

Abrams Elementary Mid-Year Update, 2021

Dear Abrams Elementary families:

The 2020-2021 school year has certainly been unique. As you know, our student and staff have risen to the unique challenges presented to us this year with creativity and grit. We would like to take this opportunity to update you on a number of measures that we use to chart our progress throughout the year. These metrics help us to understand some of our areas of strength as well as opportunities for growth.

- [Early Literacy Achievement and Growth](#): How are our students progressing in their acquisition of reading skills?
- [English Language Arts \(ELA\) and Math Achievement and Growth](#): What type of progress are our students making in mastering year-long concepts in ELA and Math?
- [Student Survey Data](#): What are our students saying about our school and district?
- [Parent Survey Data](#): What are our parents saying about our school and district?
- [Health Data](#): How have our schools and district responded to COVID? How many positive cases have we seen in both students and staff?
- [What have we identified as our areas of strength this year and where do we think we still have room to grow?](#)

This report focuses on general school-wide trends. Please feel free reach out to your child's teacher, Assistant Principal Rochelle Williams or Principal Lois Skaggs for more detailed results and feedback.

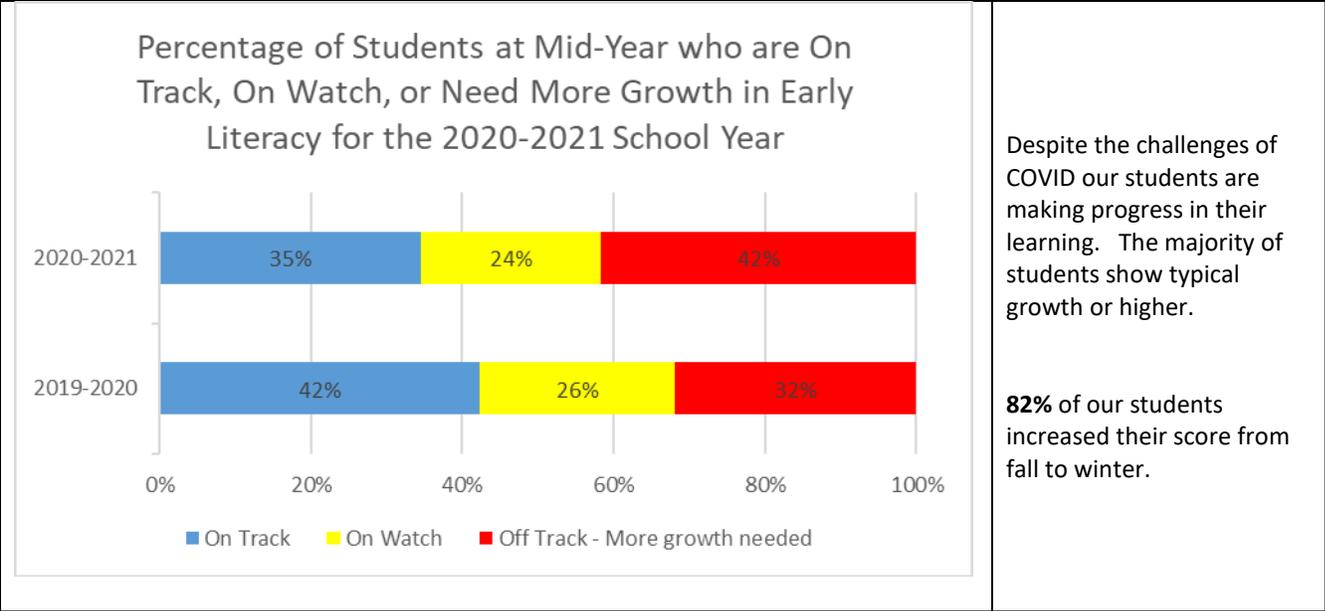
The data is extremely promising as it shows that not only are our students learning and mastering standards this year, but in many cases, they are actually doing better this year than last year. We can only attribute this to tremendous efforts of our students and staff.

Early Literacy Achievement and Growth: How are our students progressing in their acquisition of reading skills?

The DIBELS assessment is given to all K-3rd grade students to assess their progress in acquiring early literacy skills. 4th and 5th grade students are given the assessment on an as needed basis.

Students are considered:

- "On Track" if they are scoring at benchmark with average or above average growth, or below benchmark with above average growth or higher.
- "On Watch" if they are scoring at benchmark with below or well below average growth, or below benchmark with average growth or lower.
- "Off Track" if they are scoring at below or well below benchmark with below or well below average growth.



The table below describes the percentage of students in each growth category based on their achievement level after the mid-year DIBELS assessment in 2021.

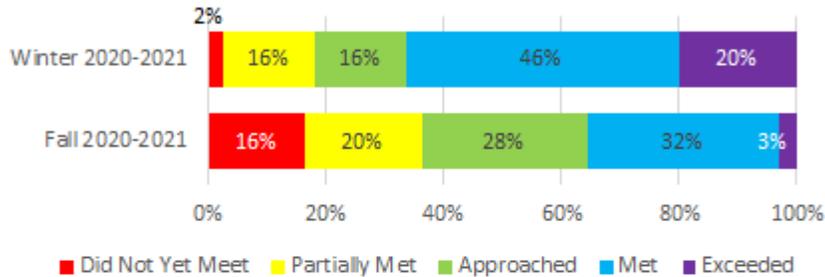
Achievement vs. Growth					
Achievement Level	Well Above Average Growth	Above Average Growth	Typical Growth	Below Average Growth	Well Below Average Growth
Above Benchmark	6%	6%	4%	3%	1%
Benchmark	2%	5%	6%	4%	3%
Below Benchmark	0%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Well Below Benchmark	0%	3%	11%	13%	22%
Grand Total	8%	16%	23%	24%	28%

ELA and Math Achievement and Growth: What type of progress are our students making in mastering year-long concepts in ELA and Math?

We administered a comprehensive assessment in the fall and winter. This “Illuminate” assessment covers topics that are taught over the course of the year. The assessment enables our teachers and students to get real-time feedback on specific concepts that have been mastered or still need to be addressed. It is directly aligned to the state assessment, Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS). *If a student scored “Met” on the Illuminate assessment at the beginning of the year, then it means that they would have most likely scored “Met” on the CMAS assessment had they taken it the previous year. It does not mean that they will score “Met” on the state assessment at the end of the year, but we will be able to provide that analysis after spring assessments are administered.*

Overall Performance for Students Who Took Both Fall and Winter Assessments

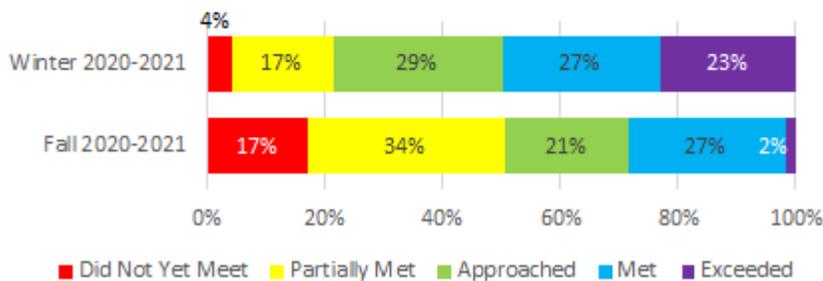
Fall and Winter Performance Illuminate Benchmark Assessments ELA 2020-2021 Abrams Elementary



We see a significant increase in the percentage of students scoring in the Met and Exceeded categories.

Over **87%** of students demonstrated growth or an increase in their score from fall to winter in ELA and over **76%** of students demonstrated growth in math.

Fall and Winter Performance Illuminate Benchmark Assessments Math 2020-2021 Abrams Elementary

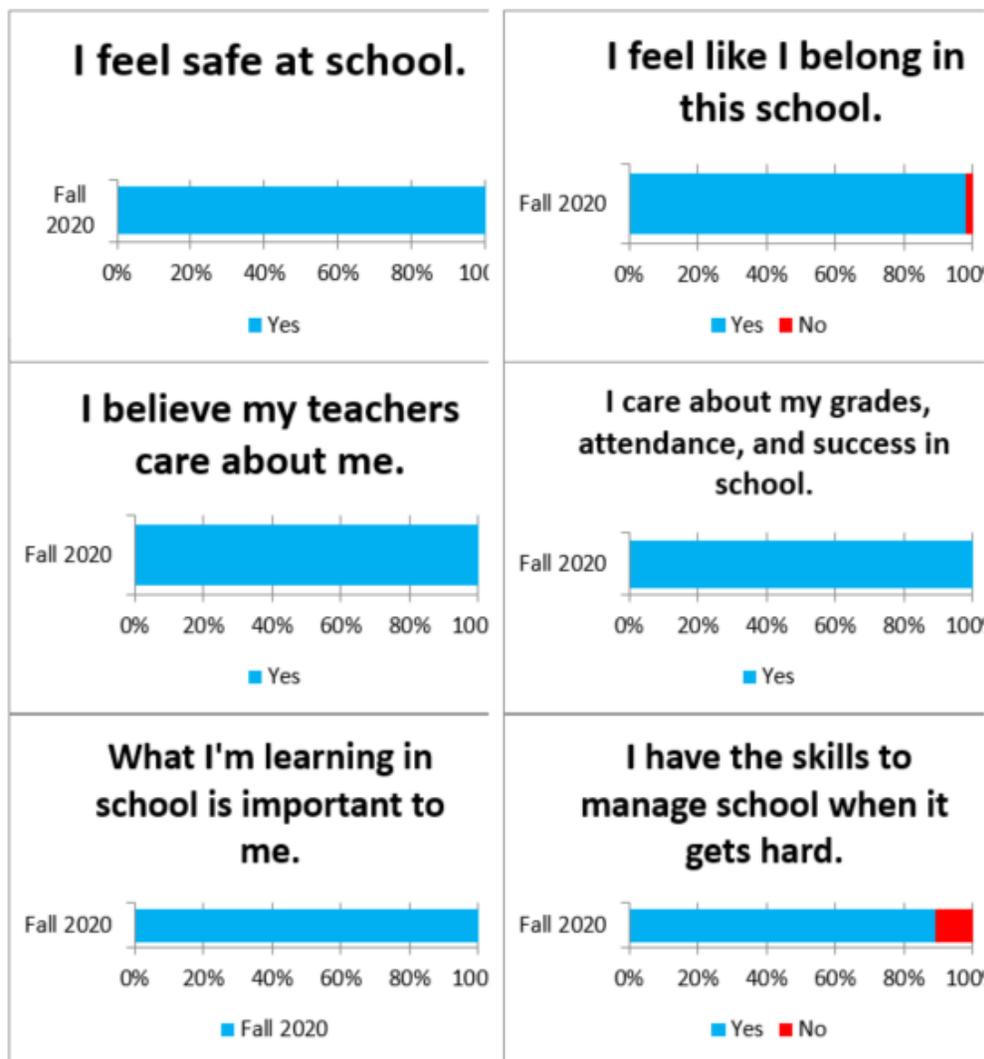


While the number of students scoring in the lower bands decreased, these students still need to grow in order to meet grade level standards.

Student Survey Data: What are our students saying about our school and district?

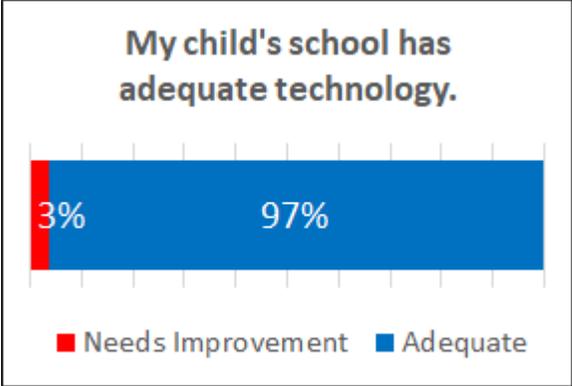
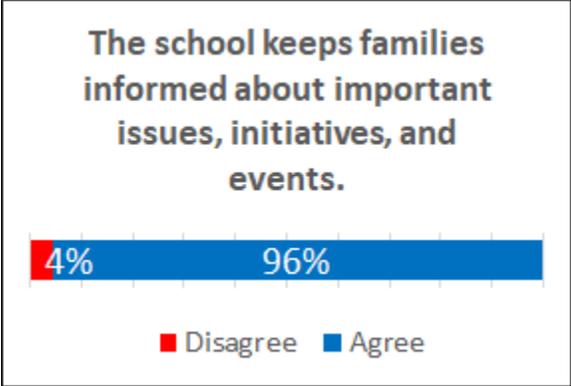
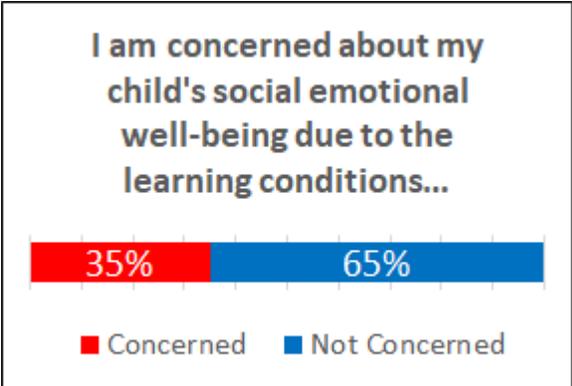
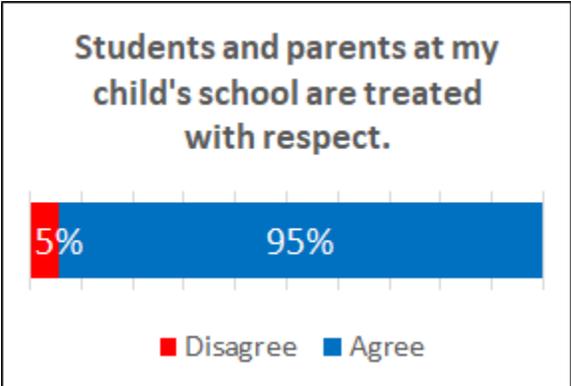
Abrams Elementary School teachers and staff care deeply about students' experiences. It is important that not only do our students have a voice, but that we also listen. Below are some of the questions that we asked our students in the fall including their responses.

While all of our students indicated that they feel safe at school and that their teachers care about them, a small percentage of students feel that they do not belong and a slightly larger percentage report that they may not have the skills necessary to manage when school gets hard. This information is very important for school staff as we continue to work to insure that our students all feel a sense of belonging. Supports are tailored to help us identify and meet the need of all students.



Parent Survey Data: What are our parents saying about our school and district?

A high percentage of parents surveyed indicate that they feel respected and informed regarding important issues, but more parents indicated concerns in regard to their child’s social-emotional well-being. Those concerns are shared across school staff. Our behavioral health team works closely with small groups and individual students, teaching coping skills and strategies.

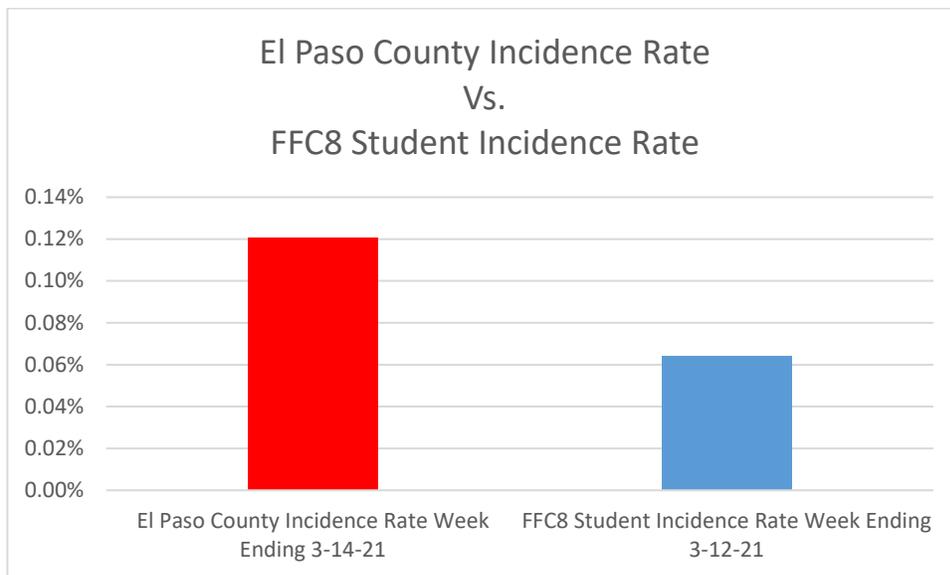


Health Data: How have our schools and districts responded to COVID? How many positive cases have we seen in both students and staff?

The health and safety of our students and staff is our number one priority. We have taken extraordinary measures this year to keep our buildings and classrooms as healthy as possible during the pandemic. Please [visit this site](#) for current information about how we are addressing COVID-19 at our district.

As of Friday, March 12, 2021, FFC8 has approximately 7768 students and 404 staff members. Of these community members a small percentage have had a confirmed COVID infection. Staff have been prioritized for vaccination and many have already received their 2nd dose.

Timeline	Students	Staff
Week of March 5 th to March 12 th	0.06%	0%
Total since the beginning of 2 nd Semester	0.55%	9.90%



Please note that our data shows that there is very little, if any, student to student COVID transmission and the incident rate amongst students is significantly lower than the [El Paso community](#) at large.

Based on this information we still believe that **the safest place for most students to be is at school.**

What have we identified as our areas of strength this year and where do we think we still have room to grow?

Academics:

Our students have demonstrated high levels of perseverance, grit and adaptability. They have learned new and different ways of interacting with their peers and have gained skills in utilizing differing technology tools. While we have seen some impact in student learning due to the uncertainties with fourth quarter of the last school year, we have not seen an impact in our student’s ability to learn and to apply their new learning.

Our “one to one” laptop initiative provided opportunities for students and teachers to learn new skills and access different technology tools that would not otherwise have been available to our school community. In many cases, we have seen students grow more this year than in the past. Our intermediate grades show strong learning curves and we are excited to see their continued performance.

We still have room to grow, especially in areas where students need to learn new skills. This is especially true in early literacy skills. We need to insure that our earliest learners grow and that we address their needs quickly and intentionally. The best way for students to learn to read and write is with direct instruction and a lot of practice. We expect to see these same patterns in other subject areas. We will continue to examine and refine our feedback practices. Feedback that is specific, direct and tied to learning outcomes is the most impactful. We are also exploring our grading practices – what should be graded? How do we communicate that to parents? How do we increase student ownership of their learning?

Socio-emotional learning:

The COVID Pandemic has created challenges that we have never seen before, yet through it, our students and staff have shown tremendous perseverance and grit this year. As a district and a school, we have made a concerted effort to focus our resources on the physical and mental wellbeing of all of our community members. We have observed an increase in staff and student awareness around their own social-emotional needs. Parents have reached out for supports, students are expressing their needs, and our staff is helping to connect students with the necessary resources. Student access to timely and effective mental health services is a point of pride in our district. We are one of the only districts in the state where there is licensed school psychologist in every school building. This enables our mental health providers to provide proactive and personalized services.

In the next year, we foresee the need to continue to help our students and families understand the resources that are available and how to advocate for their needs. Student voice is very important, even at the elementary school level.

As we look ahead at the possibility of returning to a more “normal” look for our lives, we will be examining the lessons learned during COVID. While some of our practices may return to what they were “before,” other practices and processes have benefitted our student community and we will continue to hold those close.

We believe in the power of the Fountain-Fort Carson community to change the world. Thank you for entrusting us with your students. We recognize the honor and responsibility that comes with the faith that you have put in our school community. We are proud of what we have accomplished and also recognize that we have yet to reach our full potential. Together, we will prepare today’s youth for tomorrow’s responsibility.

Sincerely,

Lois Skaggs, Principal
Abrams Elementary School