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# HIGHBRIDGE VOICES

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**Program Highlights 2013-2014**



## **Musical Success**

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This year, the Chamber Choir and Concert Choir enjoyed unprecedented musical achievements. The choirs gave more than twenty performances and partnered with four choirs from across the country. Along with their concerts in New York City, the choir also performed in Toronto, Niagara Falls, and White Plains. Additional highlights included collaborations with Alec Baldwin and Melissa Errico during the 2014 Benefit Concert. The choir performed everything from classical pieces to folk songs to some of the Beatles' greatest hits. To top off the exciting season, the Chamber Choir was selected to perform at the New York/American Choral Directors Association State Music Educators Conference this fall at Vassar College. Highbridge Voices choirs continue to expand to meet the diverse needs and interests of our students. This spring, we offered a men's chorus for the eighteen boys in grades 7-12. Their performance was met with high praise from musicians and music-lovers alike, and the retention rate among male singers is the highest on record. We continue to foster a love for singing and music-making among all our students.



## **Making a Difference**

Highbridge Voices, an extended day music and academic program designed to inspire excellence in the lives of children, remains a vital part of the South Bronx community where it was founded sixteen years ago. The organization provides classical music training and academic reinforcement for students in a community that has limited after school enrichment options. The choral curriculum is the springboard for teaching students self-discipline, teamwork, and delayed gratification. The recent additions and improvements to the academic program have created a comprehensive curriculum ensuring every student exposed to the "Highbridge Voices Way" will have a solid foundation for lifelong achievement.



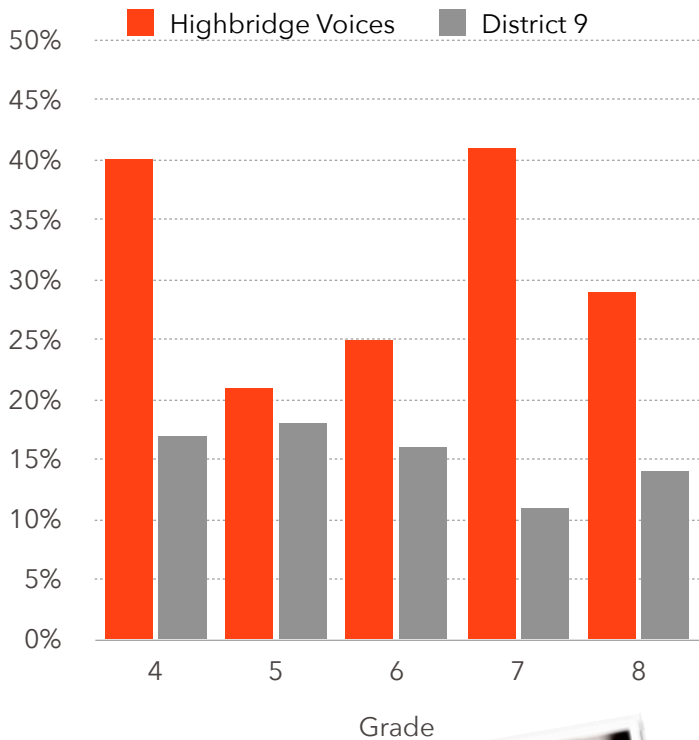
# Charting our Academic Results

Students spend approximately nine hours each week in academic activities at Highbridge Voices. This includes activities such as tutoring, homework help, English language arts (ELA) classes, and math classes. During the 2013-2014 program year, the percentage of elementary and middle school Highbridge Voices students meeting or exceeding New York State standards for math and ELA dwarfed their District 9 counterparts by as much as four times (see tables below). This success is attributed to our students work ethic, our strong instructional staff of experienced teachers and tutors, and communication with students and families.

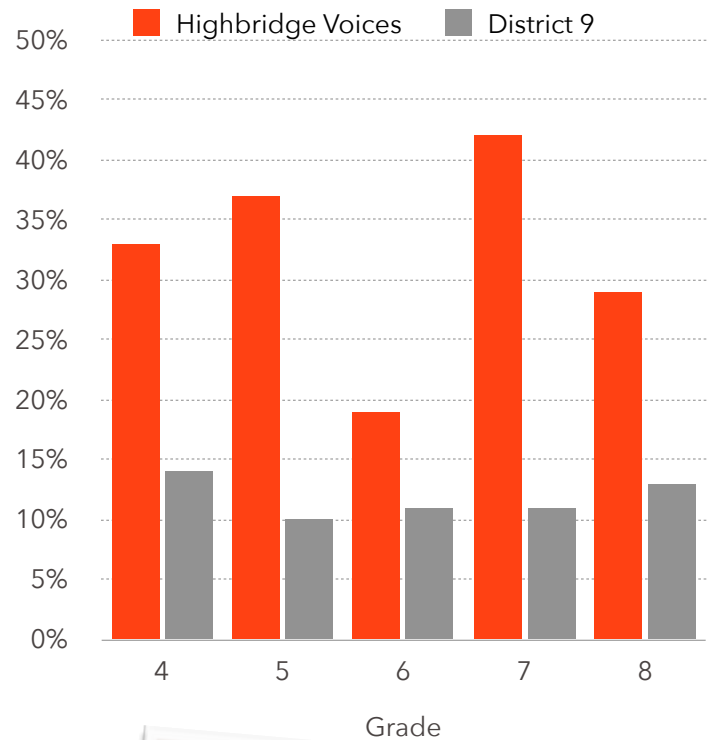
Additionally, our students did well in their respective schools. About 85% of our Concert Choir students passed their math and ELA classes, while 90% and 100% of the Chamber Choir students passed math and ELA, respectively. The students' academic achievements represent their ability to work hard and utilize a support system when it is necessary.

Lastly, three of our four graduating seniors, with the consistent guidance of our academic advisement team, gained acceptance to numerous colleges and universities, an encouraging development in a community where many students are unable to overcome socioeconomic challenges to pursue degrees in higher education. We are incredibly proud of them for the drive and determination to succeed and to serve as role models for the rest of the students in the program.

### Math Assessment



### English Language Arts Assessment





## Alumni Profile: Donovan Agbo

Donovan graduated in June of 2014 from Cardinal Hayes High School in the Bronx. A member of Highbridge Voices since he was nine years old, Donovan was a great leader during his senior year. As an Intern, he helped students and staff each day, demonstrating teamwork, discipline, and dedication. According to Donovan, leaving Highbridge Voices felt like “leaving [his] second family.” He continues to be successful in his new pursuits as a first-year student at Buffalo State University, where he is a biology major. He continues to study music as well. Donovan credits Highbridge Voices for teaching him important skills such as organization, time management, and public speaking.

Highbridge Voices has graduated **38** students since 2006.  
**100%** have graduated high school in four years.

## Connecting Our Students to the World

With a focus on increasing our wi-fi capabilities and adding more laptops, we were able to implement two new program elements for our students. A new website also gave us unprecedented exposure.

## The Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative

This summer, thirteen middle school and high school students from Highbridge Voices participated in our annual summer program. This year’s curriculum focused on a “Healthy Neighborhoods” initiative in which students created research projects that focused on obstacles to healthy living faced by residents of the South Bronx.

Students toured and surveyed NYC neighborhoods to understand environmental and socioeconomic disparities, interviewed field experts, and participated in a symposium with Public Health Educator Candida Bido of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Among the topics researched were obesity, stress, the value of arts-based education, self-esteem, public safety, nutrition, and resource development. Students created multimedia presentations that highlighted the challenges our communities face, as well as possible alternatives and solutions .

The addition of computers and increased connectivity allowed students to do real research, synthesize information, and present their findings in a professional setting during our first Highbridge Voices Health Symposium.

## Music Technology

Additional technology reaped immediate rewards in our song writing curriculum. Using music composition software and electronic keyboards, students wrote, performed, and recorded original compositions in small groups. Then, they worked with professional videographers to create music videos which were posted on our website. Students experienced the song writing process from creation to production. They worked with professionals in the field, and were exposed to variety a of music career options.

## Connecting YOU to Highbridge Voices

This year we debuted our new website, allowing you to keep up with our performances and programming. Since its launch, we have seen a 400% increase in website traffic.

# BY THE NUMBERS

served

182

children

from

50

schools

Students are at Highbridge Voices 15 hours per week. Here is how they spend their time:

4.5 hours of choir rehearsal

4 hours of homework assistance

3 hours of language and reading

2 hours of math enrichment

1 hour of music theory

1 voice lesson



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