address multiple ways to solve problems in new and varied formats. These materials provide a math learning experience that will deepen understanding of concepts presented, and build upon previously taught skills.

Grades 6 and 7 will be challenged by **Houghton Mifflin's Go Math! Middle School Program**.

As with ELA, our in-house regularly-scheduled assessments drive our instruction, student grouping, and re-teaching when a topic was not mastered by the whole group or individual students. On a daily basis, teachers will immediately identify students who have not mastered a skill and re-teach that skill/strategy during thirty (30) minute AIS periods.

Students in Grades 5, 6, and 7, will departmentalize for Reading and Social Studies, and Science and Math.

### Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics examination for grades 3-8.

### METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades in April 2016. Each student's raw score has been converted to a grade-specific scaled score and a performance level.

The table below summarizes participation information for this year's test administration. The table indicates total enrollment and total number of students tested. It also provides a detailed

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breakdown of those students excluded from the exam. Note that this table includes all students according to grade level, even if they have not enrolled in at least their second year.

2015-16 State Mathematics Exam  
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested <sup>6</sup>				Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	Refused	
3	65					65
4	73					73
5	81					81
6	43				1	44
All	262	0	0	0	1	263

## RESULTS

43 percent of all students as well as 43 percent of students in at least their second year at GCACS performed at standards 3 and 4 on the 2016 NYS Math exam.

Performance on 2015-16 State Mathematics Exam  
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grades	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	48%	65	49%	57
4	40%	73	40%	73
5	40%	81	40%	78
6	47%	43	48%	40
All	43%	262	43%	248

## EVALUATION

GCACS did not achieve this measure. 43 percent of students in at least their second year achieved levels 3 and 4 on the NYS ELA exam, which is 32 points less than the goal of 75.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

With the exception of grade 3, the math scores dipped this year as compared to years past.

<sup>6</sup> Students exempted from this exam according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP), because of English Language Learners (ELL) status, or absence for at least some part of the exam.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	51%	90	43%	77	49%	57
4	59%	58	60%	85	40%	73
5	54%	30	56%	50	40%	78
6					48%	40
All	<b>54%</b>	178	<b>53%</b>	213	<b>43%</b>	248

## Goal 2: Absolute Measure

Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index ("PLI") on the State mathematics exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective ("AMO") set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.

## METHOD

The federal No Child Left Behind law holds schools accountable for making annual yearly progress towards enabling all students to be proficient. As a result, the state sets an AMO each year to determine if schools are making satisfactory progress toward the goal of proficiency in the state's learning standards in mathematics. To achieve this measure, all tested students must have a PLI value that equals or exceeds the 2015-16 mathematics AMO of 101. The PLI is calculated by adding the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 2 through 4 with the sum of the percent of all tested students at Levels 3 and 4. Thus, the highest possible PLI is 200.<sup>7</sup>

## RESULTS

The GCACS Performance Level Indicator in Math calculates to 131, which is greater than the AMO of 101.

Mathematics 2015-16 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
262	12%	45%	30%	13%

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 45 & + & 30 & + & 13 & = & 88 \\
 & & & & 30 & + & 13 & = & \underline{43} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 131
 \end{array}$$

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this outcome measure with a PLI 30 points greater than the target.

<sup>7</sup> In contrast to NYSED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

**Goal 2: Comparative Measure**

Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

**METHOD**

A school compares the performance of tested students enrolled in at least their second year to that of all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year at the school and the total result for all students at the corresponding grades in the school district.<sup>8</sup>

**RESULTS**

GCACS outperformed the local district overall, 43% versus 26%, and in each individual grade.

2015-16 State Mathematics Exam  
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	49%	57	27%	2171
4	40%	73	30%	2241
5	40%	78	23%	2251
6	48%	40	22%	1924
All	<b><u>43%</u></b>	248	<b><u>26%</u></b>	8587

**EVALUATION**

GCACS achieved this measure. In Grade 3, GCA students outperformed District 8 students by 22% in Math. GCA outperformed Grade 4 District 8 students by 10%, Grade 5 District 8 students by 17%, and Grade 6 District 8 students by 24%.

<sup>8</sup> Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its database containing grade level ELA and math test results for all schools and districts statewide. The NYSED announces the release of the data on its [News Release webpage](#).

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS continues to outperform the local district, even after moving from Bronx District #9 to #8.

Mathematics Performance of Charter School and Local District  
by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in at Least their Second Year Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	51%	18%	43%	20%	49%	27%
4	54%	17%	60%	16%	40%	30%
5	54%	18%	56%	20%	40%	23%
6					48%	22%
All	<b>54%</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>26%</b>

## Goal 2: Comparative Measure

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

## METHOD

The Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to that of demographically similar public schools statewide. The Institute uses a regression analysis to control for the percentage of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. The Institute compares the school's actual performance to the predicted performance of public schools with a similar concentration of economically disadvantaged students. The difference between the school's actual and predicted performance, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics, produces an Effect Size. An Effect Size of 0.3, or performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree, is the requirement for achieving this measure.

Given the timing of the state's release of economically disadvantaged data and the demands of the data analysis, the 2015-16 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2014-15 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

## RESULTS

In 2014-15, GCACS achieved an overall effect size of 1.57, which is Higher than Expected to a Large Degree.

*2014-15 Mathematics Comparative Performance by Grade Level*

Grade	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Percent of Students at Levels 3&4		Difference between Actual and Predicted	Effect Size
			Actual	Predicted		
3	<b>94.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>1.08</b>
4	<b>89.5</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>1.93</b>
5	<b>88.2</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>1.76</b>
6						
7						
8						
All	<b>90.9</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>52.7</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>1.57</b>

**School's Overall Comparative Performance:****Higher than expected to a large degree**

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this measure in 2014-15. 2015-16 results are not available yet.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS has had an overall effect size greater than 0.3 since 2012-13.

*Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year*

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2012-13	3-5	92.4	142	50.7	20.5	1.97
2013-14	3-5	91.1	187	53.5	27.4	1.44
2014-15	3-5	90.9	216	52.7	25.4	1.57

**Goal 2: Growth Measure<sup>9</sup>**

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

## METHOD

This measure examines the change in performance of the same group of students from one year to the next and the progress they are making in comparison to other students with the same score in the previous year. The analysis only includes students who took the state exam in 2014-15 and also

<sup>9</sup> See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

have a state exam score in 2013-14 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2013-14 scores are ranked by their 2014-15 scores and assigned a percentile based on their relative growth in performance (student growth percentile). Students' growth percentiles are aggregated school-wide to yield a school's mean growth percentile. In order for a school to perform above the statewide median, it must have a mean growth percentile greater than 50.

Given the timing of the state's release of Growth Model data, the 2015-16 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2014-15 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.<sup>10</sup>

## RESULTS

GCACS grades 4, 5 and overall growth percentile for 2014-15 surpassed the statewide median of 50.

2014-15 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	56	50.0
5	54.1	50.0
All	<b><u>55.3</u></b>	50.0

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this measure with an overall growth percentile of 55.3, exceeding the median of 50.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

As evidenced below, the mean growth percentile has exceeded the statewide median of 50 since 2013.

Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Statewide Median
4			56	50.0
5			54.1	50.0
All	73.4	52.9	54.1	50.0

<sup>10</sup> Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's business portal: [portal.nysed.gov](http://portal.nysed.gov).



## SUMMARY OF THE MATHEMATICS GOAL

With the exception of the first absolute measure, GCACS achieved all other measures. With 43 percent of our scholars scoring at levels 3 and 4, the students outperformed the proficiency average across NYS and in NYC District schools.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State mathematics exam for grades 3-8.	Did Not Achieve
Absolute	Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Level Index (PLI) on the state mathematics exam will meet that year's Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state mathematics exam will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance on the state mathematics exam by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above (performing higher than expected to a small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. (Using 2013-14 school district results.)	Achieved
Growth	Each year, under the state's Growth Model the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Achieved

## ACTION PLAN

Please refer to the aforementioned school wide and math plans within this document.

In addition, GCA will be transition to STEM based lessons across math and science in grades 5-7. STEM lessons pose problems and combine problem solving with project-based learning across disciplines. Teachers will work together with students on activities to develop students' critical thinking, communication, assessment, and inquiry skills.

## SCIENCE

### Goal 3: Science

All students at Grand Concourse Academy Charter School will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

### BACKGROUND

The GCA science curriculum reflects STEM activities and students have multiple opportunities for hands on inquiry and critical thinking. GCA uses Pearson Interactive Science for Grades K-6, with a focus on Earth Science in Grade 6. Outdoor gardening opportunities provide students with space for creating a space for planning a garden, using mathematical measurement and planning skills.

### Goal 3: Absolute Measure

Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State science examination.

### METHOD

The school administered the New York State Testing Program science assessment to students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in spring 2015. 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

**100 percent** of our grade 4 students scored at levels 3 and 4 on the NYS Science exam in 2015-16.

Charter School Performance on 2015-16 State Science Exam  
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	100%	69	TBD	

### EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this measure.

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS grade 4 students have done very well on this exam for the past three years.

# SCIENCE

## Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	99%	58	100%	85	100%	69

### Goal 3: Comparative Measure

Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state science exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

### METHOD

The school compares tested students enrolled in at least their second year to all tested students in the surrounding public school district. Comparisons are between the results for each grade in which the school had tested students in at least their second year and the results for the respective grades in the local school district.

### RESULTS

Bronx District #8 Science 4 results are pending, but it is likely GCACS outperformed them given that 100 percent scored at 3 and 4.

## 2015-16 State Science Exam

### Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year		All District #8 Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	100%	69	TBD	

### EVALUATION

Results Pending.

### ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS has performed well compared to the local district(s) in recent years.

Science Performance of Charter School and Local District  
by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Charter School Students at Proficiency and Enrolled in At Least their Second Year Compared to Local District Students					
	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	99%	70%	100%	78%	100%	TBD

## SUMMARY OF THE SCIENCE GOAL

GCACS grade 4 students performed extremely well on the NYS Science exam, with 100 percent scoring at standards 3 and 4.

Type	Measure	Outcome
Absolute	Each year, 75 percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State examination.	Achieved
Comparative	Each year, the percent of all tested students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency on the state exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in the local school district.	Achieved

## ACTION PLAN

GCACS will continue with the existing science program as our students are learning, enjoy it and perform well on the NYS Science 4 exam. GCA has moved to a new facility which provides space for enhancements to our science program. Outdoor gardening opportunities will provide students with space for creating a garden, using mathematical measurement and planning skills. As previously mentioned, grades 5-7 will be transitioning to STEM lessons across math and science.

Using our funding sources to supplement our discovery programs, we plan to take Grade 7 students to the Pocono Environmental Education Center in October for two days and three nights for a comprehensive program on the environment.

## NCLB

### Goal 4: NCLB

The school will make Adequate Yearly Progress.

#### Goal 4: Absolute Measure

Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status is in good standing: the state has not identified the school as a Focus School nor determined that it has met the criteria to be identified as school requiring a local assistance plan.

## METHOD

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's learning standards, the federal No Child Left Behind legislation stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet state proficiency standards. New York, like all states, established a system for making these determinations for its public schools. Each year the state issues School Report Cards. The report cards indicate each school's status under the state's No Child Left Behind ("NCLB") accountability system.

## RESULTS

Grand Concourse Academy Charter School continues to be in Good Standing.

## EVALUATION

GCACS achieved this outcome measure.

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

GCACS has been in Good Standing since it opened.

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2013-14	Good Standing
2014-15	Good Standing
2015-16	Good Standing