



## Empowerment Academy Charter School 2015-16 Academic Results

The State of New Jersey does not begin to measure scholar learning growth through the administration of state assessments until Grade Three. To measure the learning growth and comparative performance of our scholars, who in SY15-16 (our first year of operations) were all Kindergartners and First Graders, we used *Terra Nova* Reading and Math Assessments.

*Terra Nova* assessments are administered all throughout the United States, which permits a “national norming” of student test scores. *Terra Nova* reports student test scores both on a Grade Mean Equivalent (GME) basis and on a National Percentile Rank basis.

### Grade Mean Equivalent (GME) Gains of Empowerment Academy Scholars in SY15-16

A GME score of 1.0 means that a scholar has the academic skills of the average American child on the first day of First Grade. A GME score of 1.1 means that a scholar has the academic skills of the average American child after one month of First Grade. Thus, a GME score gain of 0.1 means that a scholar has achieved what equates to one month of learning growth for American children, on average. The school year is 10 months long at most American schools, so a GME score gain of 1.0 means that a scholar has achieved what equates to a full grade level of learning growth for American children, on average.

To obtain a baseline measure of our Kindergartners' academic skill and knowledge item mastery, we administered Terra Nova Reading and Math Assessments in May 2016. We did *not* administer the Assessments to our Kindergartners in October 2015 because we do not believe standardized texts yield reliable results for scholars just beginning their Kindergarten year, as some entering Kindergartners lack the assessment-taking skills necessary to accurately demonstrate the other skill and knowledge item masteries they possess. Assessments administered in May of a Kindergartner's year do not suffer from this problem. We believe their results are reliable.

On average across America, Kindergartners taking the *Terra Nova* Reading and Math assessments in May, following 8 complete months of schooling, achieve a Grade Mean Equivalent (GME) score of 0.8 on each assessment. Our Kindergartners' average *Terra Nova* GME scores, in May 2016, follow below.

Grade Level	Reading GME 5/16	Math GME 5/16
Kindergarten	1.0	1.1

The above 1.0 Reading GME score and 1.1 Math GME score indicate that by May of their Kindergarten year, Empowerment Academy brought its Kindergartners to a level of academic skill and knowledge item mastery that, on average, was 2 months of schooling ahead and 3



months of schooling ahead of their age-level peers across America in the subject areas of Reading and Math, respectively.

We will use the above scores to provide a baseline from which the year-to-year learning *growth* of this cohort can be calculated in the future.

To obtain a baseline measure of our First Graders' mastery of academic skills and knowledge items as they were beginning with Empowerment Academy, we administered *Terra Nova* Reading and Math Assessments to our First Grade scholars in October 2015. At that time, after completing their first month of First Grade, our First Graders had an average GME score of 1.1 in both Reading and Math, which is precisely equal to the score of the average American child after one month in First Grade in those subject areas.

To see how our First Graders' academic skills grew over the course of the year, we administered the assessments a second time in May 2016. The results of these two assessments, expressed in terms of our First Graders' average *Terra Nova* GME scores, follow below.

Grade Level	Reading GME 10/15	Reading GME 5/16	Reading GME Gain After 7 Months
First	1.1	2.3	1.2

Grade Level	Math GME 10/15	Math GME 5/16	Math GME Gain After 7 Months
First	1.1	2.2	1.1

This data shows that our First Graders achieved GME score gains of 1.2 (Reading) and 1.1 (Math) over a period of just 7 months (7/10ths of a school year). Using division, we can calculate "Annualized Learning Growth" for our Empowerment Academy First Graders in SY15-16:

- 1.2 Reading GME Gain / .7 School Years = 1.71 GME Gain/Year
- 1.1 Math GME Gain / .7 School Years = 1.57 GME/Year

Thus, our First Graders likely made *full-year* learning gains that equal 1.71 grade levels in Reading and 1.57 grade levels in Math. That's pretty darn good.

#### National Percentile Rank Gains of Empowerment Academy's Scholars in SY15-16

As mentioned, the *Terra Nova* Reading and Math assessments also provide a National Percentile Rank score for scholars throughout America.

A National Percentile Rank score of 100 means that a scholar has academic skills that are above the level of 100% of their age-level peers throughout America. A National Percentile Rank score



of 50 means that a scholar has academic skills that are above the level of 50% of their age-level peers throughout America.

The tables below shows how the average National Percentile Rank of our scholars grew between October 2015 and May 2016.

Grade Level	Reading NPR 10/15	Reading NPR 5/16	Reading NPR Point Gain(Loss)
Kindergarten	NA	59	NA
First	43	61	18

Grade Level	Math NPR 10/15	Math NPR 5/16	Math NPR Point Gain(Loss)
Kindergarten	NA	62	NA
First	46	59	13

Grade Level	Combined NPR 10/15	Combined NPR 5/16	Combined NPR Point Gain(Loss)
Kindergarten	NA	69	NA
First	48	63	15

These are extremely large National Percentile Rank gains. On average across America, children achieve no National Percentile Rank gain compared to their peers throughout the country.

The dramatic increase in our First Graders' average National Percentile Rank scores from October 2015 to May 2016 underscores how much faster Empowerment Academy scholars are progressing in mastery of academic standards than their age-level peers throughout the country and once again demonstrates that Empowerment Academy is achieving its mission.