The Results

Grade	Kindergarten			First Grade		
Year	Reading	Language	Math	Reading	Language	Math
2006–07	50%	53%	79%	70%	65%	67%
2007–08	92%	85%	93%	82%	94%	95%
2008-09	98%	97%	97%	93%	100%	98%
Gains	+48	+44	+19	+23	+35	+31

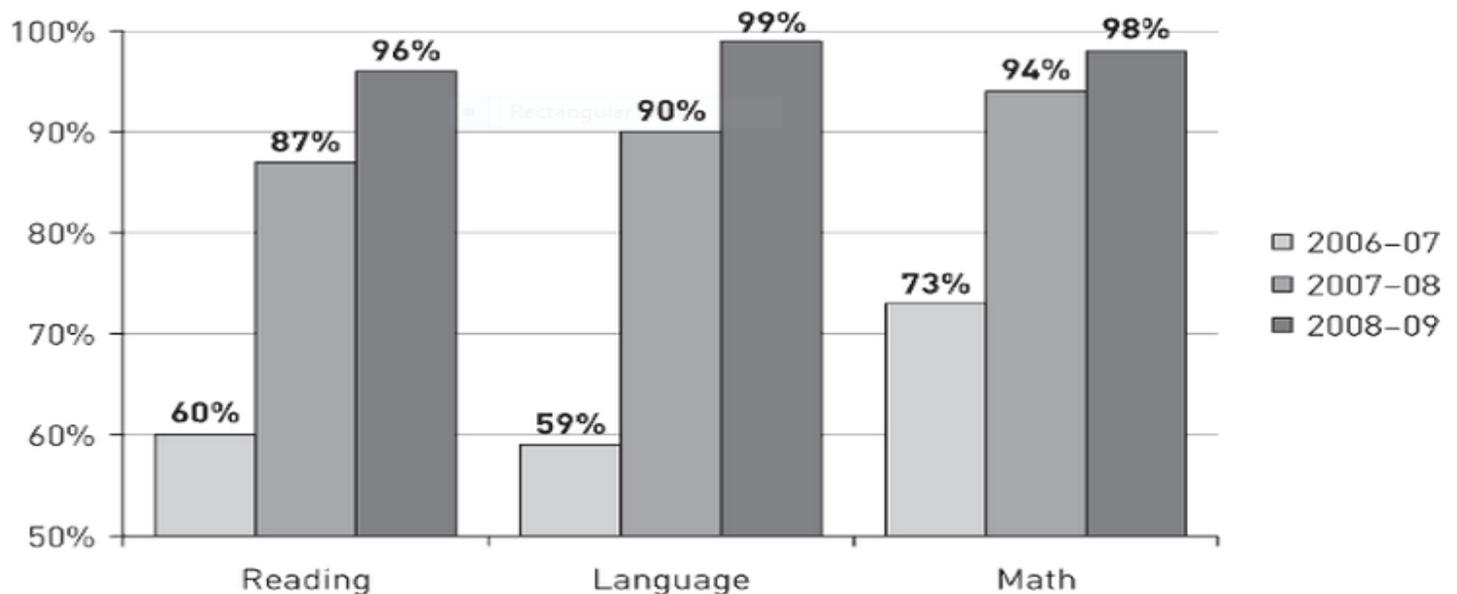## TerraNova: Percent at or Above Grade Level

Figure1.5 TerraNova Average at or Above Grade Level: Kindergarten and First-Grade Students at South Bronx Classical.

The Story

Located in a gritty New York neighborhood, South Bronx Classical was founded in 2006 to serve a student body where 100 percent are minority students and 90 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch. When Scott Hudnor took over as principal in 2007–08, he was determined to put data-driven instruction in place. Having attended the Data-Driven

Instruction Comprehensive Leadership Workshop (see Chapter Twelve), Hudnor first focused on creating effective interim assessments.

In the summer of 2007, Hudnor assembled a team of teachers who worked to identify precisely what level of rigor the New York State exam and the national TerraNova exam required, and what specific skills were needed for students to reach them. Once they knew exactly what their end goal required, Hudnor and his team set about creating a series of interim assessments in math and in English and language arts. Rather than simply implement regular interim assessments, however, South Bronx Classical created an aggressive follow-up system in which students took daily math assessments and daily English assessments to track their performance in real time. This up-to-the-minute awareness of student strengths and weaknesses was coupled with formal tests every two weeks that served as miniature interim assessments within the larger structure of quarterly tests. Critically, Hudnor made sure that each layer of this assessment structure was built into the academic calendar before the year began.

Once South Bronx Classical's multilayered, real-time assessment structure was in place, the school was able to implement effective and rigorous follow-up to aggressively target standards that posed problems for students. Every teacher at the school spent at least two of the ten weekly "specials" periods (such as gym class) tutoring small groups of students on key re-teaching standards. In 2008, the school added daily twenty-minute re-teach blocks devoted to these standards. Daily assessments were constantly updated to reflect student achievement, with areas of weaknesses reinforced and spiraled back into teaching as soon as they were identified. And as the facts have shown, this single-minded focus on knowing exactly what students have learned has paid off in a tremendous way!

Key Drivers from Implementation Rubric

- *Aligned assessments:* In creating interim assessments, South Bronx Classical staff made sure that they worked backwards from the original text of their end-goal exam to ensure aligned rigor.
- *Ongoing assessment:* By tracking student understanding through interim assessments, bi-weekly tests, and short daily quizzes, South Bronx Classical staff knew exactly what students were learning and what standards needed work, and they knew it in real time as teaching was occurring.
- *Teacher action plans:* Hudnor and his staff were willing to think outside the box to find time for critical re-teaching. By making targeted re-teaching a key priority and adapting the nonacademic schedule to fit it in, South Bronx Classical was able to greatly increase the amount of effective teaching time in the school day.
- *Deep analysis:* South Bronx Classical looked closely at student answer choices to determine precisely where the learning gap was occurring.