

**The Bronx Charter School for Better
Learning 2**

**2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

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By Thomas Howard, Jr., Ed.D.

2545 Gunther Avenue, 3rd Floor

Bronx, NY 10469

(718) 655-6660 X2

www.bronxbetterlearning.org

2019-20 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Dr. Thomas Howard, Jr., Executive Director, and Dr. Amanda Santos-Olson, Assistant Principal, prepared this 2019-20 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school's board of trustees:

Trustee's Name	Board Position
Kimberly Kelly	Board Chairperson, Complaint Review Policy/Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Finance/Audit Committee
Marvin Waldman	Vice-Chairperson, Fundraising/Development Committee, Policy/Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
Marilyn Maye	Treasurer, Finance/Audit Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Education Committee
William Bernhardt	Secretary, Teacher Employment Committee, Education Committee, Complaint Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
Robert Bata	Fundraising/Development Committee, Policy/Governance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
Victor Zimmerman	Complaint Review Committee, Fundraising/Development Committee, Finance/Audit Committee
Dean Thomas	Policy/Governance Committee, Fundraising/Development Committee
Neal Myerberg	Fundraising/Development Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
Jem Pagan	Fundraising/Development Committee
Marlon Henry	Parent Representative, Complaint Review Committee, Teacher Employment Committee, Education Committee

Dr. Thomas Howard Jr. has served as the Executive Director since March, 2020.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York approved the application for the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 (BBL 2) on June 4, 2014. BBL 2 opened in the fall of 2015 with an enrollment of 75 students in Kindergarten. For the 2016-17 school year, BBL 2 added a 1st grade, increasing its enrollment to 150 students. BBL 2 will continue to add one grade each year, with a projected enrollment of 450 students at full capacity in 2020. As of September 2015, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning Educational Corporation (Board of Trustees) governs both charters, i.e., Bronx Better Learning 1 (BBL 1) and BBL 2.

Prior to the first year of operation, BBL 2 reached a shared space agreement with the New York City Department of Education, through which BBL 2, the school, received permission to co-locate on the JHS 144 Michelangelo campus, sharing space with two public middle schools: JHS 144 and Pelham Gardens. BBL 2 is located at 2545 Gunther Avenue, on the 3rd floor, in CSD 11, approximately two miles from BBL 1. The BBL 2 campus will accommodate its growth up to full enrollment. Its new Kindergarten classes were situated there in 2015-2016, and 1st grade classes were added for the 2016-2017 school year. Beginning September 2015, BBL 2 occupied a total of 16 full or half size classrooms. For the 2016-2017 school year, BBL 2 occupied a total of 17 full or half size classrooms, in the 2017-2018 school year, we occupied 19 full or half size classrooms, and in the 2018-2019 school year, BBL 2 occupied a total of 22 full or half size classrooms. In the 2019-2020 school year, BBL 2 occupied a total of 25 full or half size classrooms, with plans to eventually occupy the entire 3rd floor at full capacity.

The mission of The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 is as follows:

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning provides its students with a solid foundation for academic success, through achievement that exceeds citywide averages and meets or exceeds New York State standards and national norms in all curriculum areas tested, especially in mathematics and language arts. Our teaching constantly adjusts to the needs of our students, leading to independence, autonomy, responsibility and a sustained love of learning, all of which contribute directly to high academic achievement.

To fulfill its mission, the school's teachers endeavor to practice *the Subordination of Teaching to Learning*, an instructional approach that does not dominate learning, but rather is guided by it. Implementing the approach involves: getting students actively and mentally engaged in lessons; assisting students to go beyond rote memorization, wherever the subject matter allows, and to develop criteria for understanding; recognizing every child's high intellectual capacity and, thereby, welcoming errors in students' work as guides to help them harness that capacity; promoting students' use of what they know to master new content; and encouraging student initiative and self-sufficiency.

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The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2:

- is not test-prep driven; as noted, the instructional approach is constructivist: we know children "construct" their knowledge, understanding and skills, so our teaching is guided by their learning and does not dominate it;
- does not have extended school days;
- does not incorporate an extended school year;
- backfills at all grade levels; and
- serves all students, including those eligible for free and reduced lunch, eligible for special education services and/or eligible for support as English Language Learners (ELL).

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

The enrollment numbers below were those provided by BBL II to the state for BEDS day in October, 2019.

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2015-16	75													75
2016-17	78	72												150
2017-18	73	76	76											225
2018-19	74	72	78	75										299
2019-20	74	76	72	77	72									371

GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students will become proficient readers and writers of the English Language.

BACKGROUND

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 (BBL 2) maintains a focus on four priorities: 1) Instructional Rigor, to ensure that every student receives an instructional program that is rigorous and enriching; 2) Data-Based Decision Making, to ensure that all instructional decisions are based on student performance; 3) Meeting Individual Student Needs, to ensure that the instructional program regularly adapts to meet the needs of each student; 4) Student Empowerment, to ensure that through an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort and efficacy, all students sustain a personal sense of their own innate abilities.

During the 2019-20 school year, BBL 2 maintained its strong commitment, as a replication of Bronx Better Learning 1 (BBL 1), to ensure a quality ELA program for all of its students, through the delivery of a comprehensive and challenging instructional program that is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards by:

- Emphasizing the consistent application of Bronx Better Learning’s pedagogical approach, the *Subordination of Teaching to Learning*;
- Refining the curriculum to ensure its alignment with the State’s Learning Standards;
- Incorporating as part of its reading foundation the use of Reader’s Workshop and Writer’s Workshop throughout the school;
- Fostering a joy for reading through the Growing Great Readers program;
- Making available to all students, access to an extensive classroom library;
- Closely monitoring each student’s progress through the use of regularly scheduled interim assessments and the scheduling of a monthly “Data Day”;
- Providing supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;
- Appointing high performing teachers to the position of Academic Leader assigned to further support teacher development at each grade level;
- Providing professional development through our in-house professional development specialists to both teachers and assistants to enhance each person’s readiness to support the needs of all of our students;
- Utilizing writing rubrics that are aligned with the State’s Learning Standards; and

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- Providing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through increasing the frequency of classroom observations and “walkthroughs” by administration.

In March 2020, BBL schools transitioned to a fully on-line teaching and learning model, as per Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order. During the COVID-19 school closure, our English Language Arts goal remained essentially unchanged; however, we did create an “Educational Continuity Plan” to address the unique challenge of teaching and learning online. Teachers revised instructional plans weekly to reflect their progress within the curriculum. Families became part of our instructional team, directly or indirectly, as students navigated the rigorous demands of the ELA curriculum while learning from home. Those plans addressed three general categories of instructional interventions during the COVID-19 closure.

- 1) Interactive Instruction: Regularly scheduled, synchronous learning via various videoconferencing systems and online chats, directly between students and teachers, in both large and small groups.
- 2) Assignments Using Established Interactive Learning Systems and Apps: These resources included a wide range of programs and systems that supported learning and practice, often including adaptive responses to students’ performance, with built-in mechanisms to track student participation times and progress, along with the capability to report on that information.
- 3) Posted Assignments: Daily asynchronous learning through teacher prepared written assignments, worksheets, writing prompts, website visits, and special projects.

METHOD 1

The school administered two benchmarks to students in grades 3 and 4 to assess and evaluate student achievement in ELA during the 2019-2020 school year.

The assessment was an internally developed assessment aligned with the New York State standards. In collaboration with Educational Vistas Inc., the BBL Assessment Team and Academic Leaders offered benchmark testing in November and January of the 2019-2020 school year. Those benchmarks were administered and evaluated in a traditional testing environment and proctored by classroom teachers.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The table below summarizes the performance of our 3rd & 4th grades on the 2019-2020 ELA Benchmark exams and compares scores from the same 2018-2019 ELA Benchmark exam given in January of 2019. Please note that in 2018-2019, BBL 2 did not have a 4th grade.

2019-20 BBL II ELA Benchmark Exam Performance and Comparison in Grades 3-4

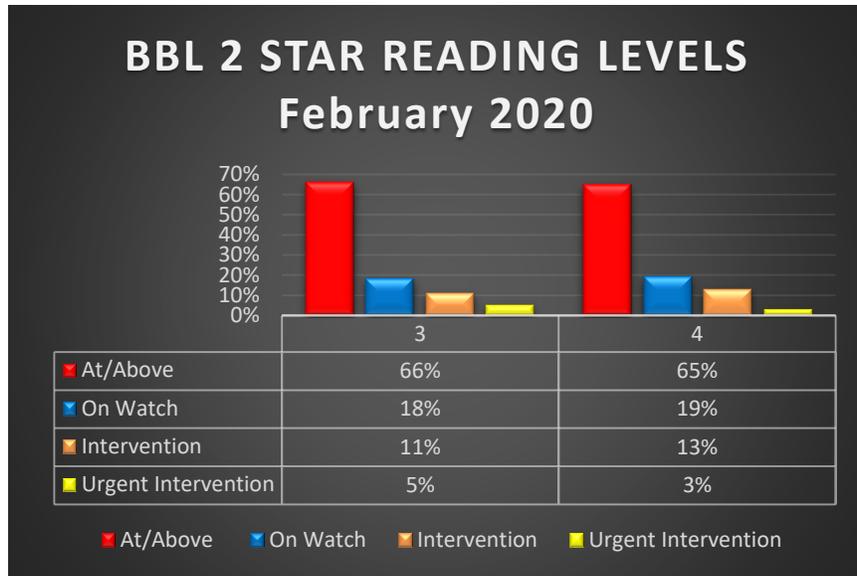
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Grade	2019-2020 ELA A2 Practice Test November	2019-2020 ELA A3 Practice Test January	2018-2019 ELA A3 Practice Test January	2018-2019 NYS ELA State Scores January
3	13%	15.6%	13.3%	60%
4	12.5%	26.6%	NA	NA

As summarized in the table, above, on the 2019-20 Ed Vista ELA Benchmark exams, 15.6% of all 3rd grade students scored at or above proficiency in January. That is a rise in 2.6 percentage points over the benchmark administered in November 2019 and 2.3 percentage points over the passing rate in January of the prior year. Note that the passing rates we set for ourselves on the Ed Vista exam are deliberately very conservative. In the 4th grade, 26.6% of students scored at or above proficiency on our Ed Vista assessment in January 2019, That result represents a rise of 14 percentage points over the benchmark administered in November 2019. Given those data, and based on last year’s dramatically better passing rate for our 3rd graders on the actual state ELA exam (60%), we estimate that BBL 2 students would have outperformed our last year’s high passing percentage of 60%, relative to peers in District 11 and NY State generally, on a NY State ELA 2019-2020 exam, should it have been administered.

METHOD 2

Our second assessment, STAR, is given to students in grades 3 and 4 on a monthly basis. This computer based, adaptive assessment provides insight to how our students are growing in each of the ELA standards. The chart below is the final STAR assessment data that was given in February, before schools were closed for COVID-19, to our 3rd and 4th grades. This is the first year BBL2 utilized the STAR exam; therefore, there is no comparative data for years prior.



RESULTS AND EVALUATION

As summarized in the table above, 66% of 3rd graders scored at or above proficiency level in February of 2020. 65% of 4th graders scored at or above proficiency level in February of 2020. Based on these data, and judging by similar results obtained in our sister school, BBL 1 and how those STAR results very accurately predicted student performance on the actual state ELA assessments in 2018-2019, we can estimate that our 3rd and 4th grade students would have outperformed last year’s ELA State test scores and exceeded again, by a wide margin, those obtained by their peers in District 11 and statewide.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Our English Language Arts Goal is for all students to become proficient readers and writers of the English Language. We maintain that we have met that goal. As shown above, our yearly assessments demonstrate that our students continue to improve in English Language Arts. Still, we remain committed to providing a rigorous, high quality education that promotes independence, autonomy and success, even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, below is our action plan for continued success.

ACTION PLAN

As highlighted in our action plan, below, we continue to closely review and enhance our newly revamped ELA curriculum, along with a number of ancillary actions that have proven successful.

The BBL Board of Trustees affirms its commitment to ensure the continued improvement of student performance in ELA, including working with the Executive Director to provide all

needed resources.

As we prepare for another unprecedented year, with part of our school year taking place remotely, we have already planned and initiated the following steps, in order further to boost student achievement.

1. In 2019-2020, our ELA Curriculum Committee, composed of experienced ELA teachers, professional development specialists and administration, streamlined and further improved our ELA program. The committee integrated the reading, writing, and Words in Color ELA curriculums (K-4), aligned the K-5 ELA curriculums with social studies/science curriculums, and, created and organized resources for teachers. For the 2020-2021 year we have created a new position, ELA Curriculum Coordinator. We are confident that this position will further support our work to integrate the social studies and ELA curriculum, train teachers to execute our integrated curriculum in a way that aligns with our pedagogy, the Subordination of Teaching to Learning, and further align the K-2 curriculum with the 3-5 curriculum.
2. In the wake of today's social unrest, BBL has establish a new workgroup. The team, led by one of our principals, will engage social injustice issues through the lens of the humanities, looking at culture, philosophy, history, and community. The group, under the name of the Bronx Humanities Committee for Better Learning, will engage issue-driven conversations, and consider curriculum topics, with help from our Professional Development Department. The new workgroup will consist of delegates from both schools, including management, professional development, teachers, teacher assistants, and guidance staff. That structure provides a range of voices to inform and respond positively to the moment and drive curriculum decisions that will have a direct impact on our students' engagement with literacy and social studies.
3. Daily Reading Programs:
 - a. We will continue to enhance reading comprehension by focusing on our Growing Great Readers Program to foster a joy for reading. We will allocate time in our daily schedule for that program.
 - b. In addition to our Growing Great Readers Program, the teachers will allot time in their ELA instruction for guided reading groups. That adjustment will allow teachers to work with students according to their specific reading levels, and an opportunity to focus on targeted skills to aid in increasing reading comprehension.
4. Instructional Rigor. We will continue to maintain:
 - a. A high level of administrative support: The Principal has an especially strong background in ELA. She will continue to make frequent classroom visits to ensure instructional rigor and continuity in the instructional program across the school. She will review weekly lesson plans and provide targeted feedback during "walkthroughs," as well as during grade level meetings.

- b. Assistant Principal: The Assistant Principal will support the Principal in her efforts to ensure instructional rigor and the continuity of our ELA program.
5. Continued Increased Adult supervision: We will continue to provide small group instruction as part of our pedagogy. Furthermore, we will have self-contained 3rd grade classrooms with two teachers and one assistant. That level of staffing will further improve the student to adult ratio, and will allow the teacher to create smaller groups during instruction and more individualized instruction.
6. Data Driven Decision Making: Monthly reviews of running records will take place during our Data Day time allotment to ensure that students are making substantial growth throughout the school year.
7. Student Support: Students who are “at-risk” will be identified early on in the school year to ensure that they receive the support services needed.
 - a. Special education instructional options: Students who are identified as being in need of special education services will continue to receive those services throughout the school day, including integrated co-teaching (ICT) and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS).
 - b. English Language Learners: We will ensure that students who are identified as English language learners receive an effective delivery of instruction that meets their needs, in full accord with our charter.
 - c. Academic support: The scheduling of academic support, both during and after school hours, will be reviewed and expanded as needed to better meet the needs of underperforming students.
8. Professional Development: The ELA professional development staff will continue to work with teachers and classroom assistants to provide the highest quality of instruction through professional development sessions during lunch and after school hours, along with in-class support.
9. School Collaboration: We will continue to partner with Pelham Gardens Middle School (Pelham Gardens) through a collaborative literacy program. Students from Pelham Gardens volunteer to read with our students to promote school collaboration and a culture of literacy throughout the building.
10. ELA Nights for Parents: The school will host a series of ELA nights for parents to gain insight into our ELA program. They will learn strategies that they can use at home to supplement our efforts at school, which will support our literacy efforts. The first of those meetings will take place within the first two months of school to ensure parents have an opportunity to supplement our literacy efforts at school early on.
11. Parent Resource Center: This year, our commitment to partnering with parents has grown through the creation of our Parent Resource Center. Located on our website, this webpage provides parents with information and resources for all school topics. Including, technology trainings, training in our pedagogy, videos for supporting their children in academics and emotional learning, as well lists of community resources. We will continue to update the Parent Resource Center every quarter with pertinent information.
12. Finally, our expanded Technology Committee is determined to work with management, Professional Development, and our Academic Leaders to ensure tech equity. We have

significantly increased our technology capability given that technology is now a cornerstone of education during these unprecedented times. The Technology Committee has taken the following steps to boost student achievement, especially during remote instruction:

13.1 Provided each student in grades 3-5 with a Google Classroom account and each student in grades PreK-2 with a SeeSaw account.

13.2 Collaborated with our Professional Development team to create online versions of our curriculum tools and documents, including Words in Color Charts and Primers.

13.3 Distributed iPads to all students who requested a device and will provide Wifi for students without internet access.

13.4 Augmented our online subscriptions to ensure engagement with a multitude of online resources for literacy, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and writing skills.

13.5 Hosted numerous training sessions for both parents and staff to ensure everyone is ready to engage with the technology platforms used by BBL.

GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS

Goal 2: Mathematics

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.

BACKGROUND

BBL 2 maintains a focus on four priorities: 1) Instructional Rigor, to ensure that every student receives an instructional program that is rigorous and enriching; 2) Data Based Decision Making, to ensure that all instructional decisions are based on student performance; 3) Meeting Individual Student Needs, to ensure that the instructional program regularly adapts to meet the needs of each student; 4) Student Empowerment, to ensure that through an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort and efficacy all students sustain a personal sense of their own innate abilities.

BBL 2 demonstrates a strong commitment to those school-wide priorities, as a replication of BBL 1, to ensure the delivery of a challenging and meaningful instructional program in mathematics for all of its students by:

- Reviewing the mathematics curriculum to ensure that the pacing of the instructional program effectively supports student learning of the full scope of the Learning Standards;
- Maintaining a strong commitment to the Bronx Better Learning's pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning;

- Consistently applying the use of manipulatives, primarily Cuisenaire rods, even in the earliest stages, so students develop models for thinking mathematically;
- Providing supplemental support to students identified as not progressing as expected;
- Continuing to provide professional development, through our in-house professional development specialists, to both teachers and assistants to bolster each person's readiness to meet the needs of all of our students;
- Increasing feedback to teachers and assistants on their instructional approach through more frequent classroom visits by the Principal;
- Emphasizing our students' development of two overarching capacities, i.e., becoming swift and accurate in computation skills and increasing their ability to focus on problem solving activities that involve practice and real world application of those skills; and
- Ensuring that instructional decisions are made based on specific student performance data. As with ELA, teachers utilize both formative and summative assessments, along with real-time, moment-to-moment analysis of how students are responding to instruction.

When the schools were closed in March as a result of the Governor's executive order, BBL 2 was prepared to meet our students' educational needs via synchronous and asynchronous learning. Teachers developed a schedule to meet with whole class groups, small groups and individual students to provide instruction that was aligned with the NYS curriculum. Teachers also identified several online mathematics tools to support student learning and comprehension of key mathematical concepts. These tools included: Geometry Pad, Math Playground, Labadabadoo, and Brainingcamp. The tools allowed both teachers and students to manipulate Cuisenaire rods, fraction tiles, geometric shapes, counters, and coins on their screens to work through mathematical problems. This capability was critical to the smooth transition from in-person to remote learning because students were still able to learn through the physical exploration and manipulation of objects. And further, teachers engaged their students through the screen to maintain a connection with them and with the mathematical concepts taught.

METHOD 1

While still in the physical school building, teachers gave in-class, teacher-made quizzes and tests as formative assessments and summative practice tests using released questions from the NYS assessments from previous years.

Once we went remote in March 2020, teachers continued to assess student progress through observation, discussion, classwork, online apps (assignments for asynchronous learning), and teacher-created assessments. The teachers used Edmodo and Google Classroom as vehicles for students to complete and submit assessments. These assessments gave the teachers information to continue planning to meet the individual academic learning needs of their students.

Our benchmark assessment was an internally developed assessment aligned with the New York State standards. In collaboration with Educational Vistas Inc., the BBL Assessment Team and Academic Leaders offered benchmark testing in February of the 2019-2020 school year. The

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benchmarks were administered and evaluated in a traditional testing environment and proctored by classroom teachers.

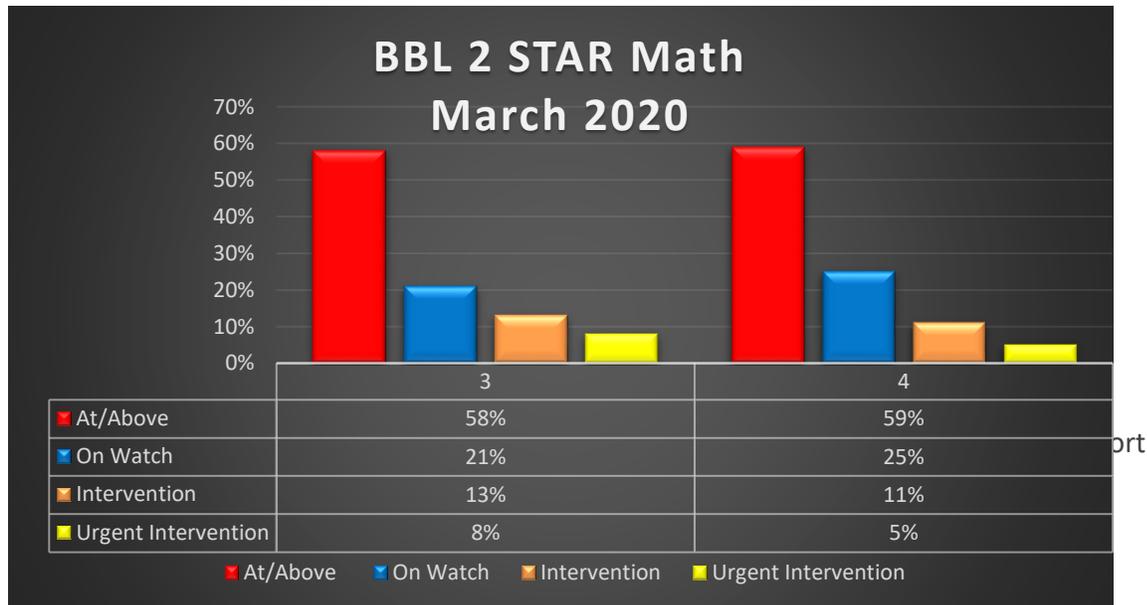
The table below summarizes the performance of our 3rd & 4th grades on our 2019-2020 Ed Vista Mathematics Benchmark exams and compares scores from the same 2018-2019 Mathematics Benchmark exam given to our 3rd graders in February of 2019 with the results of the actual state mathematics assessment administered in April of that year. Please note that in 2018-2019, BBL 2 did not have a 4th grade.

Grade	2019-2020 Math A1 Benchmark <i>October 2019</i>	2019-2020 Math A2 Benchmark <i>January 2020</i>	2019-2020 <i>Math A3 Practice Test February 2020</i>	2018-2019 <i>Math A3 Practice Test February 2019</i>	2018-2019 <i>NYS Math State Scores April 2019</i>
3	19.5%	53.3%	55.1%	64.9%	75%
4	48.7%	48.6%	50%	NA	NA

2019-20 BBL 2 Mathematics Benchmark Exam Performance and Comparison in Grades 3-4

METHOD 2

Our second assessment, STAR, was administered to students in grades 3-4 on a monthly basis. That computer based, adaptive assessment provides insight to how our students are growing in each of the mathematics standards. The chart below is the final STAR assessment data that was given in March before schools were closed due to COVID-19. Since we implemented the STAR assessment this year at BBL 2, there is no comparative data to the previous year.



RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Based on the relationship of our Practice Tests in February 2019 to the actual state mathematics assessment later that April, along with the STAR assessment results in March of 2020, we estimate that our results on a New York State mathematics exam, had it been administered, would have represented a passing rate, in both 3rd and 4th grade, of approximately 60%. That would have resulted in an estimated drop of up to 15% percentage points, compared to our results the year before, which, while still providing a wide margin above the most recent District 11 and statewide test results, has our full attention and warrants focused action on our part, highlighted below in our action plan.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS GOAL

BBL 2 was established with the same goals and priorities as BBL 1. With little exception, BBL students, in general, outperform students in the district and state in mathematics on the NYS assessments. The COVID-19 closure presented myriad challenges; however, with the strong foundation in mathematics instruction that BBL has had historically, we were able to navigate those challenges while continuing to provide strong mathematics instruction. As with each year, we seek to improve the effectiveness of our instruction and will do so with the plan outlined below, with an added focus on addressing what might have been a drop in our mathematics scores, had the state assessment been administered.

ACTION PLAN

As BBL 2 continues to grow, we will continuously evaluate the type and frequency of our assessments. To support students' ability to solidify mathematical concepts, we will increase our own, regularly scheduled self-assessments. We will re-examine how students get support to achieve learning objectives, and when. We will look at when our students are assessed and at how teachers are supported to provide rigorous and consistent instruction. To actualize those plans, we will have four Academic Leaders (ALs) for K-3, with two of them focused on mathematics.

By starting the 2020-2021 school year remotely and planning to transition to a hybrid model, BBL 2 is focused on supporting student learning through various mediums. Throughout the spring of 2020, teachers honed their skills using the online tools in the math lessons and committed time in the summer to solidifying their ability to utilize these tools in their remote instruction. Teachers will continue to assess student knowledge and skills through online assessments. We will continue to analyze individual student test results on the practice exam to effectively plan and map our instruction this year. These analyses will lead to additional adjustments in our mathematics program as the school year begins, we have already planned the following targeted steps:

1. **Instructional Alignment:** Our mathematics professional development staff, as well as the two mathematics Academic Leaders, along with our teachers, will continue to review our informal assessments and in-class assignments to reflect the structure of the assessment

questions of the NYS Mathematics exam. Through weekly grade-level planning, professional development staff, AL's and teachers will adapt the curriculum to ensure students' familiarity of the nature of the assessment when tested, especially in 3rd grade, which once again will include a cohort of students who will be taking this assessment for the first time. Additionally, we have changed the instructional structure of 3rd grade. It is now departmentalized and we have assigned two math teachers to the grade. In doing so, each teacher will be able to provide more targeted instruction to smaller groups of students to better support students as they make the transition to a testing grade.

2. **Instructional Rigor:** The mathematics program will continue to focus on ensuring that students demonstrate competence in their understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving. The assigned mathematics Academic Leaders have several years' experience with the mathematics curriculum. Their expertise will support the teachers' professional development, curriculum planning, the facilitation of common planning meetings, one-on-one targeted coaching with the teachers around our approach and the use of manipulatives in the classroom.
3. **Data Driven Decision Making:**
 - a. We will give two benchmark exams and one NYS practice assessment to help monitor student progress and to identify where the instructional program requires modification to better support student learning.
 - b. NYS assessment-like groupings will be created and incorporated into daily math lessons to allow teachers an additional opportunity to monitor student progress and adjust instruction as necessary.
 - c. Weekend homework will be given with NYS assessment-like questions added to give students additional opportunities to practice skills assessed on the NYS Mathematics exam. We also assign "break packets" for the long vacations in December, February and April to ensure consistent focus on mathematics.
 - d. We will conduct a formal midterm assessment for both 3rd and 4th grades to assess how they are achieving the curricular and instructional goals. We will assess them in January using EdVista.
4. **Continued Adult Supervision:** That level of staffing will maintain a favorable student to adult ratio, and will allow our teachers to create smaller groups during instruction and more individualized instruction.
5. **Student Support:** Students who are "at-risk" will be identified early in the school year to ensure that they receive the support services needed. Given that we will start the year remotely, we will begin our academic support program the second full week of school. This will give our support teachers an opportunity to assess any gaps in learning due to the COVID-19 school closure and provide targeted instruction in areas where students are struggling and/or underperforming.
 - e. **Special Education instructional options:** Students who are identified as being in need of special education services will continue to receive those services throughout the school day, including integrated co-teaching (ICT) and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS).

- f. English Language Learners: We will ensure that students who are identified as English language learners receive an effective delivery of instruction that meets their needs, in full accord with our charter.
6. Professional Development: The mathematics professional development staff will continue to work with teachers and classroom assistants to provide the highest quality of instruction through regularly scheduled professional development sessions after school hours, as well as in-class support to ensure the application of the school's pedagogy throughout each class. We now have a Professional Development Specialist whose time is nearly 100% committed to BBL 2 to foster growth and stability as we add our final grade in the upcoming year to be a full K – 5 school.
7. Home-School Connection: Much of our connections to families in the upcoming school year will take place virtually, but will follow the similar structures to in-person, allowing for parents to learn and ask questions regarding our approach. To build more support for mathematics at home, we will continue to use parent teacher conferences to review individual scores with parents, virtual “Coffee and Conversation” sessions to go over overall progress of each grade, and we will also have two virtual Curriculum Nights in the beginning of the year – one in September for all parents and one in October for parents new to our school. Our primary purpose will be to increase parents' comfort with and willingness to rely on manipulatives to bolster students' deep understanding of basic mathematical concepts.
8. Administrative Support: The Principal will make more frequent visits into the classrooms to ensure continuity in the instructional program across the grades, as well as to ensure instructional rigor. Our Assistant Principal has expertise in mathematics instruction, to assist the Principal in ensuring the implementation of these action steps. She will very closely monitor the mathematics program to ensure that students' needs are met and progress is being made by:
- i. frequent visits to the classrooms.
 - ii. reviewing weekly lesson plans and homework.
 - iii. providing targeted feedback to both teachers and assistants.
 - iv. working closely with the Academic Leaders, PD staff and teachers to ensure consistency in rigor of mathematics instruction throughout the grades.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE

Goal 3: Science

Students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning

BACKGROUND

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 uses Science 21, an integrated K – 6 science curriculum, which is developed by teachers and meets the New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science and Technology. The appeal of the curriculum to BBL 2 is the importance it places on student-directed investigations with a focus on hands-on, inquiry-based science. Moreover, this curriculum integrates mathematics, English language arts and technology into the science content, making it relevant for students.

There are four units of study in each grade. These units are vertically aligned. Teachers attend professional development workshops offered through the Putnam/Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services three times a year. Additionally, Academic Leaders lead teacher discussions about the curriculum and the unit kits of materials with which students engage in learning activities. Teachers from BBL 2 plan with teachers from BBL 1 to share best practices in implementation and instruction.

Teachers assess students using a variety of methods, which include, but are not limited to, class discussions, writing prompts, teacher-made quizzes, and experiments.

Our science staffing and curriculum remained virtually unchanged during the COVID-19 school closing. While all our classes were conducted remotely, our science lessons continued to focus on our four priorities listed above. We successfully adapted our Science 21 lessons to meet the needs of our students, allowing them to participate in science experiments and the scientific method all while doing so virtually.

The BBL 2 continues to strongly promote effective student mastery of the State’s standards in science by:

- a. Continuing to implement the Bronx Better Learning’s pedagogical approach, the subordination of teaching to learning, incorporating techniques and materials that foster students’ active participation in lessons;
- b. Continuing to implement lessons that emphasize hands-on experimentation and make use of BOCES prepared science kits (Science 21 Program) that complement the school’s core pedagogy;
- c. Continuing to incorporate a problem solving approach that presents students with “real life” problems and working in groups, which analyze data/information to come up with solutions to the problems, all of which leads students to a deeper appreciation of cause and effect relationships; and
- d. Continuing to provide supplemental support to students who are not progressing as expected.
- e. Leveraging technology and online platforms to ensure a rich and rigorous science curriculum while students work remotely from home.

METHOD

During the 2019-2020 school year, BBL administered internally developed assessments that were aligned to state standards. These assessments included teacher made tests and quizzes, anecdotal evidence based on student engagement with curriculum, and problem-based learning projects. Furthermore, science teachers collaborated with our ELA teachers on essential questions to further integrate writing into science. Online programs such as Kidblog, IXL and BrainPop were used to progress monitor student growth in vocabulary acquisition and science concepts.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

2019-2020 was the first year the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning 2 had a 4th grade. We set our internal targets as we would have set our stated external targets. Our goal was that 75% or more of our students met or exceeded the state assessment standards. We gave a practice exam in January 2020. This practice exam was made up of released questions from the 2019 state assessment. We were quite pleased that 71% of our students achieved proficiency on the assessment, which included questions on curriculum that had not yet been taught when the assessment was given. Thus, we are confident that with three additional months of instruction and covering all of the material in the curriculum by the date of the NYS exam, we would have met our goal.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY SCIENCE GOAL

Our science goal is for students to demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning. We believe that our efforts to meet this goal have proven effective. As shown above, our work in the science department continues to focus on academic rigor, the scientific method and problem-based learning projects. This approach, coupled with the success of our students on past state science exams prove that we continue to provide a sound and enriching science education for all our students. We remain committed to providing a rigorous, high quality education that promotes independence, autonomy and success, even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, below is our action plan for continued success in science.

ACTION PLAN

While student performance in Science continues to be laudable, Bronx Better Learning will refine and improve its program through:

1. Instructional Rigor: The science program will continue to focus on facilitating the development of effective analytical skills for all students through:
 - a. Academic Leaders, who have been placed at each grade level to ensure consistent

delivery of a rigorous and meaningful instructional program, including facilitating the ongoing process of collaborative planning, the review of weekly lesson plans and aligning of the overall instructional program with the high expectations articulated through the common core standards.

- b. Science Curriculum Coordinator: A Science Curriculum Coordinator has been appointed and continues to facilitate instructional planning and curriculum refinement.
 - c. Data Driven Decision Making: Frequently scheduled interim assessments will help monitor student progress and identify where the instructional program requires modification to better support student learning.
2. Focus on At-Risk Students: The science program continues to support students identified as being at-risk and with special needs through:
- a. Experienced Teachers: The Academic Leaders, who represent some of BBL's most experienced and effective teachers, will serve as the support teachers for the at-risk students, with the in-house professional development specialists working directly with them and their students to ensure the precision of each student's instructional program.
 - b. Special Education Instructional Options: Students identified in need of special education support services will continue to have access to a variety of services, including cooperative teaching intervention (CTI) classes, SETSS provided as either push-in or pull-out services, and related services, e.g., speech, occupational therapy and counseling.
 - c. English Language Learner (ELL) Program/Support: The ELL Coordinator's schedule ensures the effective delivery of needed support for students identified as ELL.
3. Professional Development: The science program will ensure that all teachers are effectively prepared to provide students with the highest quality of instruction through:
- a. Weekly Institutes: The in-house Professional Development Specialists and the Academic Leaders have arranged a weekly Institute schedule that will focus on the continued application of the school's pedagogy throughout the school.
 - b. In-Class Support: Professional development will continue to push-in to the classrooms to provide teachers and assistants with direct feedback on instructional practices and to provide examples that illustrate in "real situations" the effectiveness of the school's approach.
 - c. Technology Training: The Technology department and Professional development department will continue to partner to ensure that teachers are prepared to leverage online platforms and online problem based learning opportunities in science.

GOAL 4: ESSA

The 2019-20 ESSA Goal remains unchanged due to the Covid-19 school closure. The 2019-20 accountability status based on 2018-19 results and can be found by navigating to the school report card available [here](#).

Goal 7: Absolute Measure

Under the state’s ESSA accountability system, the school is in good standing: the state has not identified the school for comprehensive or targeted improvement.

METHOD

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's performance standards, the federal statute stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results. As New York State, like all states, is required to establish a specific system for making these determinations for its public schools, charter schools do not have latitude in establishing their own performance levels or criteria of success for meeting the ESSA accountability requirements. Each year, the state issues School Report Cards that indicate a school’s status under the state accountability system.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning II is in Good Standing.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The Bronx Charter School for Better Learning II will continue to provide a rigorous academic program in ELA, Mathematics and Science/Social Studies with support for students to meet expectations set forth in our Accountability Plan.

Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2017-18	Good Standing
2018-19	Good Standing
2019-20	Good Standing

APPENDIX A: OPTIONAL GOALS

Goal 5: Absolute Measure

Each year, 90 percent of all students enrolled during the course of the year return the following September.

METHOD

Students are tracked through the Automate The Schools (ATS) student information system. Students are registered in BBL and then entered into ATS. Parents advise BBL’s administration or teachers that their child(ren) will not be returning. At that time, the BBL staff member receiving the information will inquire as to the reason the student will not be returning to BBL. So students are tracked individually through class lists. Students leave BBL for a variety of reasons, which are discussed below.

RESULTS

Upon surveying the parents who withdrew their child(ren) from BBL in the 2019-2020 school year, we found the following:

- 12 moved out of the district – (44% of 27)
- 8 went to a different public school in District 11 (30% of 27)
- 1 went to a different charter school (3.7% of 27)
- 6 were not entered into ATS (22.22 % of 27)

2019-20 Student Retention Rate

2018-19 Enrollment	Number of Students Who Graduated in 2018-19	Number of Students Who Returned in 2019-20	Retention Rate 2019-20 Re-enrollment ÷ (2018-19 Enrollment – Graduates)
296	0	269	91%

EVALUATION

Not only did BBL 2 meet its retention rate goal in 2019-2020, but we also showed an improvement in the rate over the last 2 years. We will continue to gauge parents’ satisfaction with BBL through parent surveys, Coffee and Conversation monthly meetings, and teacher conversations with individual parents.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Year	Retention Rate
2017-18	89%
2018-19	89%
2019-20	91%

