



BUFFALO UNITED

A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL MANAGED
BY NATIONAL HERITAGE ACADEMIES

BUFFALO UNITED CHARTER SCHOOL

2014-15 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 15, 2015

By the
Buffalo United Charter School
Board of Trustees
325 Manhattan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14214

National Heritage Academies prepared this 2014-15 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Gregory Dearlove	Vice President
Kim DeJesus	President <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee • Complaints Committee • Personnel Committee
Jack Dorn	Secretary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee
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Art Traver	Trustee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Committee • Finance Committee
Theodore Purvis	Treasurer

Tammy Messmer has served as the school's principal since December 2008.

INTRODUCTION

Buffalo United Charter School (Buffalo United or BUCS) opened in the fall of 2003. We started by serving 234 students in grades K-4. We currently serve 714 students in grades K-8, of whom 93 percent qualify for free and reduced price lunch, 12.1 percent are students with disabilities, and 0.4 percent are English language learners.

Our mission is to offer families and students a public charter school which, focuses on high academic achievement and instills a sense of family, community, and leadership within all of our students.

“Our entire school community is focused on accelerating academic achievement for every child, every day. We also focus on developing each student’s leadership skills because we know this is an important contributor to achieving success in school and life.”

- Tammy Messmer, Principal

Since 2003 our mission has never wavered, and we remain faithful to our key design elements:

- **Academic Excellence.** We believe a high-quality K-8 education sets the critical foundation for a student’s success in high school, college, and beyond. Achievement may look different for each individual student, but our goal is to prepare every child for college. With that in mind, Buffalo United’s academic program is designed to meet the Common Core State Standards and relevant New York State Learning Standards and to ensure that students master the specific skills and knowledge in each content area at each grade level. To complement the strong academic program, Buffalo United students also benefit from a wrap-around program provided by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo (BGCB). The BGCB program is interwoven into the fabric of our school. It provides multiple opportunities for our students to learn and grow in a safe and supportive environment that is wrapped into the school day. BGCB teaches children the skills needed to build positive lives, attitudes and behavior through academic enrichment, youth development and family engagement.
- **Strong Parent Relationships.** We are committed to fostering strong partnerships with parents. Parents are encouraged to make a voluntary commitment at the beginning of each school year to a parent-student-teacher compact that affirms support for Buffalo United’s mission, vision, policies and activities. We actively engage parents in their children’s learning and have an “open door” policy where parents are welcome in the school at any time.
- **Accountability.** Buffalo United staff, students and parents are responsible for their actions and results. We understand that it is essential for all three groups to work together to ensure students’ educational success.
 - **Staff.** Our staff understands that student learning is an adult responsibility, and leadership and staff are committed to creating a scholarly environment by setting high expectations for instruction to ensure that our students are college-ready. Multiple data points are collected and analyzed to monitor the quality of the educational program at the school level, grade level, and student level. This enables us, to hold teachers accountable for student learning results.

- *Students:* A critical component of the parent-teacher-child partnership is the role the child plays in his or her academic success. From kindergarten through the 8th grade, Buffalo United students are taught to act responsibly and take accountability for their actions, both positive and negative. Each day during morning announcements, students recite the BUCS Bully Blocker's Pledge and Student Creed. The Student Creed states: *"I am a Buffalo United student. I strive to achieve academic excellence. I exemplify high moral character. I strive to realize my potential. I work diligently to prepare for the future."*
- *Parents:* We encourage parents and families to be involved in their child's education because we recognize that parental involvement is a key indicator of student success. We work purposely to involve parents in their child's education because it is crucial to maintaining the school culture we desire.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2011-12	80	67	61	78	76	78	71	73	75	-	-	-	-	659
2012-13	73	70	71	60	76	77	76	65	73	-	-	-	-	641
2013-14	74	82	75	77	62	77	78	76	75	-	-	-	-	676
2014-15	65	82	104	78	77	78	80	75	75	-	-	-	-	714

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will be proficient in English Language Arts.

Background

We know that our curriculum must prepare students for a rigorous high school curriculum to provide them with the best opportunity for college success. We implement a curricular program, including a robust system of assessment, which is built around the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and aligns with our mission¹.

The school has implemented new curricular tools to better support implementation of the state's Common Core standards in English language arts.

- In the 2013-14 school year, we used these tools in middle school. We purchased Holt Literature for grades six and above.
- In the 2014-15 school year, we used Reading Street in grades K-5.

Extensive professional development has been provided to our teachers to support their effective use of these new tools in the classroom. We will continue to provide our staff with training and support through this transition.

Goal 1: 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 English language arts examination for grades three through eight.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program English language arts assessment to students in third through eighth grade in April 2015. 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).

¹ When the school opened in fall 2003, the curriculum was built around the New York State Learning Standards. It has since been updated to reflect the State's adoption of the Common Core Learning Standards for ELA and math.

2014-15 State English Language Arts Exam Number of Students Tested and Not Tested

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ²			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	73	0	0	3	76
4	76	0	0	0	76
5	74	1	0	1	75
6	75	0	0	0	75
7	74	0	0	1	75
8	75	0	0	0	75
All	447	1	0	5	452

Results

Fifteen percent of students enrolled in at least their second year at Buffalo United scored at or above Level 3 in English language arts on the New York state exam.

Performance on 2014-15 State English Language Arts Exam By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year

Grade	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	13.7%	73	12.1%	58
4	21.1%	76	24.2%	66
5	10.8%	74	11.9%	59
6	13.3%	75	12.3%	65
7	6.8%	74	8.3%	60
8	16.0%	75	19.4%	62
All	13.6%	447	14.9%	370

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. With fifteen percent of second-year students scoring at or above Level 3 the school was well below its accountability goal of 75 percent.

Additional Evidence

The percentage of second year students scoring at or above Level 3 decreased by one percentage point from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

² 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.

English Language Arts Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	6%	36	23%	56	12%	58
4	20%	64	32%	49	24%	66
5	17%	53	7%	55	12%	59
6	13%	56	17%	60	12%	65
7	14%	44	7%	60	8%	60
8	5%	61	11%	54	19%	62
All	13%	314	16%	334	15%	370

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 Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2014-15 English language arts AMO of 97. 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 200.³

Results

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2014-15.

English Language Arts 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	45.4	40.9	10.5	3.1

$$\begin{array}{rclclclclcl}
 \text{PI} & = & 40.9 & + & 10.5 & + & 3.1 & = & 54.5 \\
 & & & & 10.5 & + & 3.1 & = & \underline{13.6} \\
 & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 68.1
 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Buffalo did not meet this goal, falling 29 points below the threshold of 97.

³ In contrast to SED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

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.⁴

Results

15 percent of second-year students at Buffalo United scored at Level 3 on the state test, which was three percentage points higher than the local district.

**2014-15 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 Second Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	12.1%	58	12.0%	2,165
4	24.2%	66	13.6%	2,141
5	11.9%	59	10.8%	2,151
6	12.3%	65	11.0%	2,152
7	8.3%	60	10.2%	2,082
8	19.4%	62	13.6%	2,053
All	<u>14.9%</u>	370	<u>11.9%</u>	12744

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure, with fifteen percent of their second year students proficient compared to twelve percent at the local district. In addition five of the six grade levels outperformed the local district.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has met this measure and consistently done so over the last five years.

⁴ Schools can acquire these data when the New York State Education Department releases its Access 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](#).

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 Who Are at Proficiency Compared to Local District Students					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	6%	12%	23%	13%	12%	12%
4	20%	11%	32%	15%	24%	14%
5	17%	10%	7%	9%	12%	11%
6	13%	12%	17%	10%	12%	11%
7	14%	11%	7%	11%	8%	10%
8	5%	14%	11%	14%	19%	14%
All	13%	11%	16%	12%	15%	12%

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 Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. 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 economically disadvantaged percentage. The difference between the schools' 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

Results

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2013-14 with a comparative performance of 'lower than expected'.

2013-14 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	88.3	75	17	20.5	-3.5	-0.26
4	95.2	71	26	18.6	7.4	0.57
5	89.6	76	8	17.2	-9.2	-0.79
6	93.6	77	13	13.2	-0.2	-0.02
7	89.5	77	5	14.9	-9.9	-0.88
8	85.3	74	8	19.8	-11.8	-0.86
All	90.2	450	12.7	17.3	-4.6	-0.38

School's Overall Comparative Performance:
<i>Lower than Expected</i>

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2013-14 with an Effect Size of -0.38.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United met this measure in 2011-12, but did not meet this in 2012-13 or 2013-14.

English Language Arts Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2011-12	3-8	83.3%	429	43.1	34.8	0.51
2012-13	3-8	93.4%	426	10.8	14.6	-0.36
2013-14	3-8	90.2%	450	12.7	17.3	-0.38

Goal 1: Growth Measure⁵

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 four through eight will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

⁵ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score from 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 score are ranked by their 2013-14 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.⁶

Results

In 2013-14 Buffalo United met this goal in the aggregate, however, only two of the five grades had a Mean Growth Percentile above 50.

2013-14 English Language Arts Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	79	50.0
5	47	50.0
6	47	50.0
7	45	50.0
8	52	50.0
All	<u>53.5</u>	50.0

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this goal in 2013-14. Their MGP was 53.5, which was 3.5 MGP points above the target of 50. In 2012-13, Buffalo United did not meet this goal with a score of 47.5, but in 2011-12 met this goal with a strong MGP score of 55.

Summary of the English Language Arts Goal

Buffalo United met two of the five ELA goals laid out in their accountability plan. This is progress over 2013-14 when the school met only one of the five ELA goals in their accountability plan.

⁶ Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's Business Portal: portal.nysed.gov.

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.	Did Not Achieve
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.)	Did Not Achieve
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

- *Update our curricular tools.* New curricular tools are being implemented to better support implementation of the state's Common Core standards in ELA. In 2014-15, *Reading Street* was utilized in K-5 and *Holt Literature* was utilized in middle school. We have given our teachers extensive professional development to help them use these new tools effectively. We will continue offering this training and support through this transition.
- *Modify our assessment strategy.* We previously administered the NWEA MAP three times per year in language usage, math, and reading. Over time, our program of assessment has evolved as we strive to meet the demands of New York's career- and college-readiness standards. For this reason, during 2014-15, we adjusted our assessment practices to better serve students. In our intensified approach, we:
 - Administered the NWEA MAP in the fall and spring in reading and math in grades K-8.
 - Adopted common assessments in grades K-8 in ELA that aligns to the state's Common Core Learning Standards. These assessments provide common benchmarking data to ensure that students are mastering the essential knowledge they need to be successful on the NYSTP.
 - Continued to administer the Ready New York Common Core assessments by Curriculum Associates in grades two through eight two times a year as a mock NYSTP assessment. We closely analyze results to determine what instructional adjustments should be made prior to the NYSTP administration in the spring.
- *Implement flexible groupings during workshop.* Teachers will continue to offer differentiated instruction through regularly scheduled workshop sessions and flexible grouping – approaches designed to meet each student's individual learning needs.

- *Additional academic support for students.* We have implemented a reading program to help support learning in the classroom. We also have an instructional coach to assist with development of instructional strategies and work with new teachers. The school has seven chromebooks available for use in each classroom.
 - *I am Reading and Accelerated Reader:* Buffalo United has begun to implement two reading programs, I am Reading and Accelerated Reader, to encourage students to read and increase reading performance. In our I am Reading program, each teacher adopts a student and works to ensure that his/her adopted student is reading. In our Accelerated Reader program, students read a book and take a computer quiz to monitor their understanding of the book. Students are rewarded based on the number of books they read. Teachers are utilizing iReady to track skills that the students have mastered and can create individualized plans based on the student's learning.

MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will be proficient in Mathematics.

Background

We know that our curriculum must prepare students for a rigorous high school curriculum to provide them with the best opportunity for college success. We implement a curricular program, including a robust system of assessments, which is built around the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and aligns with our mission⁷.

It is important to note that in spring 2013, the NYSTP changed significantly: For the first time, New York measured student learning using the new Common Core Learning Standards. This change created a new baseline for student academic performance – and significantly changed how the state defines proficiency. Like many schools across the state, Buffalo's absolute proficiency decreased as defined by this assessment.

With the changes to the state standards, we began planning changes we would need to make to meet these new, more rigorous learning expectations. Through the partnership with our education management organization, an evaluation was completed of our current reading and math curricular tools – Imagine It (K- 5), Houghton Mifflin Literature (6), Think Math (K- 5), and Holt Math (6) – to determine alignment with the new standards. In both cases it was determined that the tools were not optimal for helping our students meet the new demands. Therefore, the important search for new, better aligned programs was initiated. Additionally, as the search was undertaken, short-term plans were implemented to fill the gaps in our reading and math curricular programs until suitable replacements were ready.

⁷ When the school opened in fall 2010, the curriculum was built around the New York State Learning Standards. It has since been updated to reflect the State's adoption of the Common Core Learning Standards for ELA 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 three through eight.

Method

The school administered the New York State Testing Program mathematics assessment to students in third through eighth grade in April 2015. 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.

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam
Number of Students Tested and Not Tested**

Grade	Total Tested	Not Tested ⁸			Total Enrolled
		IEP	ELL	Absent	
3	73	0	0	3	76
4	76	0	0	0	76
5	74	1	0	1	75
6	75	0	0	0	75
7	73	0	0	2	75
8	70	1	0	6	76
All	453	2	0	12	465

Results

In 2014-15, 27 percent of students in their second year scored at or above a Level 3 on the New York state math exam.

⁸ 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.

**Performance on 2014-15 State Mathematics Exam
By All Students and Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year**

Grade	All Students		Enrolled in at least their Second Year	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
3	20.5%	73	19.0%	58
4	36.8%	76	39.4%	66
5	32.4%	74	40.7%	59
6	21.3%	75	21.5%	65
7	16.4%	73	16.9%	59
8	18.6%	70	22.4%	58
All	24.5%	441	26.7%	365

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this measure. With 27 percent of students scoring at or above Level 3 the school did not meet the 75 percent threshold.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United had a decrease in the percentage of two+ year students that were proficient, decreasing five percentage points from 2013-14.

Mathematics Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year Achieving Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	8%	36	29%	55	19%	58
4	42%	64	47%	47	39%	66
5	9%	53	37%	54	41%	59
6	20%	56	30%	60	22%	65
7	30%	44	34%	59	17%	59
8	28%	61	3%*	30*	22%	58
All	24%	314	32%	305	27%	365

**Does not include eighth grade students taking the algebra regents exam*

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 Performance Level Index (PLI) value that equals or exceeds the 2014-15 mathematics AMO of 94. 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 200.⁹

Results

Buffalo United did not meet this measure in 2014-15.

Mathematics 2014-15 Performance Level Index (PLI)

Number in Cohort	Percent of Students at Each Performance Level			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	39.0	36.5	17.7	6.8

$$\begin{array}{rclclclcl} \text{PI} & = & 36.5 & + & 17.7 & + & 6.8 & = & 61.0 \\ & & & & 17.7 & + & 6.8 & = & \underline{24.5} \\ & & & & & & \text{PLI} & = & 85.5 \end{array}$$

Evaluation

Buffalo United did not meet this goal, missing the target by eight points.

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.¹⁰

Results

27 percent of two+ year students scored at or above Level 3, compared to 15 percent of students enrolled in the local district.

⁹ In contrast to NYSED's Performance Index, the PLI does not account for year-to-year growth toward proficiency.

¹⁰ 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](#).

**2014-15 State Mathematics Exam
Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level**

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least 2 nd Year		All District Students	
	Percent	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested
3	19.0%	58	17.5%	2,185
4	39.4%	66	18.0%	2,132
5	40.7%	59	18.1%	2,121
6	21.5%	65	15.0%	2,052
7	16.9%	59	11.7%	1,922
8	22.4%	58	9.2%	1,863
All	26.7%	365	15.1%	12,275

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 27 percent of two+ year students scoring at or above Level 3, the school outperformed the district public schools by 12 percentage points.

Additional Evidence

Since 2007-08 Buffalo United has consistently met this measure.

**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					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
3	8%	14%	29%	16%	19%	18%
4	42%	10%	47%	16%	39%	18%
5	9%	9%	37%	13%	41%	18%
6	20%	11%	30%	15%	22%	15%
7	30%	7%	34%	10%	17%	12%
8	28%	7%	3%*	9%	22%	9%
All	24%	10%	32%	13%	27%	15%

**Does not include eighth grade students taking the algebra regents exam*

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 Charter Schools Institute conducts a Comparative Performance Analysis, which compares the school's performance to demographically similar public schools state-wide. 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 economically disadvantaged percentage. The difference between the schools' 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Comparative Performance Analysis available.

Results

Buffalo United met this measure in 2013-14. With a 0.34 Effect Size, the school met the threshold for 'higher than expected to a small degree'. Additionally, a large number of eighth grade students took and passed the algebra I regents exam, and did not take the eighth grade assessment, lowering the score for that particular grade.

2013-14 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	90.5	72	26	29.2	-3.2	-0.18
4		69	47	25.8	21.2	1.15
5		75	33	25.4	7.6	0.43
6		77	24	19.8	4.2	0.25
7		76	29	16.5	12.5	0.77
8		48	2	14.9	-12.9	-0.69
All	90.5	417	28.1	22.3	5.9	0.34

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

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure in 2013-14, and has done so for the last four years. While the Effect Size since 2012-13 has been lower than previous years, the school has met the threshold for 'higher than expected to a small degree'.

Mathematics Comparative Performance by School Year

School Year	Grades	Percent Eligible for Free Lunch/ Economically Disadvantaged	Number Tested	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
2011-12	3-8	83.3%	427	71.2	47.4	1.14
2012-13	3-8	93.4%	426	21.1	16.3	0.32
2013-14	3-8	90.5%	417	28.1	22.3	0.34

Goal 2: Growth Measure¹¹

Each year, under the state's Growth Model, the school's mean unadjusted growth percentile in mathematics for all tested students in grades four through eight 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 2013-14 and also have a state exam score in 2012-13 including students who were retained in the same grade. Students with the same 2012-13 scores are ranked by their 2013-14 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 2014-15 analysis is not yet available. This report contains 2013-14 results, the most recent Growth Model data available.¹²

Results

In 2013-14 Buffalo United had a Mean Growth Percentile of 66, exceeding the threshold of 50 by 16 points.

¹¹ See Guidelines for [Creating a SUNY Accountability Plan](#) for an explanation.

¹² Schools can acquire these data from the NYSED's business portal: portal.nysed.gov.

2013-14 Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile	
	School	Statewide Median
4	82	50.0
5	57	50.0
6	59	50.0
7	62	50.0
8	77	50.0
All	66	50.0

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With a MGP of 66, the school was 16 points above the threshold. Additionally, all grade levels were above the threshold of 50, showing that growth was good across the school.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United has consistently met this measure in math.

Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Mean Growth Percentile			
	2011-12 ¹³	2012-13	2013-14	Statewide Median
4		68	82	50.0
5		42	57	50.0
6		43.5	59	50.0
7		68.5	62	50.0
8		65	77	50.0
All	67.1	57	66	50.0

Summary of the Mathematics Goal

Buffalo United met three of its five math goals.

¹³ Grade level results not available.

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.	Did Not Achieve
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

- *Update our curricular tools.* New curricular tools are being implemented to better support implementation of the state's Common Core standards in math. In 2013-14, we implemented *Big Ideas Math* in middle school. In 2014-15, *Math Expressions* was utilized in K-5. We have given our teachers extensive professional development to help them use these new tools effectively. We will continue offering this training and support through this transition.
- *Modify our assessment strategy.* We previously administered the NWEA MAP three times per year in language usage, math, and reading. Over time, our program of assessment has evolved as we strive to meet the demands of New York's career- and college-readiness standards. For this reason, during 2014-15, we adjusted our assessment practices to better serve students. In our intensified approach, we:
 - Administered the NWEA MAP in the fall and spring in math in grades K-8.
 - Adopted common assessments in grades K-8 in math that aligns to the state's Common Core Learning Standards. These assessments provide common benchmarking data to ensure that students are mastering the essential knowledge they need to be successful on the NYSTP.
 - Continued to administer the Ready New York Common Core assessments by Curriculum Associates in grades two through eight two times a year as a mock NYSTP assessment. We closely analyze results to determine what instructional adjustments should be made prior to the NYSTP administration in the spring.
- *Implement flexible groupings during workshop.* Teachers will continue to offer differentiated instruction through regularly scheduled workshop sessions and flexible grouping – approaches designed to meet each student's individual learning needs.

- *Additional academic support for students.* We have implemented a math program to help support learning in the classroom.
 - *Math Maniacs:* To help students better understand basic math facts and make math fun, we implemented Math Maniacs. Students compete against themselves to complete timed math tests and each grade level sets a student goal. If students reach their goal, they become Math Maniacs and receive a reward.

SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will be proficient in Science.

Background

We know that our curriculum must prepare students for a rigorous high school curriculum to provide them with the best opportunity for college success. As such, we implement a rigorous curricular program, including a robust system of assessment, which is built around the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLs) for science and aligns with our mission. Staff is provided with professional development to support the implementation of the school's science curriculum.

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 fourth and eighth 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

In 2014-15, 77 percent of second year students scored at or above the Level 3 Cut Score in science.

**Charter School Performance on 2014-15 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 Second Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	86.3%	66	--	--
8	67.7%	62	--	--

Evaluation

Buffalo United met this measure. With 77 percent of students scoring at or above the Level 3 Cut Score, Buffalo United met its accountability goal of 75 percent proficient by two percentage points.

Additional Evidence

Buffalo United failed to meet this measure in 2013-14 and 2012-13 by three percentage points and two percentage points respectively, but met this measure in 2014-15.

Science Performance by Grade Level and School Year

Grade	Percent of Students Enrolled in At Least Their Second Year at Proficiency					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	97%	63	100%	49	86%	66
8	49%	61	45%	53	68%	62
All	73%	124	72%	102	77%	128

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

Buffalo United achieved a proficiency rate of 77 percent in science. Data for the district public schools is not yet available. Therefore, we are unable to compare Buffalo United scores to those of the district schools.

2014-15 State Science Exam Charter School and District Performance by Grade Level

Grade	Percent of Students at Proficiency			
	Charter School Students In At Least Second Year		All District Students	
	Percent Proficient	Number Tested	Percent Proficient	Number Tested
4	86.3%	66	--	--
8	67.7%	62	--	--

Evaluation

Because data for district public schools has not yet been released, we are unable to determine if the school met this measure.

Additional Evidence

Because data for district public schools has not yet been released, we are unable to determine if the school met this measure for 2014-15. However, the school has consistently met this measure since 2012-13, and has outperformed the local district by significant margins during this time frame.

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					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District	Charter School	Local District
4	97%	68%	100%	62%	86%	--
8	49%	40%	45%	29%	68%	--
All	73%	54%	72%	45%	77%	--

Summary of the Science Goal

Buffalo United met the absolute goal, beating the target by two percentage points. Additionally, the school has continued to have a higher rate of proficiency than the local school district.

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.	Did Not Achieve
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.	n/a

Action Plan

- Communication with parents will also be a focus to address achievement challenges. Parents will be notified of important test dates and how to prepare his/her child at home through parent workshops. During parent/teacher conferences, parents will receive important resources and strategies to use at home.
- Students will have an opportunity to practice with hands on experiments prior to the NY State Assessment.
- A mock exam will be administered in eighth grade to provide teachers with data.
- Professional Development will be provided to staff members that will include a focus on creating rigorous assessments, increasing the level of questioning, and incorporating college and career ready skills.

NCLB

Goal 4: NCLB

Under the state's NCLB Accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.

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

Buffalo United was considered a school in good standing.

Evaluation

The school has met this measure, being a school in good standing.

NCLB Status by Year

Year	Status
2012-13	Good Standing
2013-14	Good Standing
2014-15	Good Standing

APPENDIX A: HIGH SCHOOL GOALS AND MEASURES

Not applicable. Buffalo United does not serve high school grades.

APPENDIX B: OPTIONAL GOALS

Not applicable. Buffalo United does not have non-academic goals.