

JUNE 30, 2016

**NYSED CHARTER SCHOOL
DISSEMINATION GRANT (2013 – 2016)**

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL AND PS 270: JOANN
DEKALB SCHOOL

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

In July 2013, Community Partnership Charter School (CPCS) and PS 270: Joann DeKalb School, which are co-located, received a three-year grant from the New York State Education Department (NYSED)'s Charter School Dissemination Program. The purpose of the NYSED Charter School Dissemination Program is to support knowledge sharing of best practices and instructional techniques between charter schools and district schools. The grant supported a comprehensive professional development initiative that tapped CPCS' expertise with the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) assessment protocol in order to improve PS 270 teachers' use of data-driven literacy instructional practices, with the ultimate goal of increasing English language arts proficiency in the early childhood grades (K – 2).

PROJECT GOALS

#	Goal
1	PS 270 students in grades K – 2 will improve their academic performance in English Language Arts (ELA). One year's worth of progress will be measured annually in student ELA skills by STEP assessment.
2	PS 270 teachers will improve their data-based decision making skills and improve the quality of their instruction. As a result, PS 270 students' ELA proficiency will improve and individual students will show growth in targeted areas.
3	Targeted PS 270 teachers will become experts in conducting STEP and deliver turn-key training for their colleagues beginning six months after grant start date.
4	CPCS will successfully share STEP expertise with PS 270 and disseminate expertise across the education community. Annually, CPCS will issue a dissemination report, organize and host a conference and maintain a website to disseminate best practices, knowledge and expertise to the education community.

GOAL 1: IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH

GOAL 1 ASSESSMENT: SUBSTANTIAL GAINS DEMONSTRATED

STEP assessment findings were the key component used to measure student gains and to address the project's progress toward meeting Goal 1. A year's worth of progress was measured as a gain of "3 steps" on the STEP assessment. Overall, K-2 students in Year's 1 and 2 of the project showed significant gains from the initial STEP assessment to the end-of-year administration of the STEP. Year 3 gains did not meet expectations. More detail regarding the gains made by students in each project year is provided in the following three sub-sections.

Year 1: 2013 – 2014 PROGRESS (Figure 1 below)

Student progress could not be measured until staff was trained in the administration of the STEP Assessments. For that reason, only two assessment cycles were administered—in January and June 2014. Approximately 77 percent of students (53 of 69) in grades K–2 progressed 2 or more STEP levels during this time and 32 percent of students (22 of 69) gained 3 or more STEP levels (considered one year's worth of progress) during that six-month period. It is believed that if students had taken the STEP assessment at the start of the year, the percentage of students that would have made one year's worth of progress (or gained 3 STEPS), would have been very high.

Year 2: 2014 – 2015 PROGRESS (Figure 1 below)

Student progress was measured over a series of three assessments cycles (September 2014, February 2015 and May 2015). Over two-thirds (68%) of K–2 students in PS 270 made gains of 3 steps on the assessment, while another 10 percent made gains of 2 steps from the beginning to end of the school year. Less than a quarter of the students (22%, N=13) made a gain of only 1 step or showed no gains.

Year 3: 2015 – 2016 PROGRESS (Figures 1 & 2 below)

Student progress was measured over a series of four assessment cycles (September 2015, November 2015, February 2016 and May 2016). As can be seen in Figure 2 below, 64 percent of students across the three target grades gained at least 2 STEP levels over the course of the school year, while 18 percent gained the target 3 STEP levels or one year’s worth of progress. Grade 1 students had the largest proportion of students (22%) that reached one year’s growth compared to 17 percent in grade K and 15 percent in grade 2.

Figure 1: Assessment Steps Gained by Target Students (K - 2) - Year 1 to Year 3

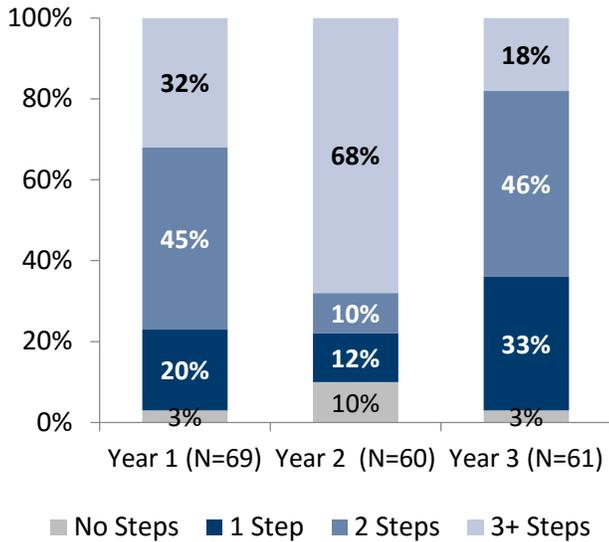
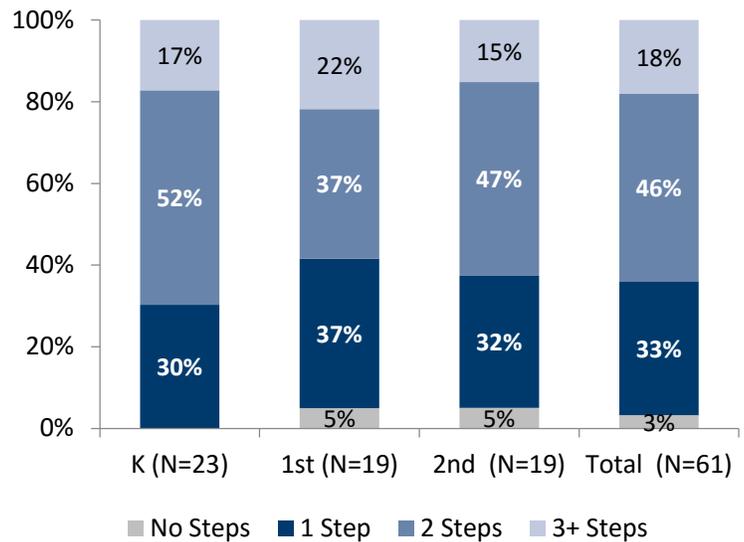


Figure 2: Assessment Steps Gained by K-2 Students Between Baseline and end of Spring



GOAL 2: IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHER DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING SKILLS, TEACHER INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT PROFICIENCY

GOAL 2 ASSESSMENT: PARTIALLY MET

A series of targeted professional development activities were provided to each PS 270 teacher over the course of the three academic years. The attached tables detail all the topics covered by these sessions with the goals of empowering teachers to utilize data, facilitating better instruction and driving proficiency.

In a conversation following the January 2016 STEP training, Ms. Farber, UChicago STEP Consultant, and Mrs. Wallace-Anderson, PS 270’s Principal, both reflected on how teachers are now able to independently conduct academic conversations in response to STEP data. They reported that teachers now code students’ gaps and understandings and create targeted guided reading plans in response. Through the grant funding, PS 270 now has a leveled guided reading resource library with more than 500 titles so that teachers can utilize texts that target students’ needs.

Feedback forms were completed by participants following each session across the second and third programmatic years (2014 – 2016). The participant feedback is quantified in Appendices A and B. Using a scale of *Not at all*, *Somewhat*, *Much*, and *Very Much*. The data revealed a very high level of satisfaction for the PD offered in year’s 2 and 3, including the following key findings during the final year:

- ❖ 98% of respondents responded *Much* or *Very Much* that they intend to use the information or strategies provided in the session
- ❖ 97% responded *Much* or *Very Much* that they feel prepared to implement the strategies they learned at the session
- ❖ 94% responded *Much* or *Very Much* that the strategies they learned at the session will improve their students’ literacy skills

In terms of specific student achievement, in Goal 1, the analysis aimed to show student growth over the course of the school year. In response to Goal 2, the STEP data is being analyzed to indicate the percentage of students who have reached “grade level” scores (or reached proficiency) on the STEP assessment by the end of the school year, according to their grade level standard. As can be seen in Figure 3 below, a notably higher percentage of students in each of the target grades had reached proficiency by the end of the school year in Year 1 compared to much lower percentages in Years 2 and 3. Specific to Year 3 (Figure 4), it seems that greater percentage of students in each of the grades were performing at grade level by the end of the fall, but were falling behind during the second half of the school year, thereby falling below grade level.

Figure 3: Percentage of Target Students At or Above Grade Level (Years 1-3)

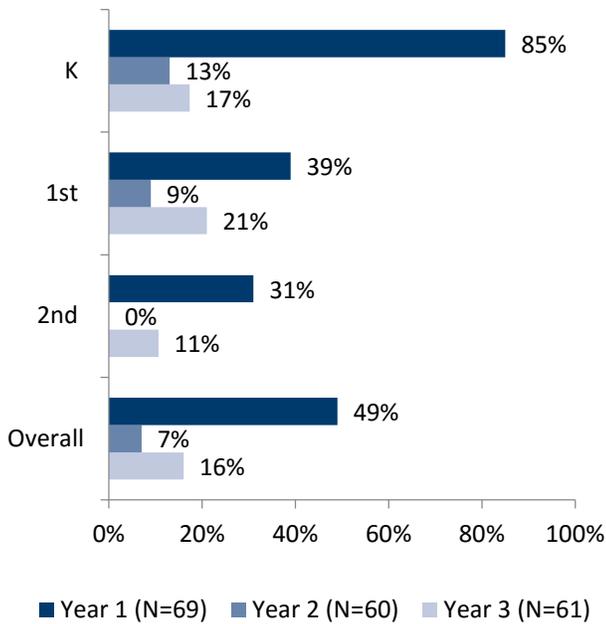
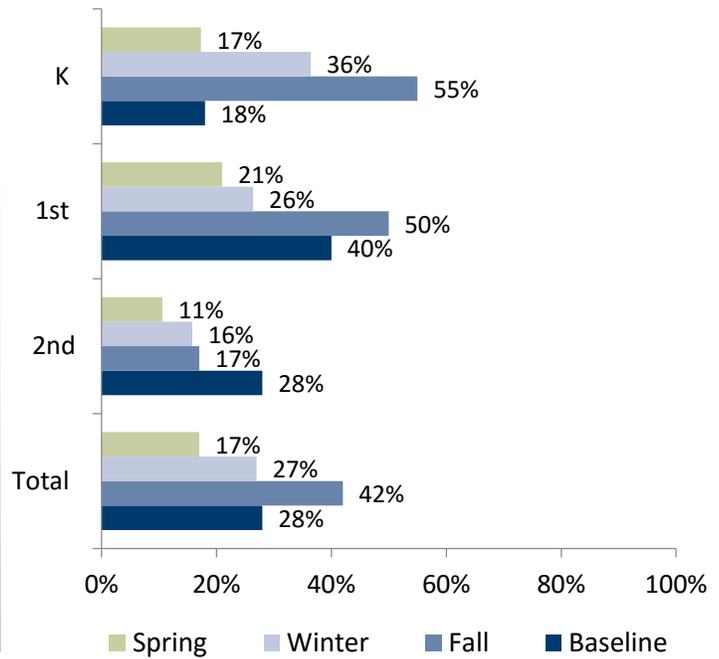


Figure 4: Percentage of Target Students At or Above Grade Level - Baseline to Spring 2016 (Year 3)



GOAL 3: TEACHERS WILL OBTAIN EXPERTISE IN STEP ADMINISTRATION

GOAL 3 ASSESSMENT: MET

Goals two and three are closely linked – teachers received a comprehensive series of professional development to become experts in STEP administration. This goal’s evidence can be provided by the staff feedback, which is detailed in the appendices to this report. In year three, PS 270 staff created their own assessment calendar and administration protocols independently of CPCS, signifying that they have become experts in STEP administration.

GOAL 4: DISSEMINATION OF EXPERTISE

GOAL 4 ASSESSMENT: MET

All information in regards to the dissemination grant, including this report, can be found on our website: <http://www.cpcsschool.org/dissemination-grant/>. This site provides general information about the grant and links to resources and reports that have been compiled over the three program years.

The grant project team also planned and hosted a one-day dissemination conference, which took place on June 4, 2015. A total of 115 individuals registered for this event, including teachers from CPCS, PS 270, neighboring district and charter schools, NYC Department of Education staff and members of local non-profits. The agenda is included in Table 3 and additional information can be gleaned from our website.

Table 1: 2013 – 2014 PD Schedule

Facilitator	Date(s)	Training Agenda Items
STEP Consultant, Cara Farber	December 20, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input student data in the web-based data management tool • Navigated the reporting capabilities of the tool at school, grade and individual student levels • Managed classroom and school-wide data • Used evidence to inform instruction
	January 10, 2014	
CPCS Academic Dean, Anna Sathe	January - March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 6 – 17: Setting up STEP administration procedures • January 13 – 17: Support installing STEP Tool • February 7: Modelled folder review for PS 270 Principal and Assistant Principal • February 24 – 25, March 27: Observed and coached teachers’ guided reading instruction

Table 2: 2014 – 2015 PD Schedule

Facilitator	Date	Training Agenda Items
Literacy Consultant, Kanika Mobley	November 12-13, 19-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with administrative teams • Classroom observations
	December 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action planning • Project team meeting (including Project Director, school principals from CPCS and PS 270, and the literacy and STEP consultants)
	January 14-15, 21-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-observation planning • Model lesson observation and feedback • Teacher leader planning session • School leadership debrief • Independent work planning • Analysis of comprehension questions
	February 11-12, 25-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment modeling and feedback • Teacher leader planning session • Utilizing STEP data to drive instruction
	April 2, 29-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced Literacy and structuring the day • Teacher Leader Session: Building comprehension skills • Foundations co-planning • Book organization • Shared reading co-planning • Lesson share-out • Leadership debrief

Literacy Consultant (cont'd)	May 4, 6-7, 11, 13, 19-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-planning sessions • Lesson observations & feedback • Teacher leaders planning session • Leadership debrief • Shared reading & Foundations planning • Preparing for final STEP assessment round • STEP administration observation & feedback • Teacher leader: Conference planning
STEP consultant	November 18-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEP assessment administration training for participating teachers
	January 7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-observation planning • Observations and feedback • Folder review procedures for school leaders
	March 25-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up STEP training

Table 3: Dissemination Grant Conference Agenda (June 4, 2015)

Time	Session Title	Presenter(s)
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival, Registration, Coffee/Tea Service	
9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Overview of Dissemination Grant	Project Director: Jamie Truman
9:15 – 9:30 a.m.	Charting our Success	Project Evaluator: Otoniel Lopez
9:30 – 9:45 a.m.	Building a Community of Literacy Teachers	Literacy Consultant: Kanika Mobley
9:45 – 10:05 a.m.	STEP: A Framework of Assessment and Coaching	STEP Consultants: Nicole Temple and Cara Farber
10:05 – 10:20 a.m.	<i>SNACK BREAK</i>	
10:20 – 11:00 a.m.	Panel Conversation and Questions: Lessons Learned	Project Director (& Moderator) CPCS Principal and Teacher Leaders P.S. 270 Principal Literacy Consultant STEP Consultants
11:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Breakout Session #1 Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What Does the Data Say? – Setting Goals and Sharing Goals with Families – Enhancing Inference – Getting The Most Out of Evaluation – The Dance of Co-Location 	Literacy Consultant, evaluator, school principals, and STEP consultants
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>	
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Breakout Session #2 Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Action Planning: Moving from Analysis to Action – Power of Questioning – Revising to Learn – Teaching Literacy Through Task- Based Math – Planning Around Close Reading 	Literacy Consultant, CPCS teacher leaders, CPCS Dean, and guest presenters from Capacity Education Consulting

Table 4: 2015 – 2016 PD Schedule

Facilitator	Date	Training Agenda Items
Literacy Consultant	March 10, 2016 and March 31, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data-Driven Guided Reading – Observing Guided Reading instruction, providing feedback, analyzing Round 2 STEP data and planning subsequent instruction
STEP consultant	November 30, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis (Part One)
	January 19, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis (Part Two) Avoiding STEP Administration Errors

Appendix A: PS 270/Community Partnership Charter School – NYSED Dissemination Grant Staff Development Feedback Form (2014–2015)

Note: There were 100 feedback forms completed across all workshops offered during Year 2.

Please circle your preferred rating:	Respondent Ns	Not at all	Some-what	Much	Very Much
1. The information was clearly presented.	100	-	1%	25%	74%
2. The session was engaging.	99	-	4%	23%	73%
3. The information presented was useful.	100	-	1%	22%	77%
4. This training covered the topics I expected.	100	1%	1%	24%	74%
5. My knowledge of reading and literacy has increased as a result of this session.	99	1%	7%	29%	63%
6. As a result of my participation in this training, I feel prepared to implement the literacy instructional strategies in my classroom.	99	1%	2%	27%	70%
7. The strategies presented today will improve my students’ reading and literacy skills.	100	1%	5%	28%	66%
8. There were sufficient opportunities to ask questions and express ideas.	100	-	2%	21%	77%
9. I intend to use the information or strategies that I learned in my teaching.	99	1%	1%	20%	78%

10. Do you feel you need or would like additional training in the topic presented at this training session?

- 50% Yes
- 50% No

11. What types of obstacles do you think you might encounter in implementing the information presented as it relates to teaching reading and literacy? (only relevant and common responses shared below)

- Finding appropriate resources and materials to meet students’ needs
- Ensuring that students are able to work independently
- Time for planning instruction and collaborating with colleagues
- Modeling activities multiple times so that students will grasp concepts
- Teaching specific challenging skills like phonemic segmentation
- Student behavior and challenges around classroom management

**Appendix B: PS 270/Community Partnership Charter School – NYSED Dissemination Grant Staff Development
Feedback Form (2015–2016)**

Note: There were 23 feedback forms completed across three workshops during Year 3.

Please circle your preferred rating:	Respondent Ns	Not at all	Somewhat	Much	Very Much
1. The information was clearly presented.	23	--	5%	27%	68%
2. The session was engaging.	23	--	--	30%	70%
3. The information presented was useful.	23	--	4%	26%	70%
4. This training covered the topics I expected.	23	--	4%	26%	70%
5. My knowledge of reading and literacy has increased as a result of this session.	23	--	9%	36%	55%
6. As a result of my participation in this training, I feel prepared to implement the literacy instructional strategies in my classroom.	23	--	4%	52%	43%
7. The strategies presented today will improve my students' reading and literacy skills.	23	--	--	39%	61%
8. There were sufficient opportunities to ask questions and express ideas.	23	--	--	26%	74%
9. I intend to use the information or strategies that I learned in my teaching.	23	--	--	27%	73%

10. Do you feel you need or would like additional training in the topic presented at this training session?

- 53% Yes
- 47% No

11. What types of obstacles do you think you might encounter in implementing the information presented as it relates to teaching reading and literacy? (only relevant and common responses shared below)

- Accessing data
- No obstacle. Just challenge of how well the students will receive it.
- Having the time and materials that are relevant to teaching reading and literacy
- Planning each group might need different lessons.
- Effective planning to address individual students' needs.
- Instructional planning
- Students resistance to going over information already taught (i.e. want idea & details)
- Instructional planning time. Some resistance in reteaching components
- Time/technology
- Students will be reluctant to go over info already taught.