

# Student Achievement

2022 ADEQUACY STUDY

June 2022

Prepared for the Interim Senate Committee on Education  
and the Interim House Committee on Education



2022 Adequacy Report





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## Introduction

This report reviews Arkansas public school student achievement data. This includes results from the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), Advanced Placement (AP), the ACT college entrance exam, results from the statewide assessment (ACT Aspire), and high school graduation rates. English language learner students and students with disabilities have additional assessments specific to their population. Results from those assessments can be found in their respective reports (English Language Learners and Special Education).

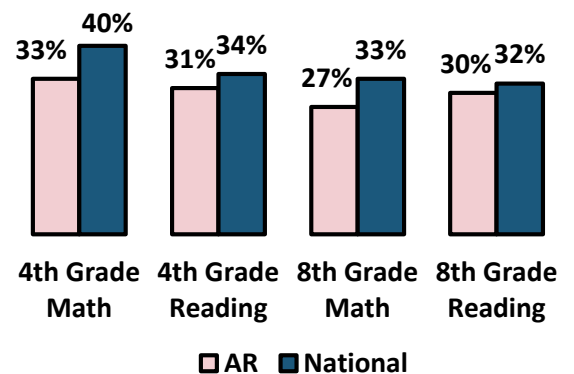
The adequacy study statute, Ark. Code Ann. § 10-3-2102, calls for the biennial study to “[a]ssess, evaluate and monitor the entire spectrum of public education” as well as to “[e]valuate the effectiveness of any program implemented by a school, a school district, an education service cooperative, the ADE, or the State Board of Education.” Additionally, the same statute calls for a review of the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (AESAA) and the state’s standing under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). AESAA mandates Arkansas students participate in the NAEP and statewide student assessment. The state’s ESSA plan includes the long-term (12 year) goal of having 80% of Arkansas students demonstrate grade-level proficiency.<sup>1</sup> The current definition of adequacy also includes, “The goal is to have all, or all but the most severely disabled, students perform at or above proficiency on these tests,” referring to the state tests.<sup>2</sup>

## National Assessment for Educational Progress

The NAEP is a national assessment administered to a sample of students in every state approximately every two years in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades across a variety of subjects. The most recent assessment available was taken in 2019. Students in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade are also tested but on a different schedule. It is the “largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students in public and private schools in the United States know and are able to do in various subjects.”<sup>3</sup> It is congressionally mandated through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences. It allows for a “common measure of student achievement that allows for direct comparisons among states and participating urban districts...Results are reported as scores and as percentages of students reaching NAEP achievement levels – NAEP Basic, NAEP Proficient, and NAEP Advanced.”<sup>4</sup> These achievement levels are defined below. Results for comparison states are found in Appendices A-D. NAEP results included in this report do not include any private schools.

- NAEP Basic – “denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for Proficient work at each grade.”
- NAEP Proficient – “represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter.”
- NAEP Advanced—“represents superior performance.”<sup>5</sup>

**Pct. of Students Scoring At or Above Proficient (2019)**



<sup>1</sup> “Every Student Succeeds Act Arkansas State Plan,” page 30.

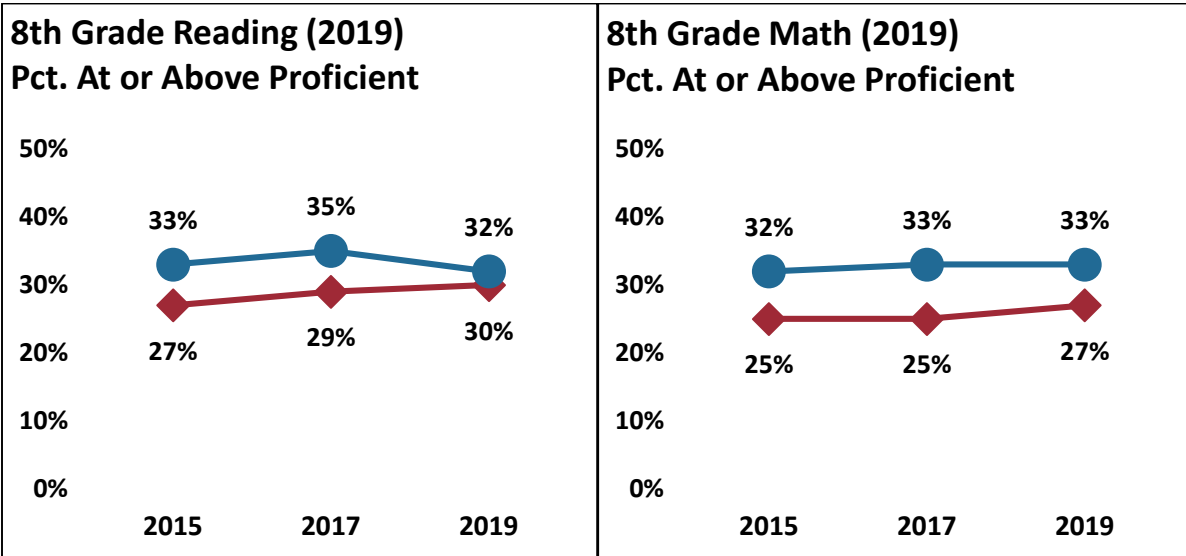
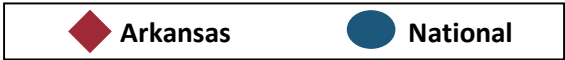
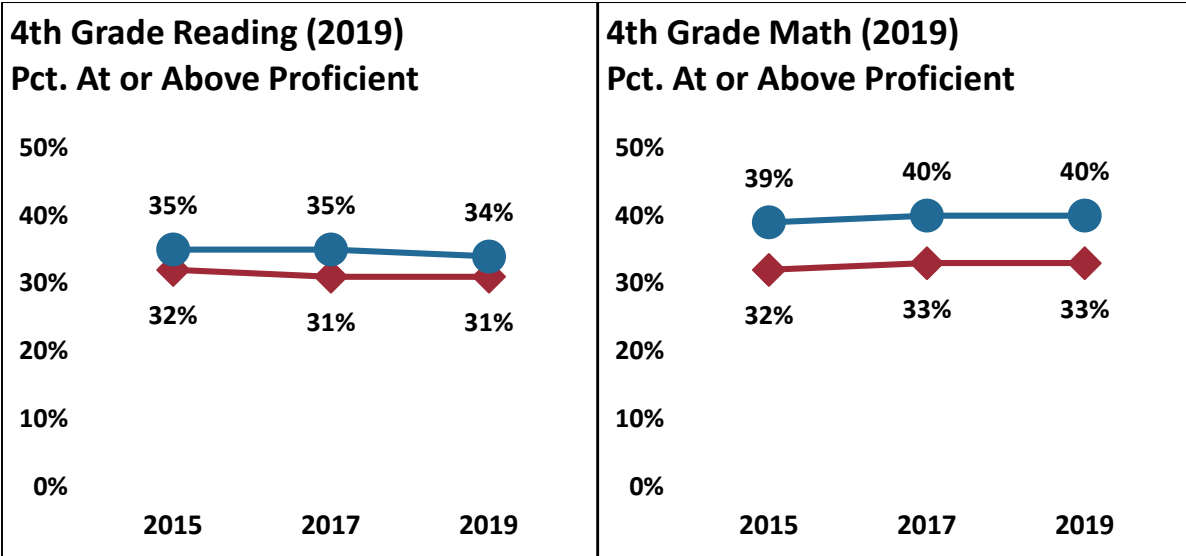
<sup>2</sup> “Final Report on the Legislative Hearings of the 2020 Educational Adequacy Study,” Volume 1, page 107.

<sup>3</sup> [https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/about/pdf/naep\\_overview\\_brochure\\_2021.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/about/pdf/naep_overview_brochure_2021.pdf)

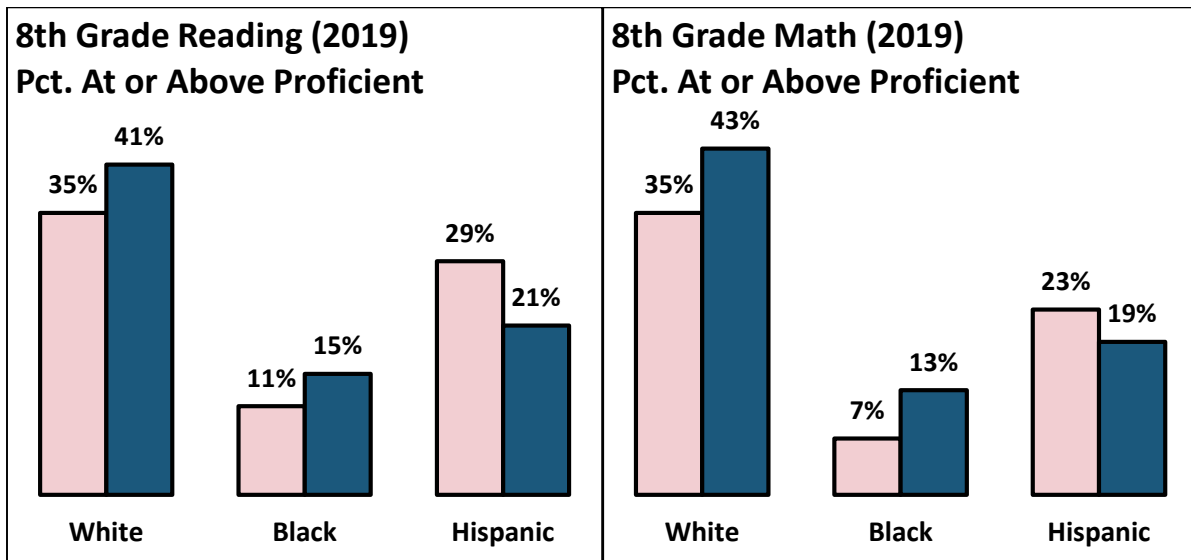
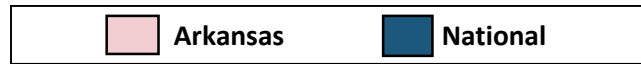
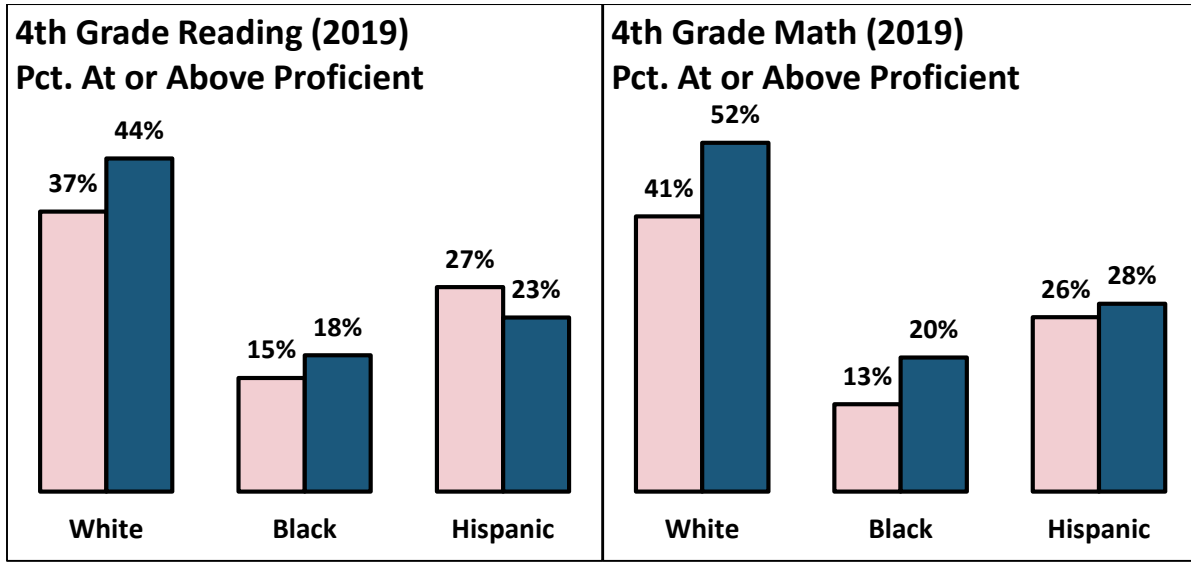
<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> NCES. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/help#sec38>

*ALL STUDENTS*

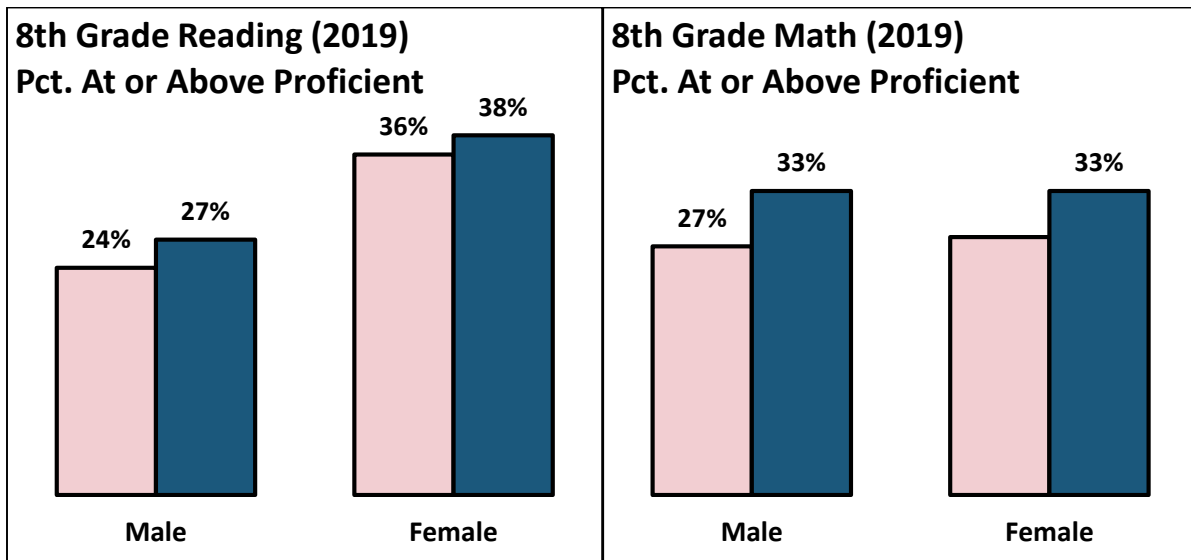
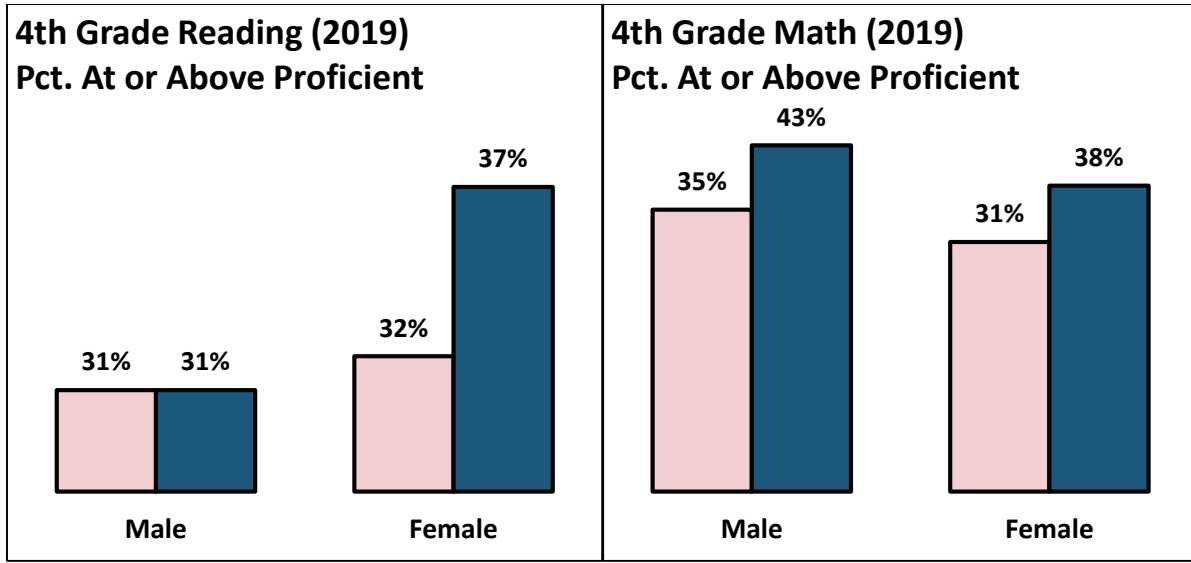


*BY RACE/ETHNICITY*

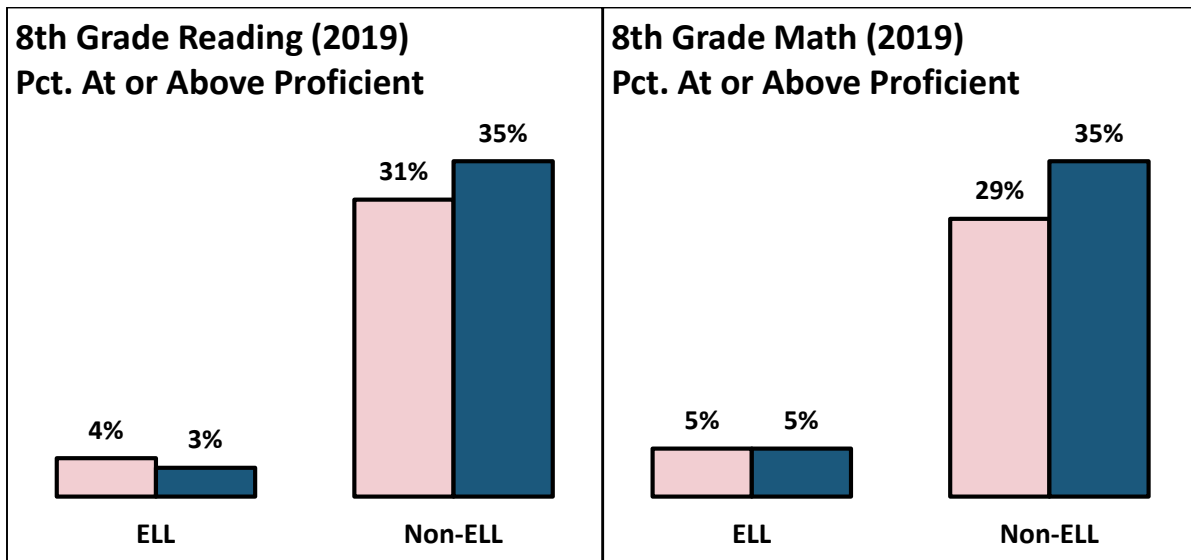
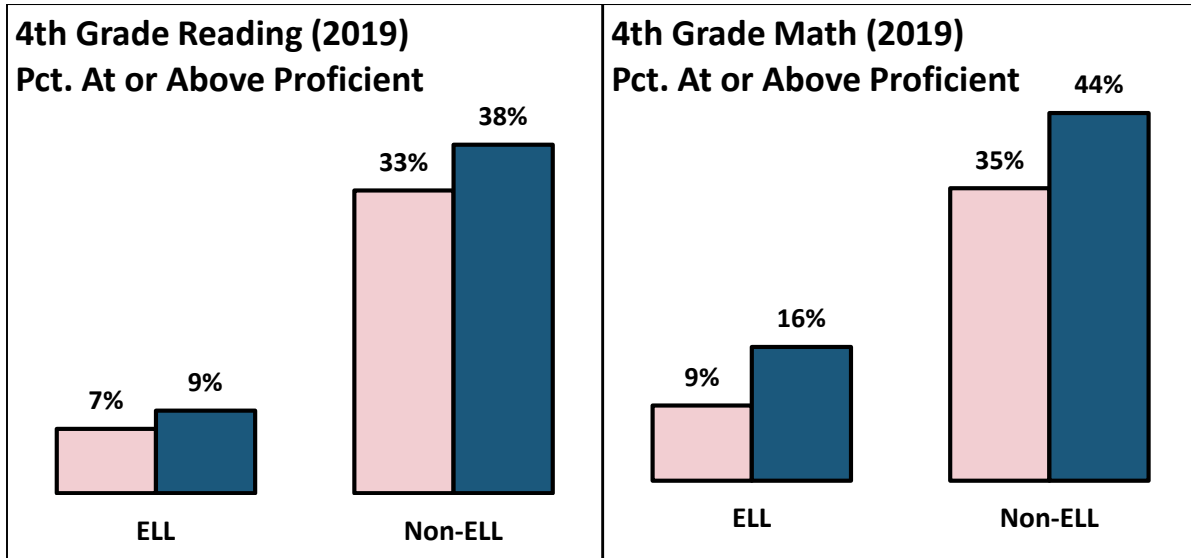


**Note:** According to NAEP, reporting standards were not met (e.g. sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate) for the remaining racial/ethnic groups for Arkansas (Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races), which is why they are not included here.

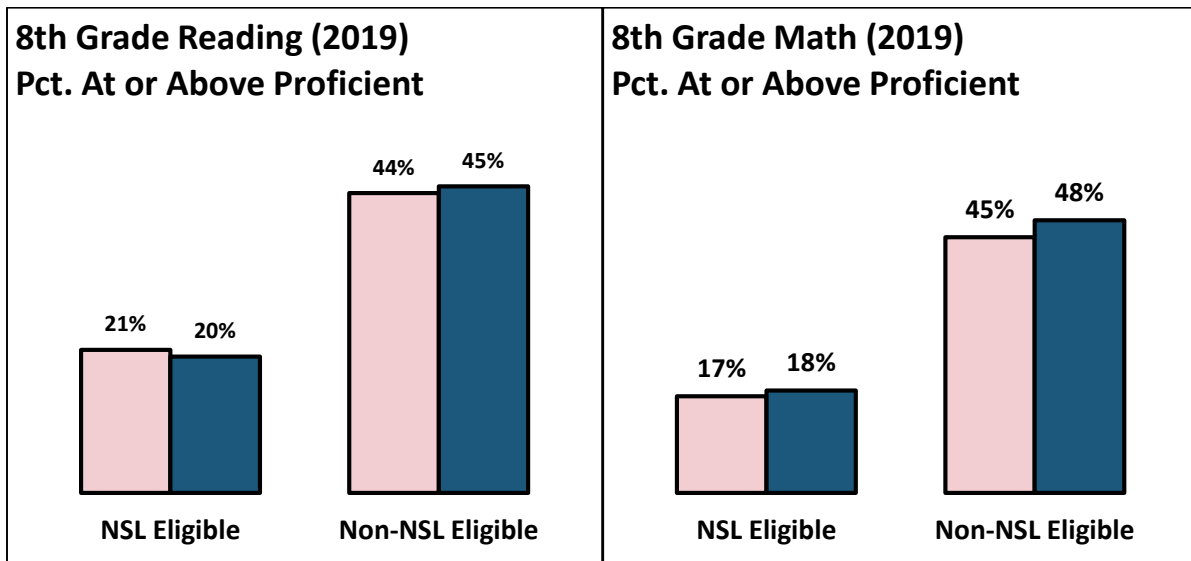
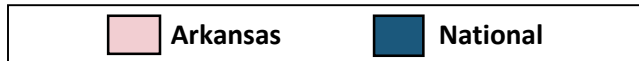
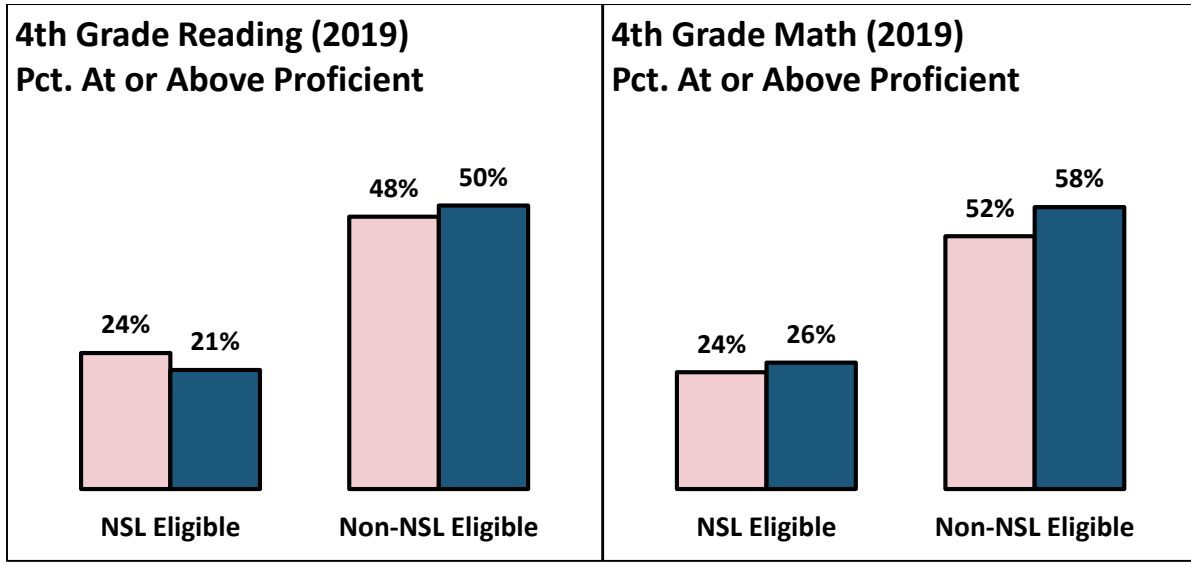
*By GENDER*







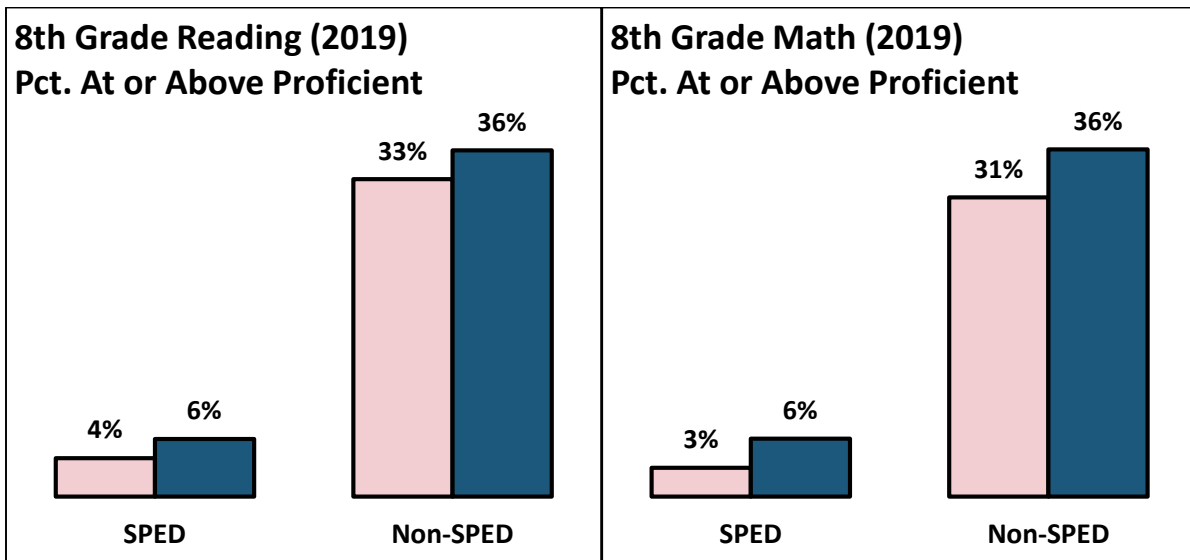
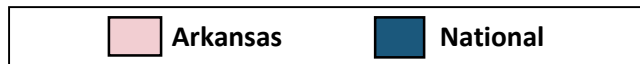
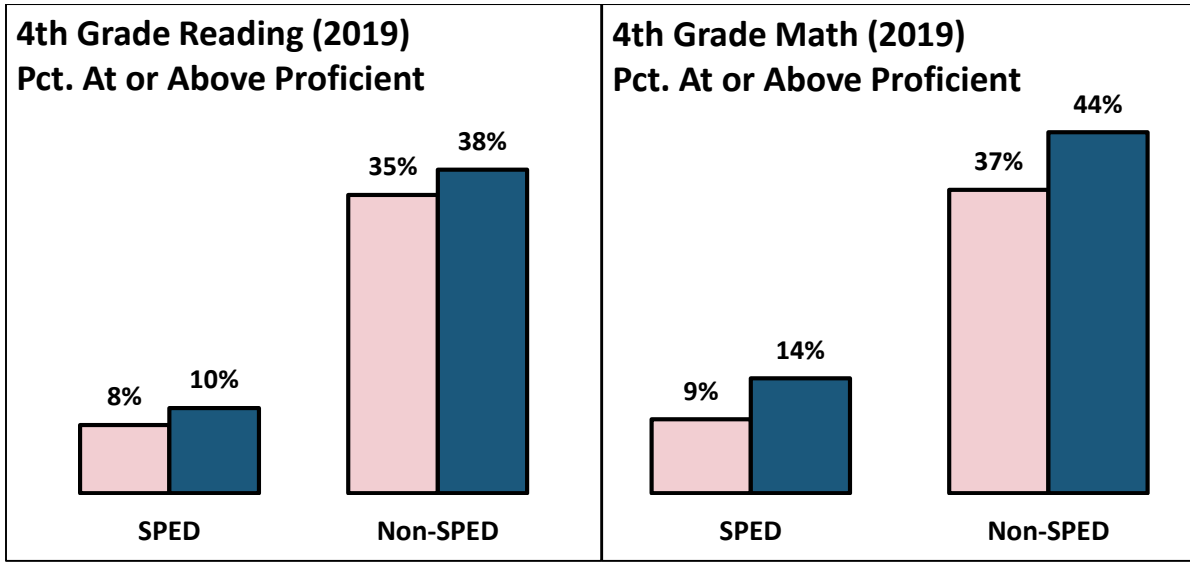
*NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH STATUS*



**Note:** NAEP uses National School Lunch Program (NSL) eligibility as an indicator of poverty. This terminology is interchangeable with students considered eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (FRL).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> NCES. "Eligibility for Free/Reduced-Price School Lunch." Retrieved from: <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/guides/groups.aspx>

*STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*



Note: Students with disabilities do not include students with a 504 plan.

## Advanced Placement

The Arkansas Advanced Placement (AP) program is “designed to improve course offerings available to middle school, junior high school and high school students throughout the state” by providing “advanced educational courses that are easily accessible and will prepare students for admission to and success in a postsecondary educational environment.”<sup>7</sup> Arkansas school districts must provide high school students with the opportunity to enroll in at least one Advanced Placement course in each of the four core areas of English, math, science, and social studies.<sup>8</sup> Advanced placement courses are defined as “a high school level preparatory course for a college advanced placement test that incorporates all topics specified by the College Board and Educational Testing Service on its standard syllabus for a given subject area and is approved by the College Board and Educational Testing Service.”<sup>9</sup>

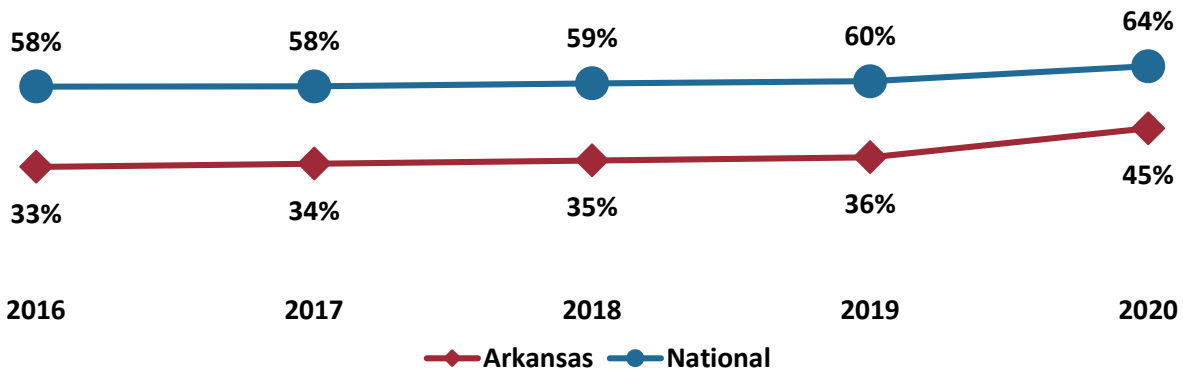
Students may take advanced placement exams which provide them the opportunity to qualify for college/university level credit.<sup>10</sup> These exams are scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Many U.S. colleges grant credit and/or advanced placement for scores of 3 or above.<sup>11</sup>

2020	Arkansas	National
<b>Number of Students Taking AP Exams</b>	28,315	N/A
<b>Number of AP Exams Taken</b>	36,824	3,057,148
<b>Percentage of Exams That Scored 3 or Above</b>	45%	64%

Source: Office for Education Policy, DESE<sup>12</sup>, and the College Board<sup>13</sup>.

Note: Data includes Arkansas School for the Blind, School for the Deaf, and the Division of Youth Services.

### Percentage of Students Scoring 3 or Above



<sup>7</sup> Arkansas Code § 6-16-802. See also DESE “Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit.” (6-1.01). Retrieved from: [https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201102110218\\_FINAL\\_Rules\\_Governing\\_Grading\\_and\\_Course\\_Credit\\_1.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201102110218_FINAL_Rules_Governing_Grading_and_Course_Credit_1.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-1204 (“Advanced Placement and Endorsed Concurrent Enrollment,” Arkansas Code § 6-16-1201 et seq., was enacted by the General Assembly in 2003 to “ensure that each student has an adequate education” because “each student should have access to a rigorous and substantially equal curriculum.”).

<sup>9</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-803(1)

<sup>10</sup> DESE. “Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit.” (1-2.02)

<sup>11</sup> College Board. “About AP Scores.” Retrieved from: <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/about-ap-scores#:~:text=AP%20Exams%20are%20scored%20on,scores%20of%203%20and%20above>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.officeforeducationpolicy.org/act-ap/>

<sup>13</sup> College Board. “AP Score Distributions All Subjects 2000-2020.” Retrieved from. <https://reports.collegeboard.org/ap-program-results/data-archive>

## ACT

The ACT is “a national college admissions examination recognized by universities and colleges in the U.S.”<sup>14</sup> Arkansas provides one opportunity for all Arkansas 11<sup>th</sup> grade students to test at their respective high schools.<sup>15</sup> The ACT contains four multiple-choice tests: English, math, reading, and science.<sup>16</sup> “These tests are designed to measure skills that are most important for success in postsecondary education and that are acquired in secondary education. The score range for each of the four multiple-choice tests is 1-36. The composite score is the average of the four test scores rounded to the nearest whole number.”<sup>17</sup> The college readiness benchmarks are “sets of statements intended to help students, parents and educators understand the meaning of test scores. The standards relate test scores to the types of skills needed for success in high school and beyond. They serve as a direct link between what students have learned and what they are ready to do next.”<sup>18</sup> The standards “are empirically derived descriptions of the essential skills and knowledge students need to become ready for college and career.”<sup>19</sup>

### ARKANSAS

Arkansas Graduating Class		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
English	Pct. Met College Readiness Benchmarks	51%	52%	52%	50%	49%
	Average ACT Score	18.6	18.8	18.7	18.4	18.3
Math	Pct. Met College Readiness Benchmarks	26%	26%	25%	22%	22%
	Average ACT Score	18.9	18.7	18.5	18.2	18.1
Reading	Pct. Met College Readiness Benchmarks	35%	34%	33%	33%	32%
	Average ACT Score	19.5	19.5	19.4	19.2	19.0
Science	Pct. Met College Readiness Benchmarks	24%	24%	24%	25%	24%
	Average ACT Score	19.4	19.2	19.0	18.9	19.1
All Subjects	Pct. Met All Four College Readiness Benchmarks	16%	16%	15%	14%	14%
	Average Composite ACT Score	19.2	19.2	19.0	18.8	18.8

Data Source: ACT.<sup>20</sup>

Note: Students in private schools are not included here.

<sup>14</sup> DESE. Retrieved from: <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/assessment/the-act--resources-for-parentsstudents>

<sup>15</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1606(b).

<sup>16</sup> The national administration of the test includes an optional writing test. Email from Sheree K. Baird, DESE Assessment Program Manager. (June 2, 2022).

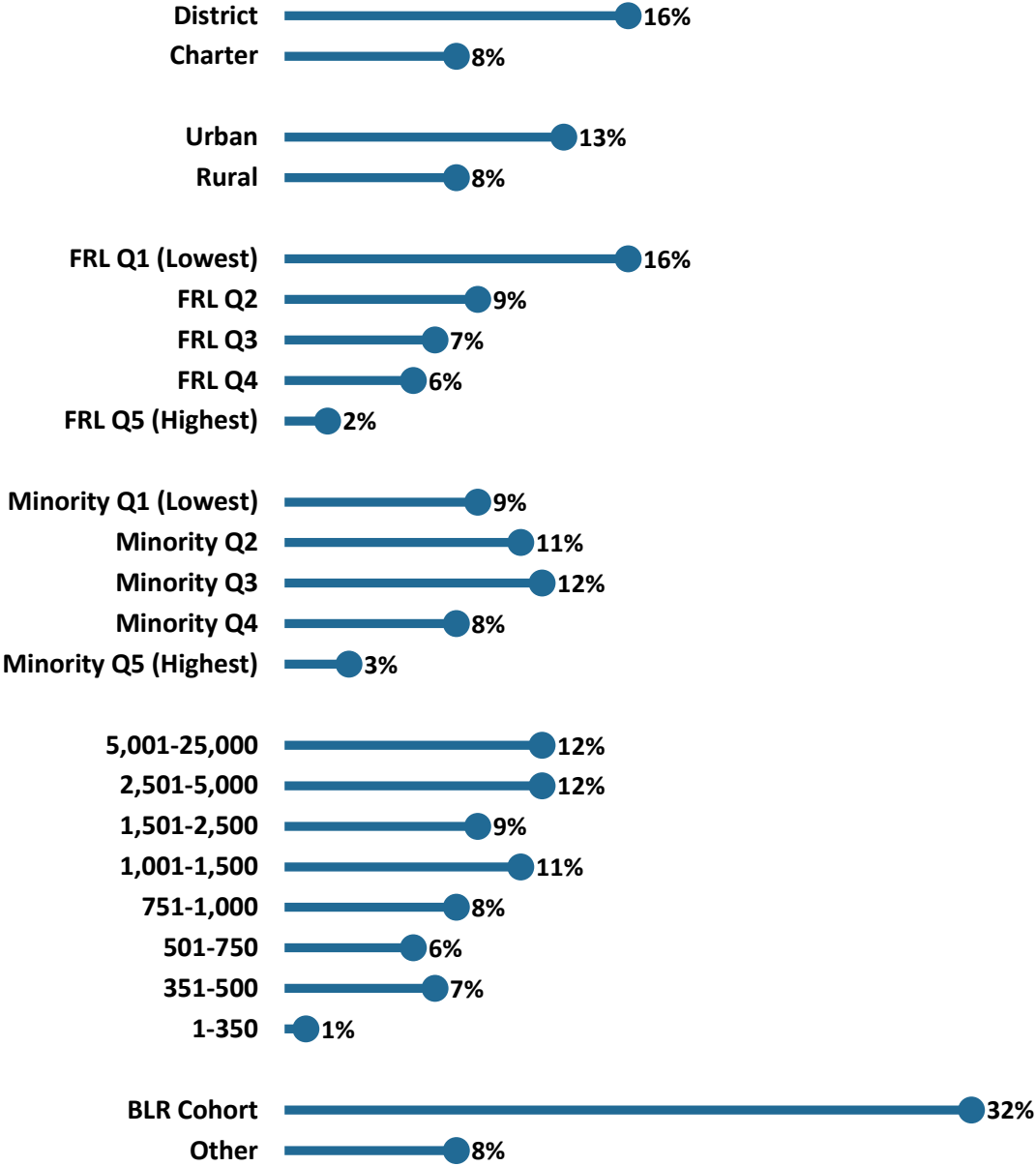
<sup>17</sup> ACT. Retrieved from: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act-educator/the-act-test.html#order-reg-materials>

<sup>18</sup> ACT. “The ACT Profile Report – State; Graduating Class 2021, Public High School Students; Arkansas.” Retrieved from: [https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/admin/Files/P\\_04\\_049999\\_S\\_C\\_P01\\_ACT-GCPR\\_Arkansas\\_public\\_only\\_20211013080020.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/admin/Files/P_04_049999_S_C_P01_ACT-GCPR_Arkansas_public_only_20211013080020.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> ACT. “Act College and Career Readiness Standards.” Retrieved from: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/college-and-career-readiness/standards.html>

<sup>20</sup> ACT. “The ACT Profile Report – State; Graduating Class 2021, Public High School Students; Arkansas.”

### Pct. of Students Meeting All ACT Readiness Benchmarks



**Data Source:** DESE<sup>21</sup>

**Note:** Data does not include Arkansas School for the Blind, Arkansas School for the Deaf, or Division of Youth Services.

<sup>21</sup> DESE. "Arkansas ACT Grade 11 School and District Report. Retrieved from: <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/assessment-test-scores/2021>

*NATIONAL COMPARISON*

	Pct. of Graduates Tested	Average Composite Score	Pct. Meeting English Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Reading Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Math Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Science Benchmark
Arkansas	99%	19.0	51%	34%	23%	26%
National	35%	20.3	56%	44%	36%	35%

Data Source: College Board<sup>22</sup>

	Pct. of Graduates Tested	Average Composite Score	Pct. Meeting English Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Reading Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Math Benchmark	Pct. Meeting Science Benchmark
<b>Top NAEP States</b>						
Massachusetts	7%	27.6	92%	83%	81%	79%
New Jersey	12%	25.1	83%	70%	67%	62%
New Hampshire	4%	26.6	89%	79%	75%	71%
Minnesota	60%	21.6	61%	52%	48%	45%
Wyoming	91%	19.8	53%	42%	32%	32%
Virginia	9%	25.5	86%	75%	68%	67%
Vermont	4%	24.7	83%	77%	62%	66%
Indiana	14%	23.1	74%	62%	57%	52%
Connecticut	9%	27.2	92%	82%	78%	76%
Utah	86%	20.6	59%	46%	38%	37%
<b>Top Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) States</b>						
Virginia	9%	25.5	86%	75%	68%	67%
Florida	34%	20.4	59%	46%	34%	35%
Maryland	8%	25.5	86%	74%	67%	65%
No. Carolina	92%	18.9	43%	36%	29%	27%
Kentucky	100%	19.2	51%	36%	27%	26%
Georgia	24%	22.6	72%	58%	50%	48%
Tennessee	100%	19.1	52%	36%	25%	28%
Texas	23%	20.1	52%	42%	35%	34%
<b>Contiguous States</b>						
Missouri	63%	20.6	59%	46%	35%	36%
Tennessee	100%	19.1	52%	36%	25%	28%
Texas	23%	20.1	52%	42%	35%	34%
Oklahoma	58%	19.7	55%	42%	26%	29%
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Mississippi	100%	18.1	43%	28%	18%	19%
Louisiana	98%	18.4	48%	31%	20%	23%

Data Source: College Board

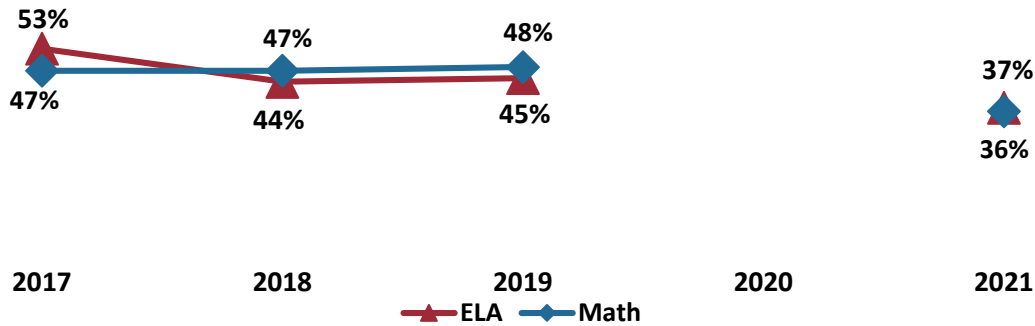
Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.

<sup>22</sup> ACT. "Average ACT Scores by State Graduating Class of 2021." Retrieved from: <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/2020/2020-Average-ACT-Scores-by-State.pdf>

## ACT Aspire

“Arkansas law requires that all public school students shall participate in a statewide program of educational assessments per Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-419, 6-15-433, 6-15-2009. In the 2015-16 school year, the Arkansas State Board of Education adopted the ACT Aspire summative assessment.”<sup>23</sup> The ACT Aspire end-of-year summative assessment is used to “assess all Arkansas public school students in grades 3-10 unless they qualify for an alternate assessment” in English, reading, writing, math, and science.<sup>24</sup> Average scores for English, reading, and writing are combined to form an English language arts (ELA) score that is shown below.<sup>25</sup> Scale scores at each grade are combined into four achievement levels: “Exceeding”, “Ready”, “Close”, and “In Need of Improvement”. Students whose scores fall within the “Exceeding” or “Ready” categories are considered on target for college and workplace readiness by the end of high school.<sup>26</sup> The state’s long-term goal is for 80% students to score proficient for their grade level by 2030.<sup>27</sup> The following ACT Aspire scores do not include the Arkansas School for the Blind, Arkansas School for the Deaf, or Division of Youth Services.

### Pct. of Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding



**Note:** Students were not tested in 2019-20 due to COVID-19. The cut scores for ELA were changed in 2018.

The following table shows the percentage of students scoring ready or exceeding in ELA and math by grade. Performance increases with grade level for ELA but decreases in math.

2021	Percentage of Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding	
	ELA	Math
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	30%	49%
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	36%	43%
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	34%	35%
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	38%	42%
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	39%	37%
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	43%	36%
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	38%	27%
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	37%	22%

<sup>23</sup> DESE. “ACT Aspire.” Retrieved from: <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/assessment/act-aspire>

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> ACT. “ACT Aspire Summative Score Labels.” Retrieved from: <https://success.act.org/s/article/ACT-Aspire-Summative-Score-Labels>

<sup>26</sup> “ACT Aspire: Understanding Your ACT Aspire Summative Results” retrieved at <https://actinc.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#300000000Wu5/a/4v000000gUBM/Kl315EClwPIY64oFQsIPAm2bY70umWJV9784Dv8xhAU>

<sup>27</sup> “Every Student Succeeds Act Arkansas State Plan.”



The following table shows performance of students by race/ethnicity for the past five years. In both ELA and math, Asian students had the largest percentage of students scoring ready or exceeding, followed by white students. The achievement gap between White and African-American students decreased by one percentage point in ELA but increased by one percentage point in math. In 2021, 45% of White students scored ready or exceeding in ELA compared to 17% of African-American students. For White and Hispanic students, the achievement gap remained the same in 2017 and 2021 for both ELA and math (14 percentage points and 13 percentage points respectively).

Percentage Scoring Ready or Exceeding					
Race/Ethnicity	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>English Language Arts</b>					
Hispanic/Latino	46%	37%	37%	Not tested due to COVID-19	31%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	54%	44%	44%		38%
Asian	74%	67%	67%		62%
African-American/Black	31%	22%	24%		17%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	30%	21%	20%		14%
Caucasian/White	60%	52%	53%		45%
Two or More Races	55%	46%	47%		38%
<b>Math</b>					
Hispanic/Latino	42%	42%	42%	Not tested due to COVID-19	31%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	46%	48%	47%		36%
Asian	70%	72%	73%		64%
African-American/Black	26%	24%	25%		14%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	25%	27%	26%		19%
Caucasian/White	55%	55%	56%		44%
Two or More Races	51%	49%	50%		36%

**Note:** Students were not tested in 2019-20 due to COVID-19. The cut scores for ELA were changed in 2018.

The following table shows performance of students by gender for the past five years. There is an achievement gap between female and male students for ELA. In 2021, 43% of female students scored ready or exceeding in ELA compared to 31% of male students. This gap of 12 percentage points is a decrease from a gap of 15 percentage points in 2017. In 2021, there was no achievement gap between female and male students in math.

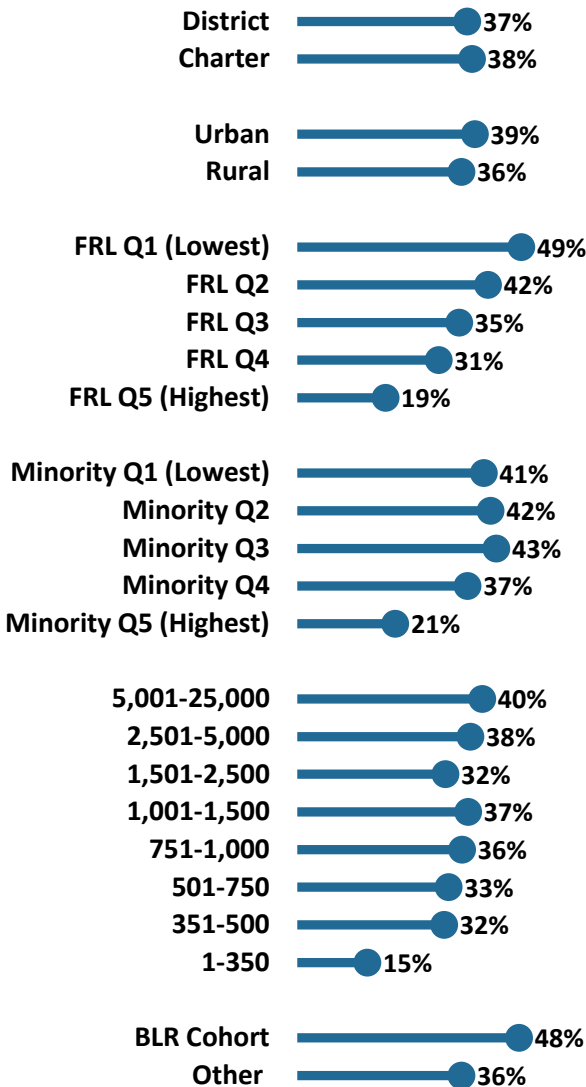
Percentage Scoring Ready or Exceeding					
Gender	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>English Language Arts</b>					
Female	60%	51%	52%	Not tested due to COVID-19	43%
Male	45%	37%	38%		31%
<b>Math</b>					
Female	49%	49%	49%	Not tested due to COVID-19	36%
Male	45%	45%	46%		36%

**Note:** Students were not tested in 2019-20 due to COVID-19. The cut scores for ELA were changed in 2018.

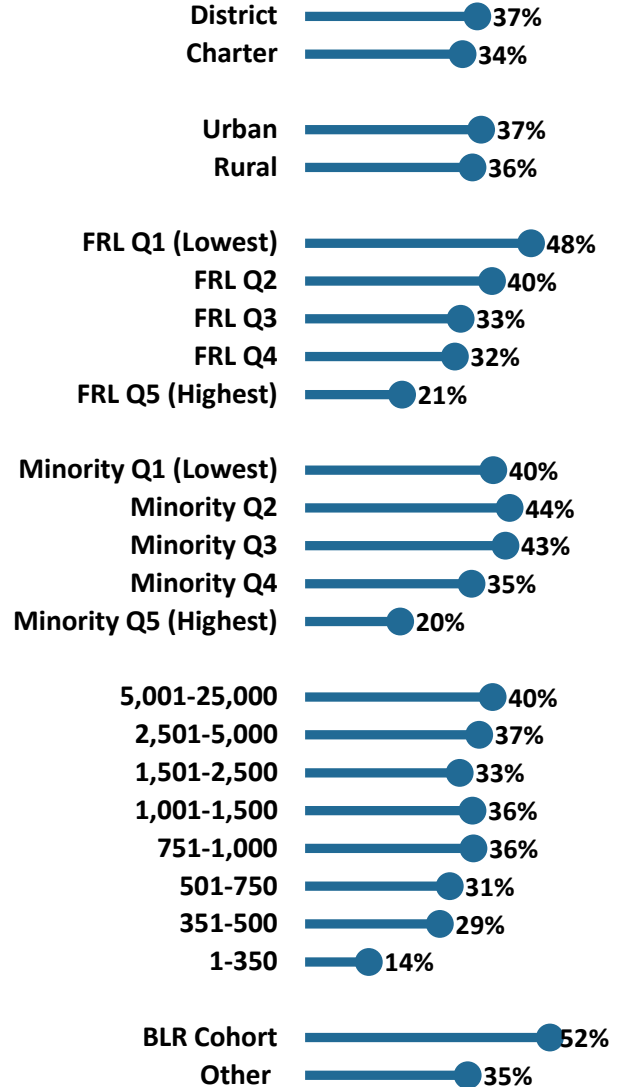
**ALL STUDENTS**

The following charts represent the average percentage of students scoring “Ready” and “Exceeding” based on the category of school they attend. Several patterns remain consistent throughout the analyses. Students attending schools within the smallest school districts or charter systems (0-350 average daily membership) are less likely to score “Ready” or “Exceeding” than their counterparts attending schools within larger districts or charter systems. Likewise, students attending schools with the highest levels of free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) students tend to score lower than students in schools with decreasing levels of FRL students. These patterns hold true for analyses of all students across ELA and math tests as well as for most special populations of students (alternative learning environment (ALE) students, English language learners (ELL), FRL students, and students with disabilities).

**Pct. of All Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**

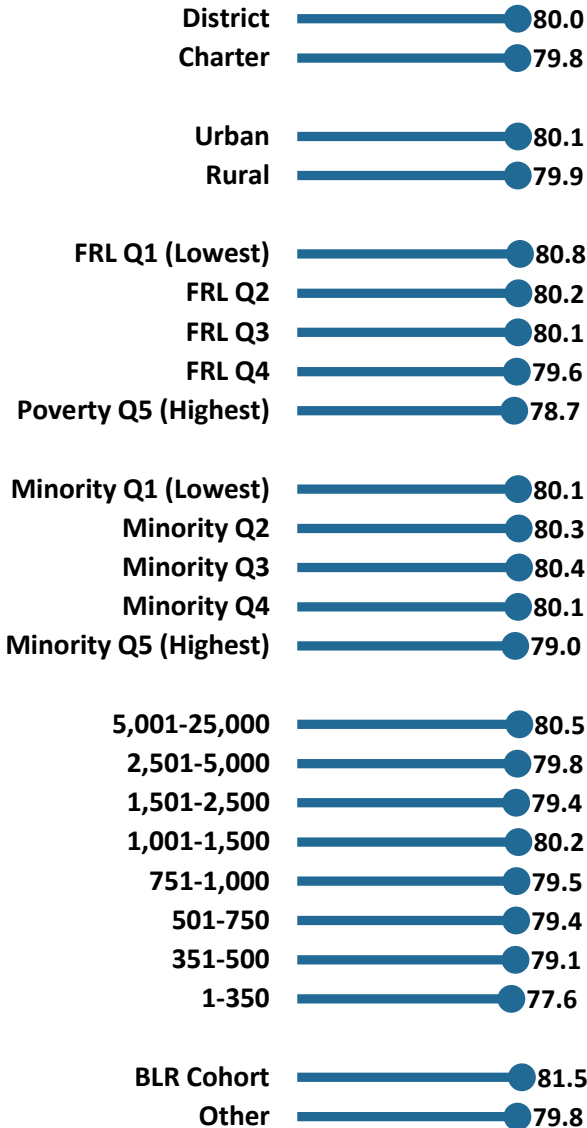


**Pct. of All Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**

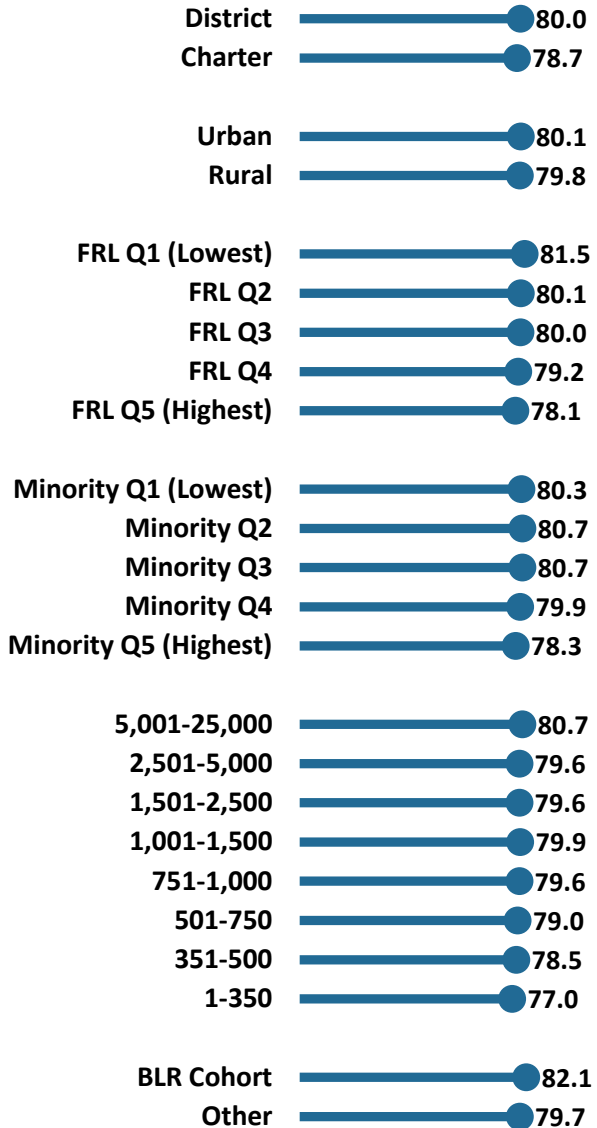


Student growth scores are calculated by comparing the student’s actual score against the student’s expected score (based on prior assessment performance) to determine whether the student met, exceeded, or failed to meet his or her expected performance. A score of 80 is right on track with a student’s expected score based on their previous test scores. A score higher than 80 indicates a higher level of growth than would be expected for that student, and a score less than 80 indicates a score lower than would be expected for that student.

### Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - All Students - ELA

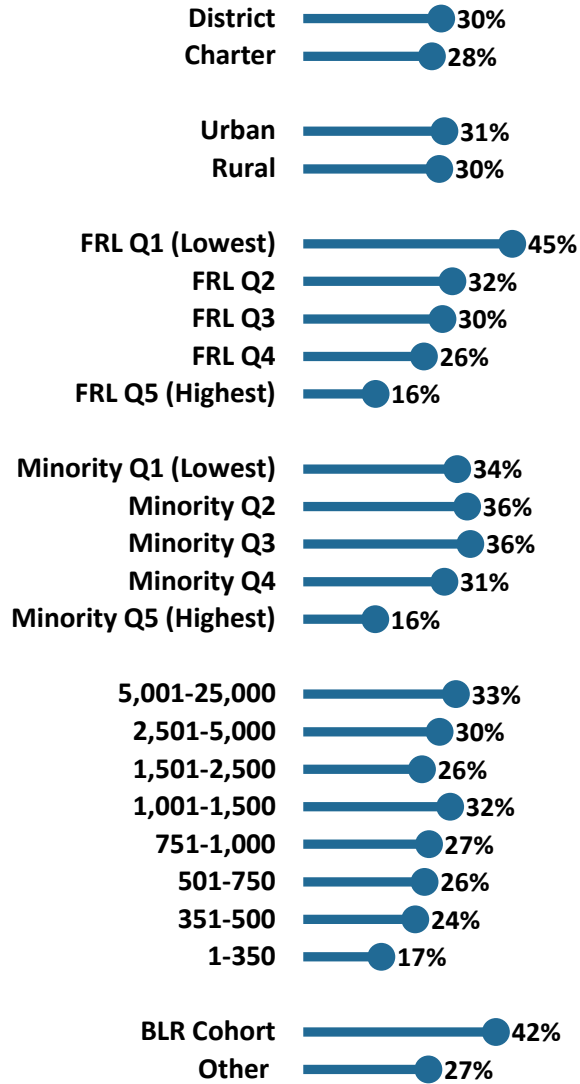


### Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - All Students - Math

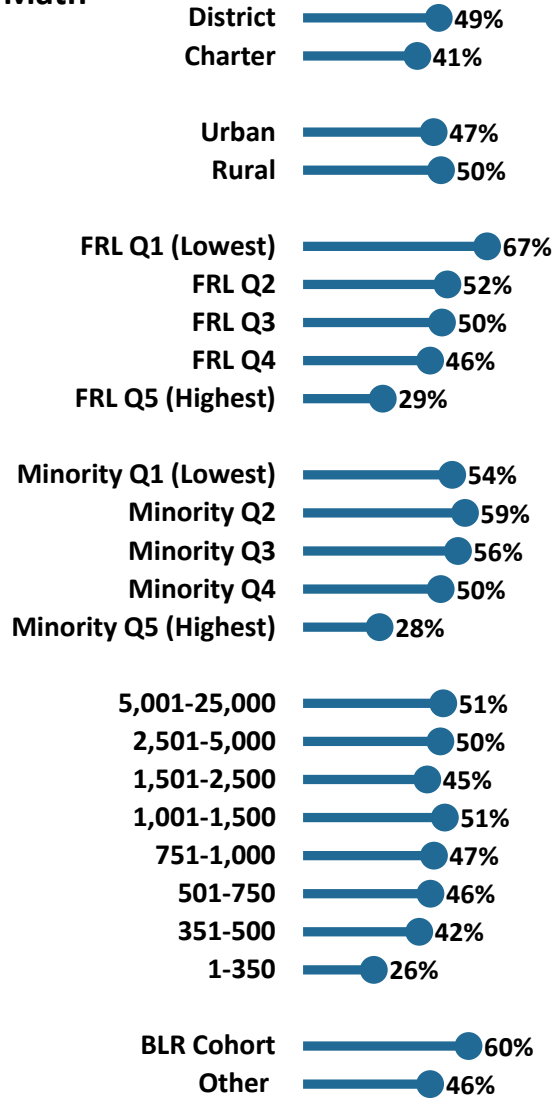


*3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE STUDENTS*

**Pct. of 3rd Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**

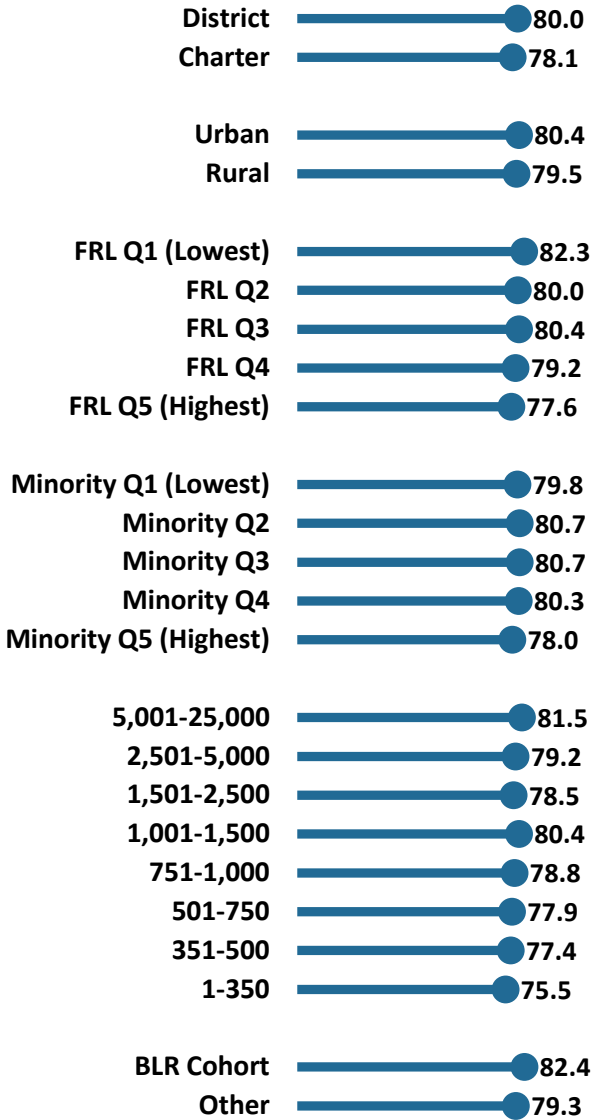


**Pct. of 3rd Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**

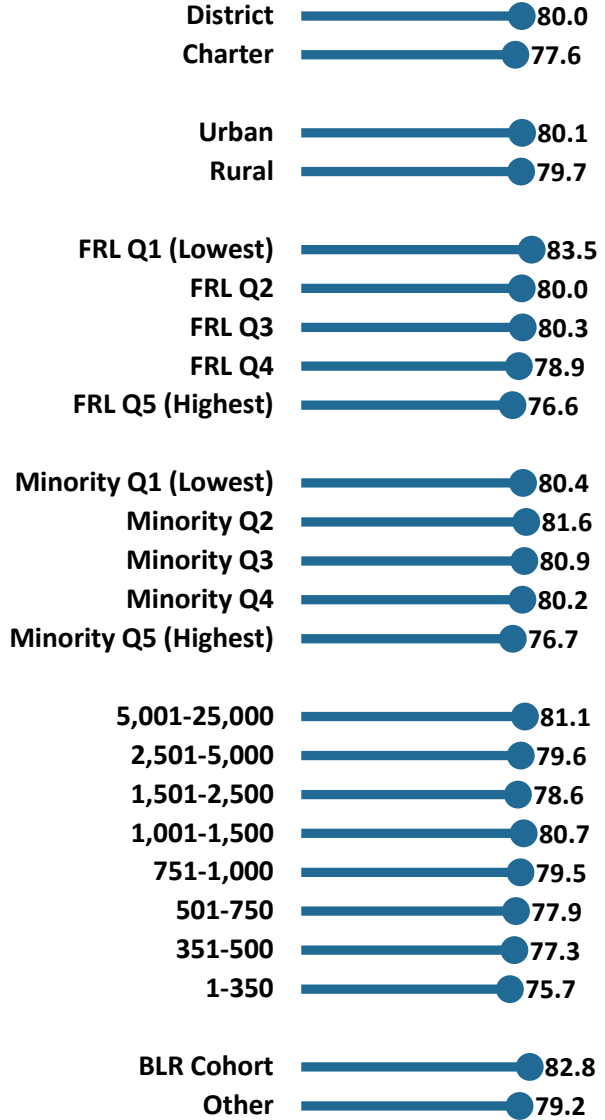


3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 3rd Grade - ELA**

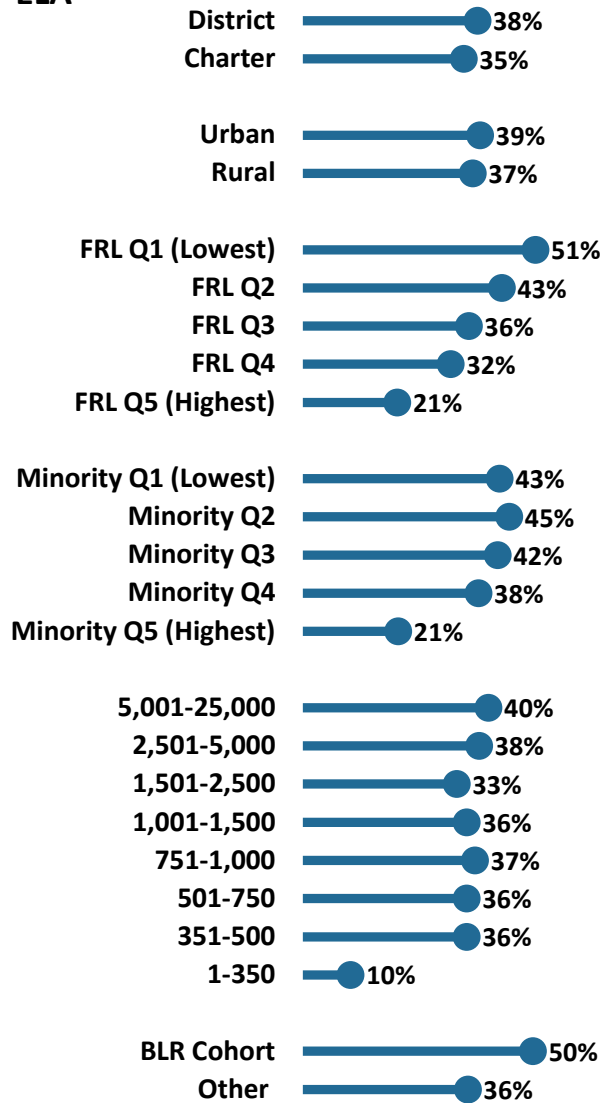


**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 3rd Grade - Math**

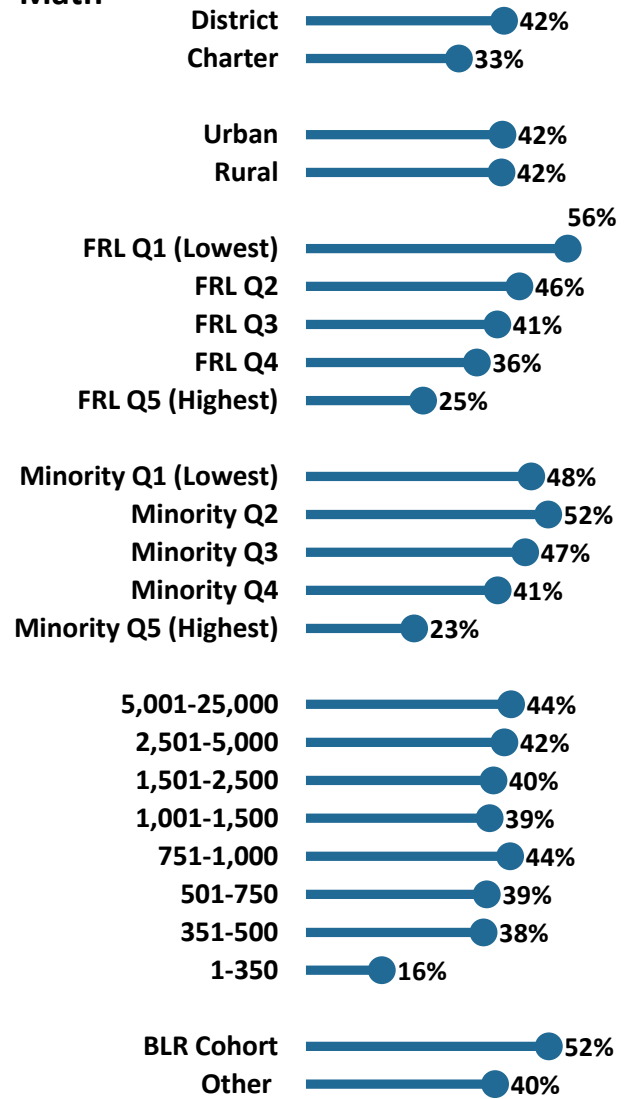


6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

**Pct. of 6th Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**

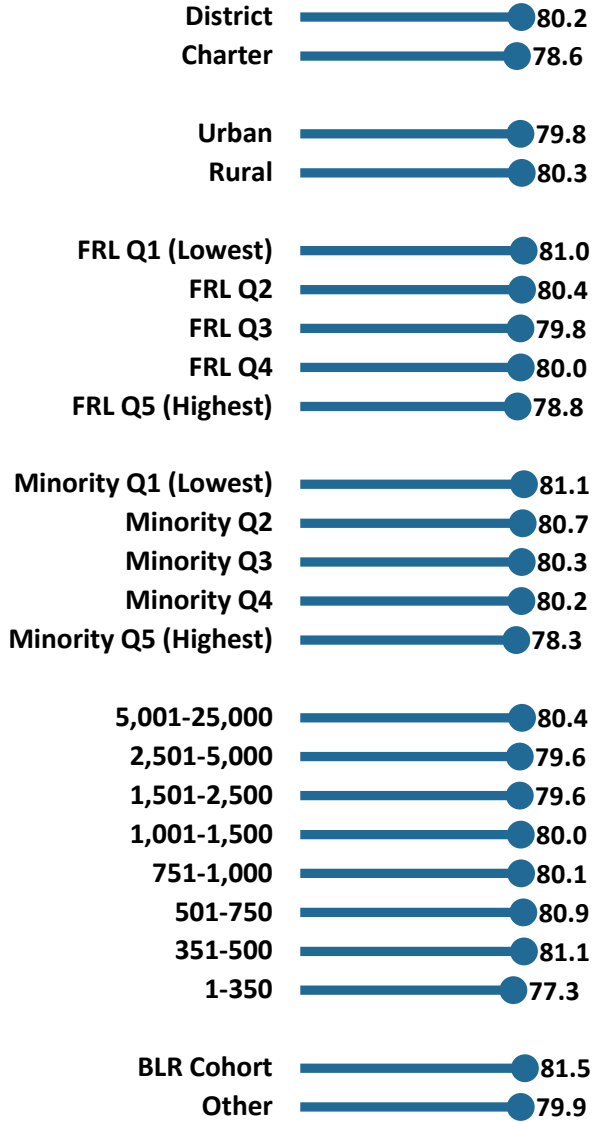


**Pct. of 6th Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**

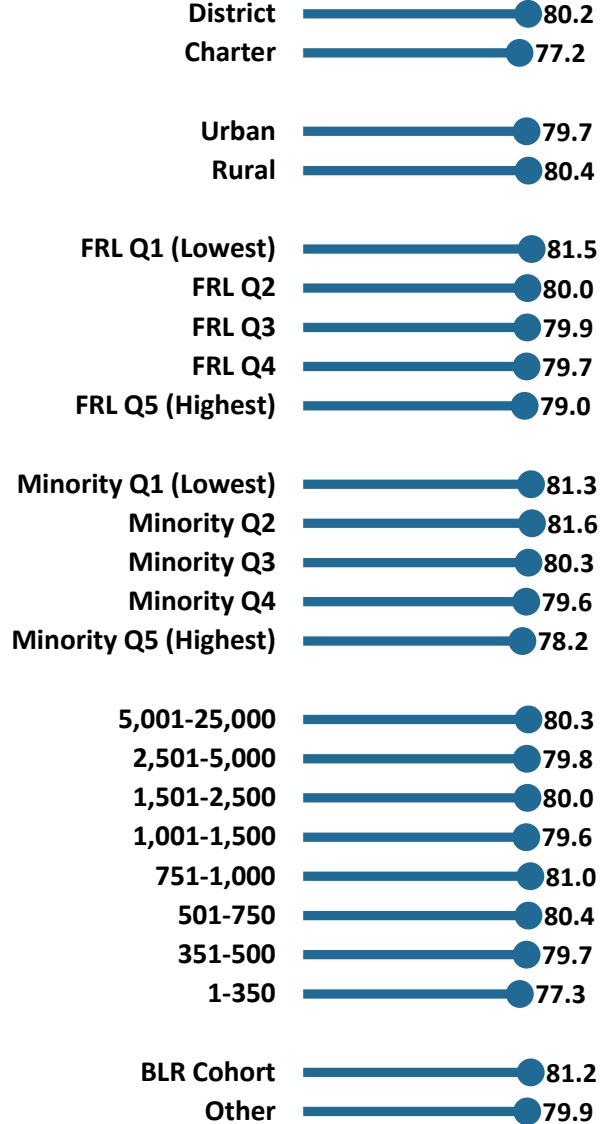


6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 6th Grade - ELA**

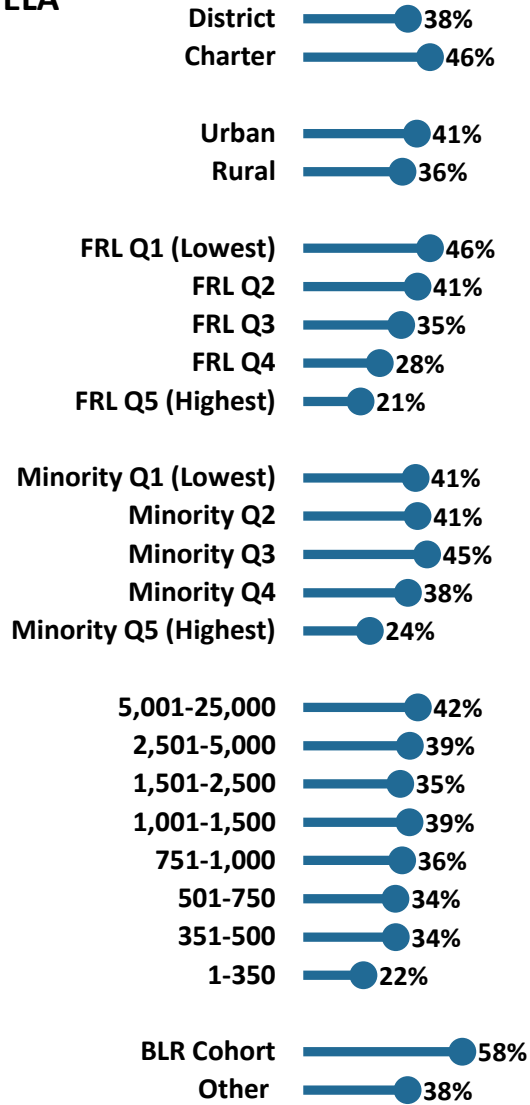


**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 6th Grade - Math**

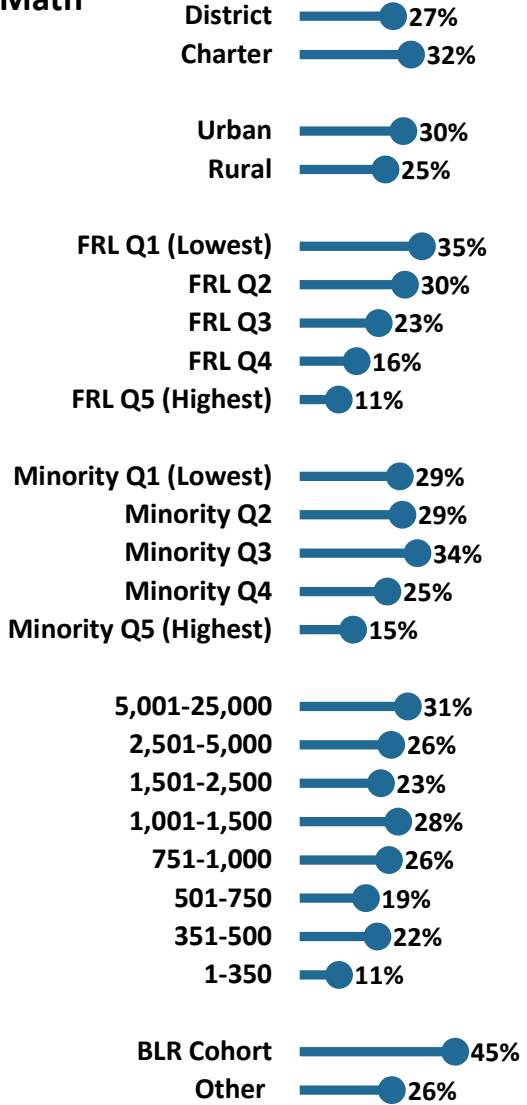


*9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS*

**Pct. of 9th Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**



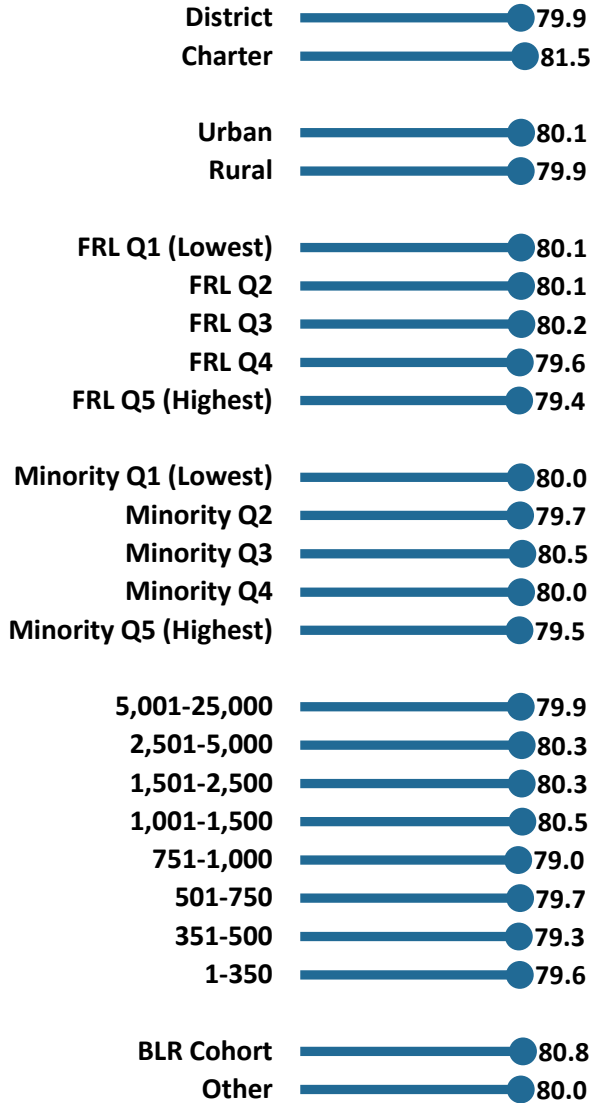
**Pct. of 9th Grade Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**



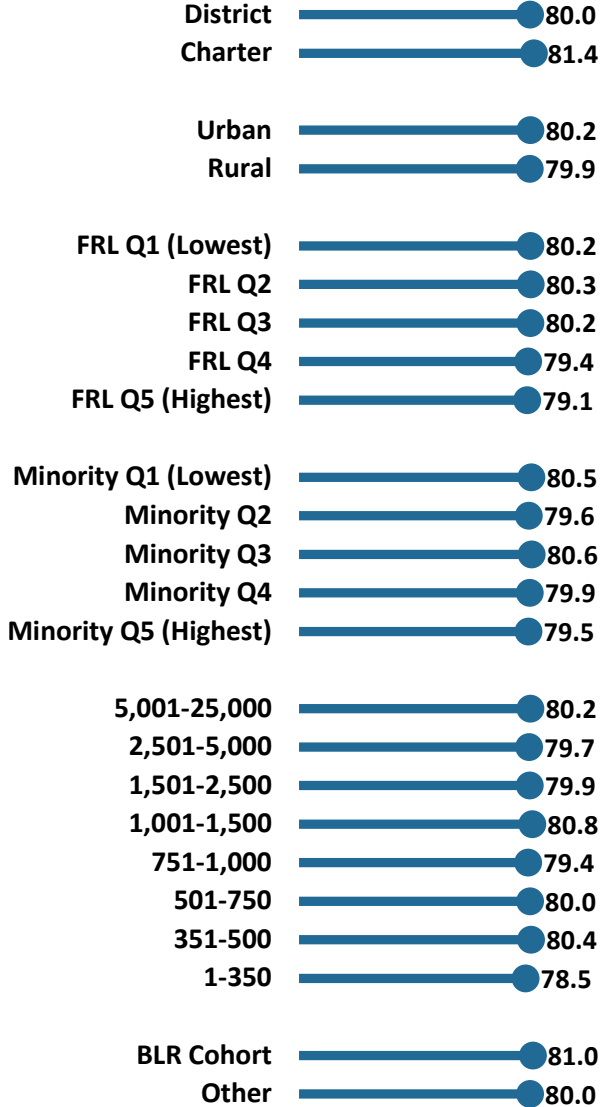


9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 9th Grade - ELA**

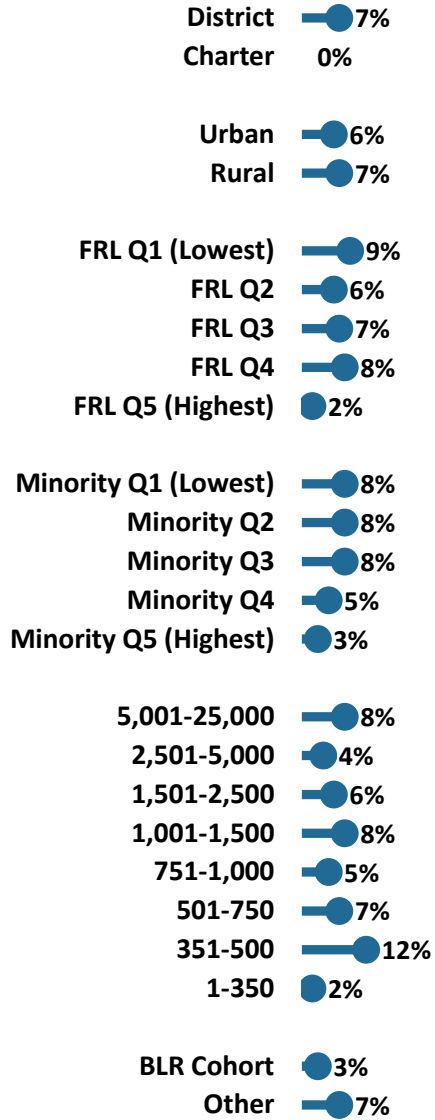


**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - 9th Grade - Math**

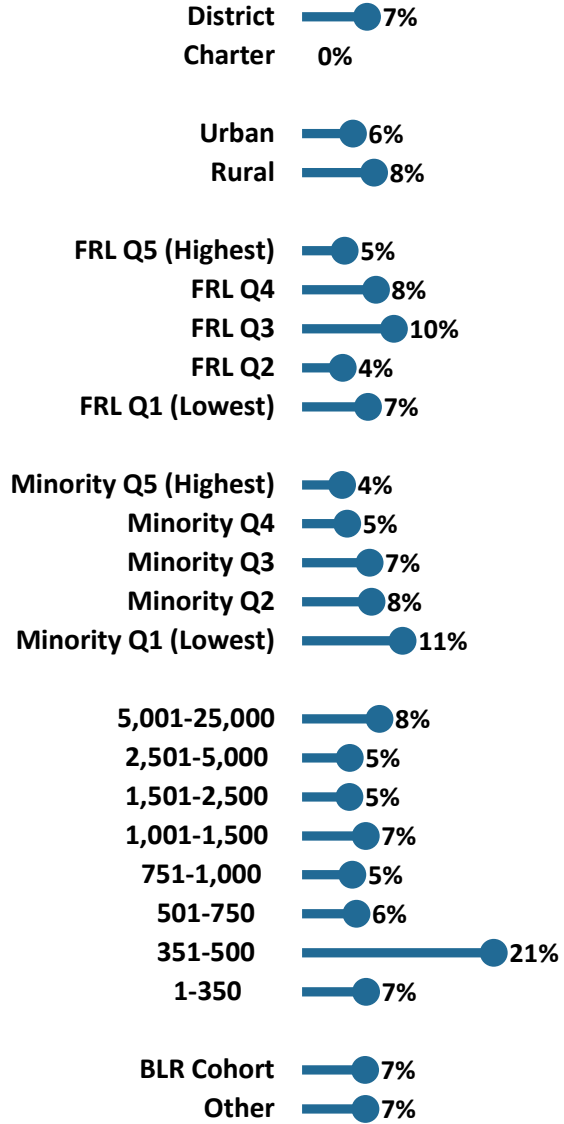


ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT STUDENTS

Pct. of ALE Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding, ELA

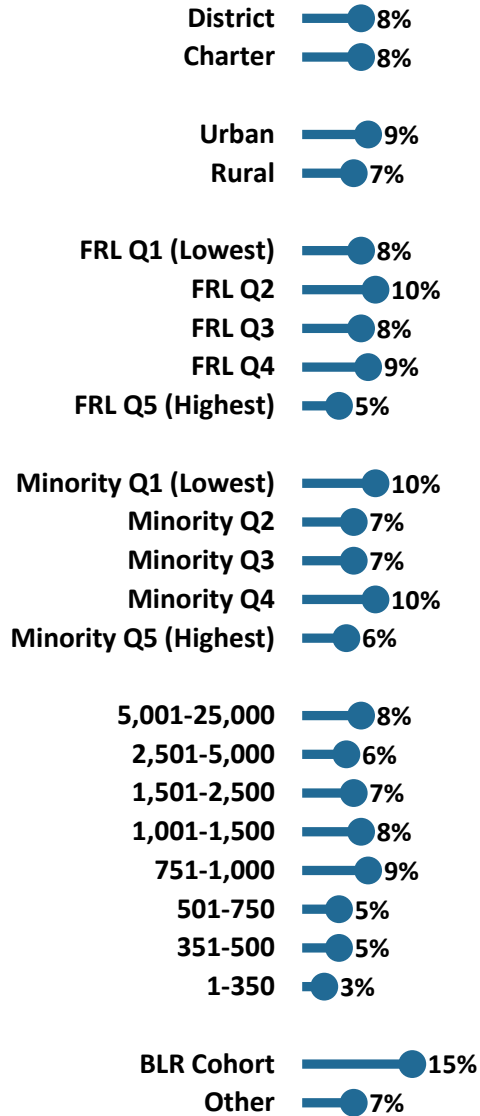


Pct. of ALE Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding, Math

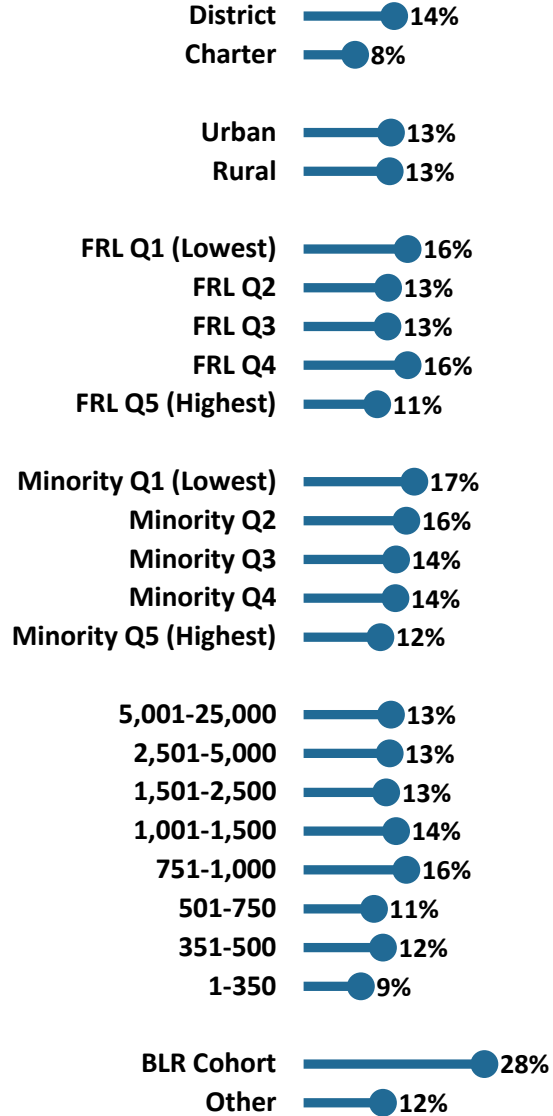


*ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS*

**Pct. of ELL Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**



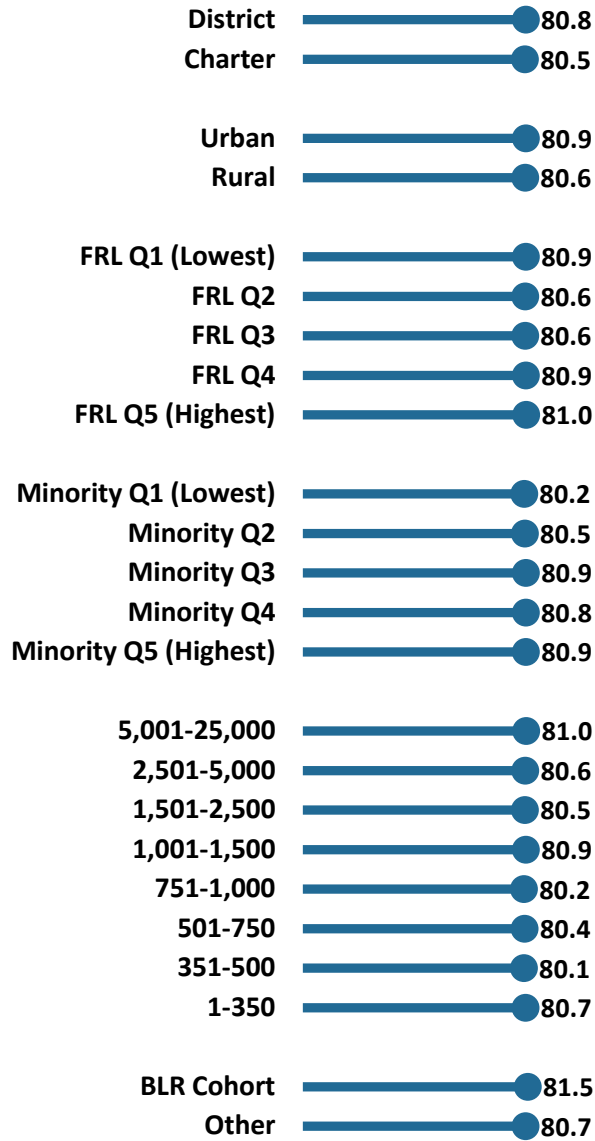
**Pct. of ELL Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**



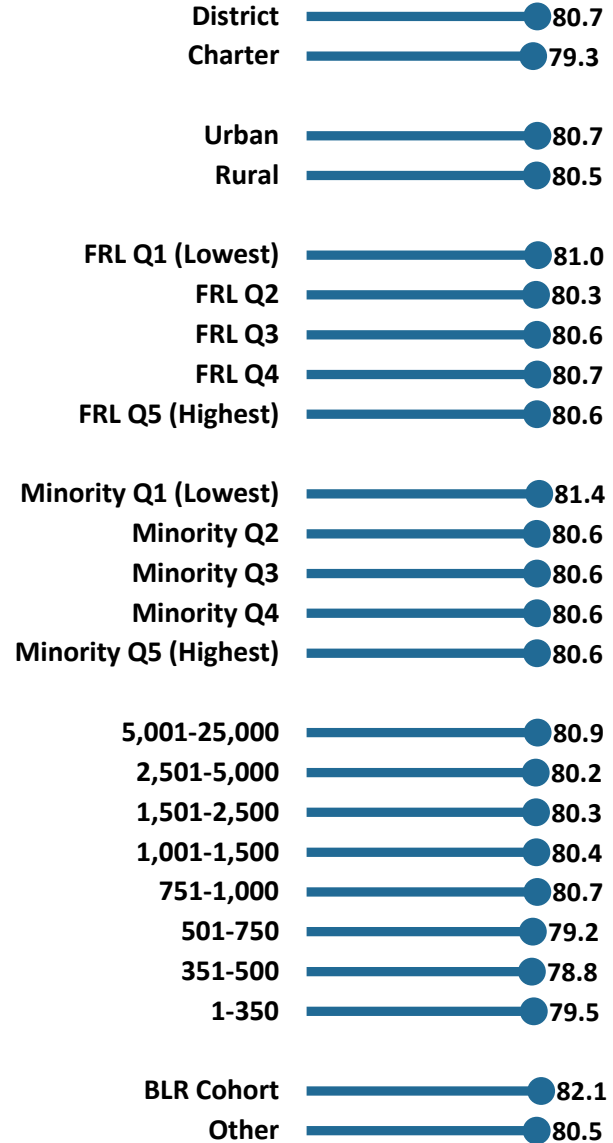
**Note:** The above scores for ELL students only include current ELL students. It does not include former ELL students that are still being monitored.

*ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS*

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - ELL Students - ELA**



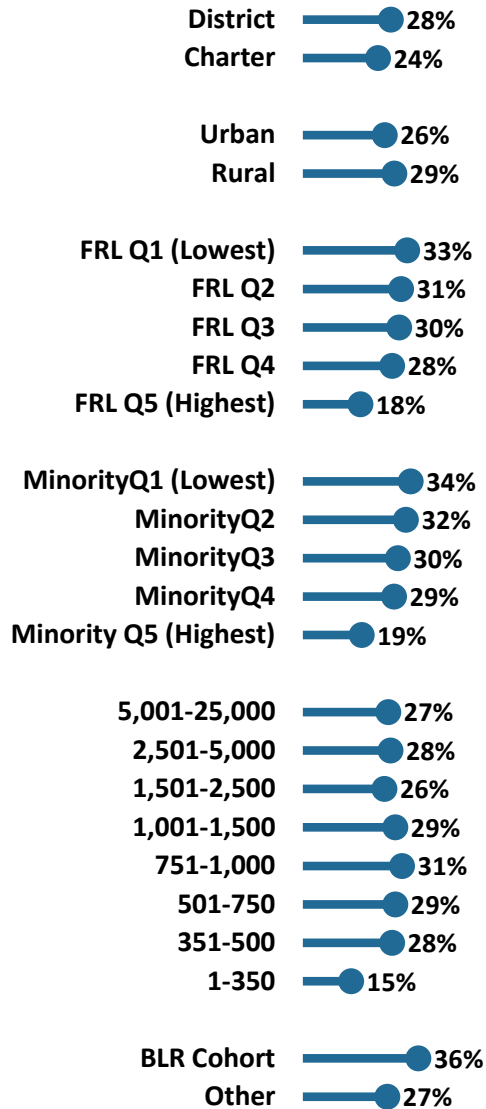
**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - ELL Students - Math**



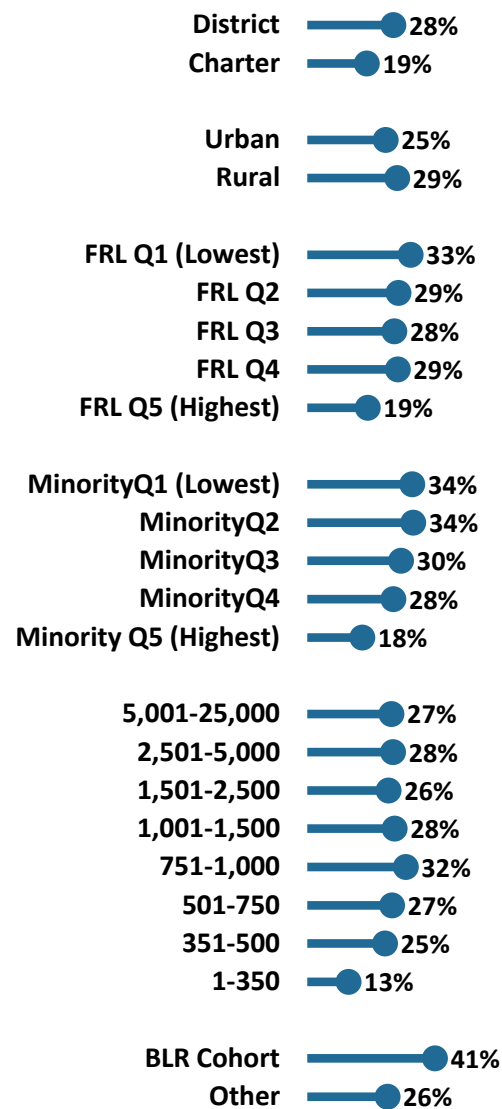
**Note:** The above scores for ELL students only include current ELL students. It does not include former ELL students that are still being monitored.

*ENHANCED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (OR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH STUDENTS)*

**Pct. of FRL Students Scoring Ready or Above, ELA**

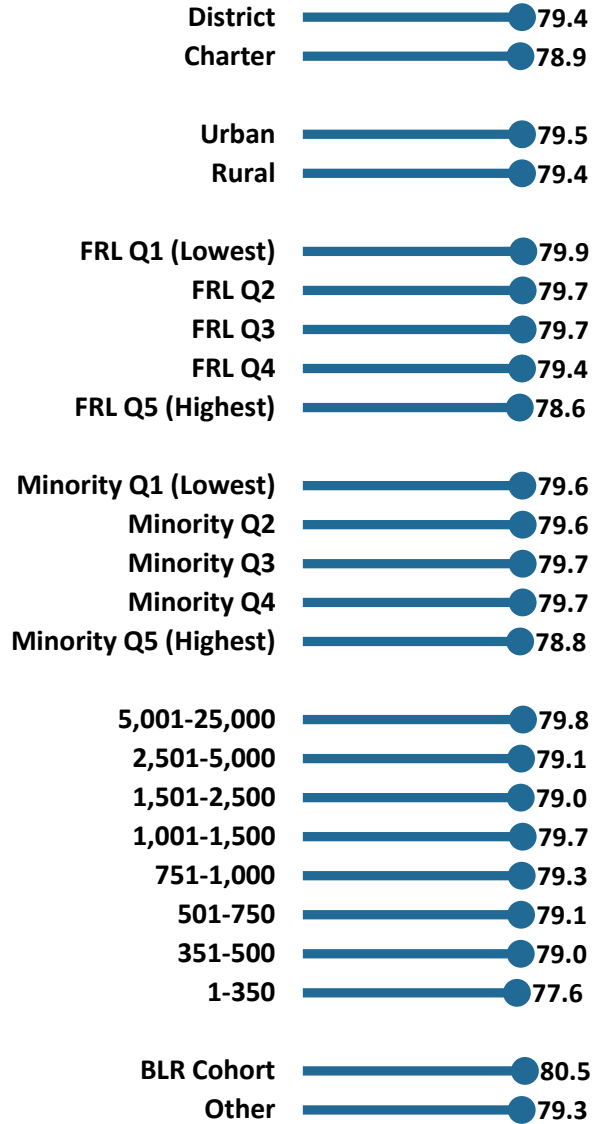


**Pct. of FRL Students Scoring Ready or Above, Math**

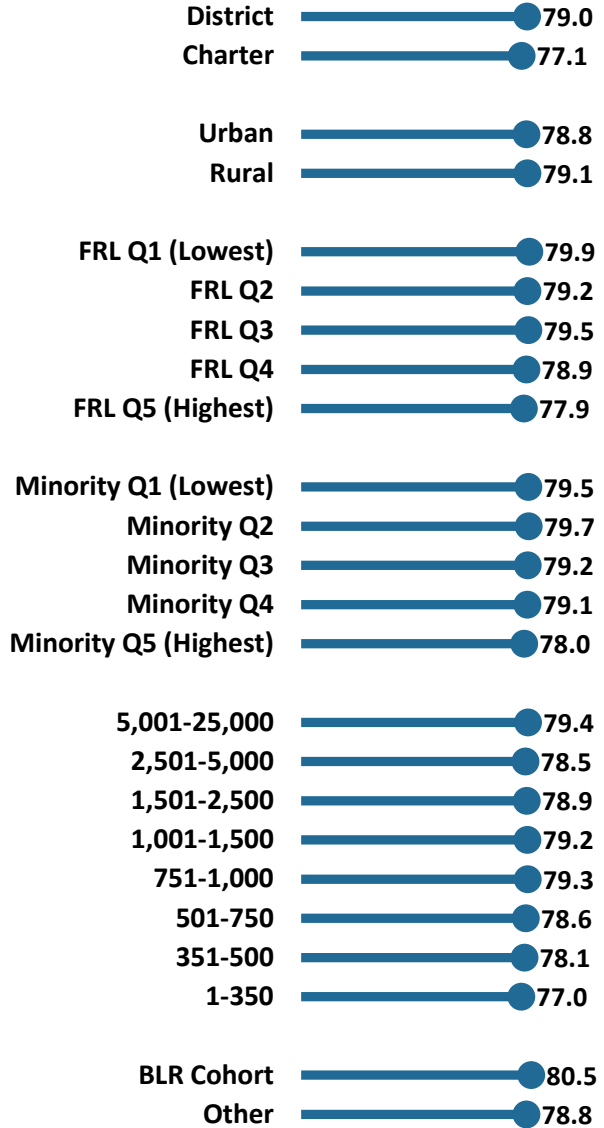


*ENHANCED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (OR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH STUDENTS)*

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - FRL Students - ELA**

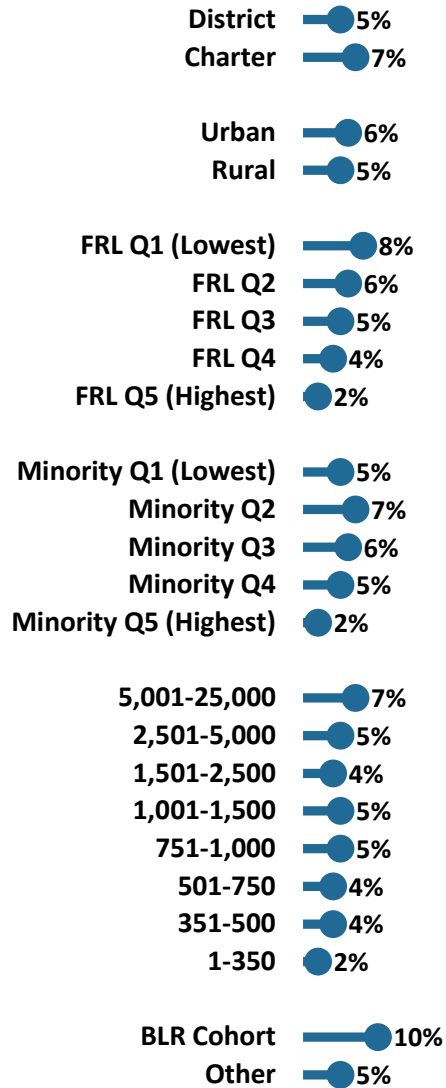


**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - FRL Students - Math**

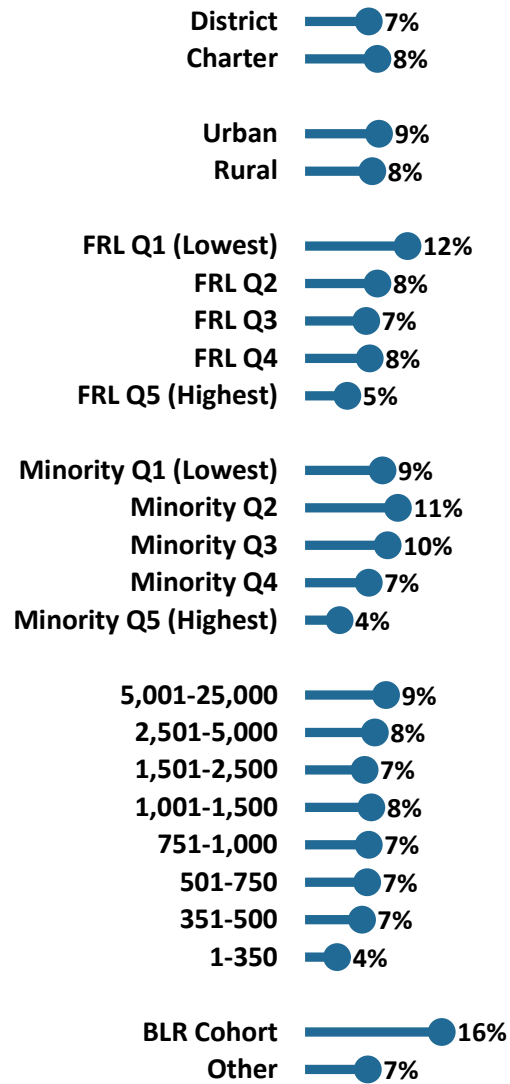


*STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*

**Pct. of Students with Disabilities Scoring Ready or Exceeding - ELA**

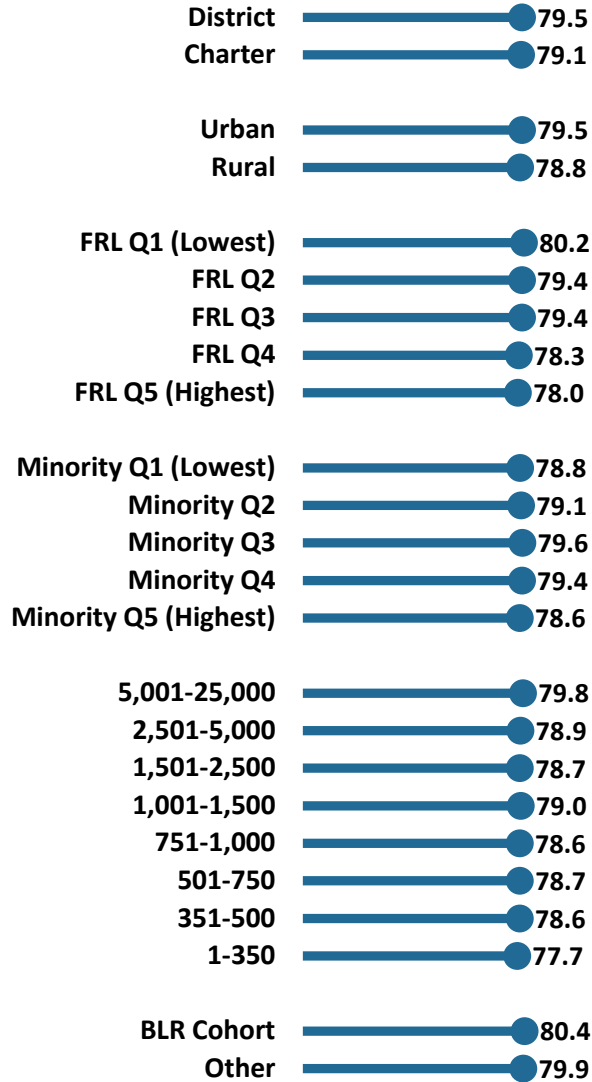


**Pct. of Students with Disabilities Scoring Ready or Exceeding - Math**

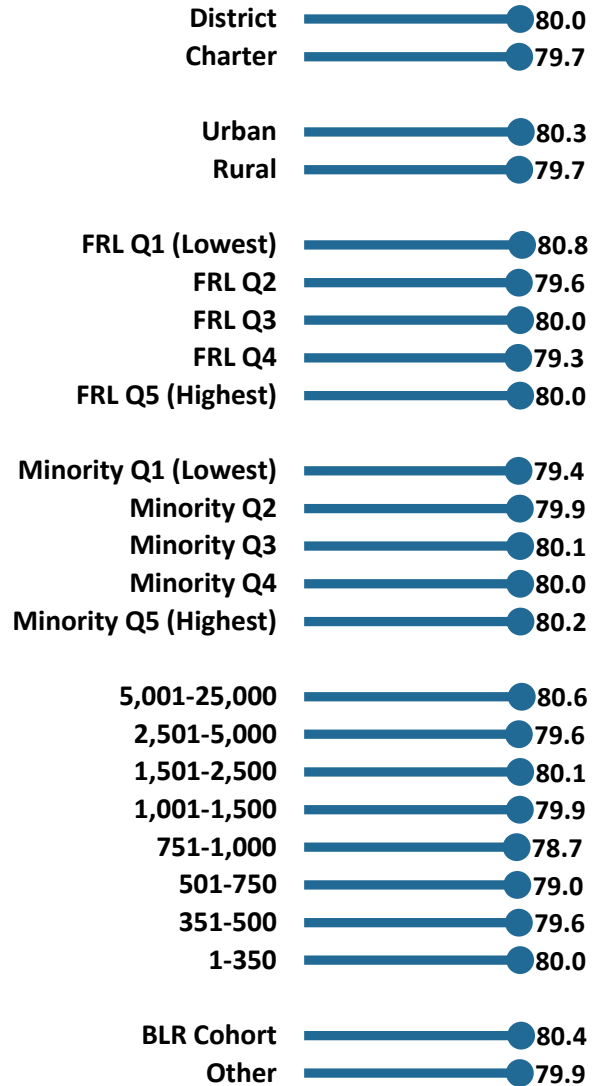


*STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*

**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - Students with Disabilities - ELA**



**Average ACT Aspire Growth Scores - Students with Disabilities - Math**





*REGIONAL TRENDS*

The following tables show the percentage of students scoring ready or exceeding in each geographic region in the state for all students and for each student population. Details for each of the six regions shown below can be found in the Methodologies and Definitions Report.

Percentage of Students Scoring Ready or Exceeding					
Region	All	ALE	ELL	FRL	SPED
<b>ELA</b>					
<b>Northwest</b>	43%	10%	8%	31%	7%
<b>Central</b>	37%	7%	8%	25%	5%
<b>North Central</b>	40%	9%	5%	35%	5%
<b>Upper Delta</b>	31%	3%	6%	26%	4%
<b>Southwest</b>	34%	4%	8%	28%	3%
<b>Lower Delta</b>	22%	1%	6%	18%	2%
<b>Math</b>					
<b>Northwest</b>	43%	9%	13%	32%	23%
<b>Central</b>	36%	7%	13%	25%	18%
<b>North Central</b>	40%	19%	12%	35%	18%
<b>Upper Delta</b>	31%	3%	13%	26%	14%
<b>Southwest</b>	33%	4%	15%	27%	15%
<b>Lower Delta</b>	21%	1%	12%	17%	7%

**Note:** The above scores for ELL students only include current ELL students. It does not include former ELL students that are still being monitored.

## Graduation Rates

The following graduation rates for Arkansas are considered a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR). “Under the ESEA [Elementary and Secondary Education Act], each state and LEA must calculate and report on its annual report card a four-year adjusted graduation rate (ACGR), disaggregated by subgroups.”<sup>28</sup> This guidance defines this rate as “the number of students who graduate from high school in four years with a regular high school diploma, plus all students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are assessed using an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards and who graduate with a state-defined alternative diploma, divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class...the cohort is based on the number of students who enter grade 9 for the first time adjusted by adding into the cohort any student who transfers in later during grade 9 or during the next three years and subtracting any student from the cohort who transfers out, emigrates to another country, transfers to a prison or juvenile facility, or dies during that same period.”<sup>29</sup>

According to the U.S. Department of Education, this measure allows for a “uniform and accurate measure of the four-year high school graduation rate that is comparable across States and consistently reported over time.”<sup>30</sup>

School Year	All Students	Economically Disadvantaged Students	Students with Disabilities	Limited English Proficient Students	Male Students	Female Students
2017	88.0%	84.9%	83.8%	83.2%	N/A	N/A
2018	89.2%	86.8%	84.6%	82.7%	86.6%	92.0%
2019	87.6%	84.8%	82.6%	82.8%	85.3%	90.0%
2020	88.8%	86.3%	84.1%	84.5%	86.4%	91.3%
2021	88.5%	85.8%	83.1%	84.1%	85.8%	91.3%

Source: DESE<sup>31</sup>

Note: Economically disadvantaged students are defined as students “participating in the Federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program.”<sup>32</sup> A change in data procedure dropped the graduation rates in 2019 from 2018.<sup>33</sup>

School Year	African American	Asian	Caucasian	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	Two or More Races
2017	83.4%	92.0%	90.0%	69.0%	85.7%	88.7%	86.1%
2018	85.6%	94.7%	91.2%	72.6%	85.8%	84.0%	89.9%
2019	83.4%	93.9%	89.6%	76.1%	84.7%	78.6%	87.1%
2020	84.5%	93.6%	90.9%	70.5%	86.8%	88.7%	85.8%
2021	84.5%	93.7%	90.1%	77.8%	87.6%	85.4%	86.2%

Source: DESE

<sup>28</sup> U.S. Department of Education (DOE). (January 2017). “Every Student Succeed Act High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance.” (p. 6). Retrieved from: [https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201215103932\\_Grad\\_Rate\\_Guidance\\_4\\_11\\_18%20\(1\).pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201215103932_Grad_Rate_Guidance_4_11_18%20(1).pdf)

<sup>29</sup> *Id.*

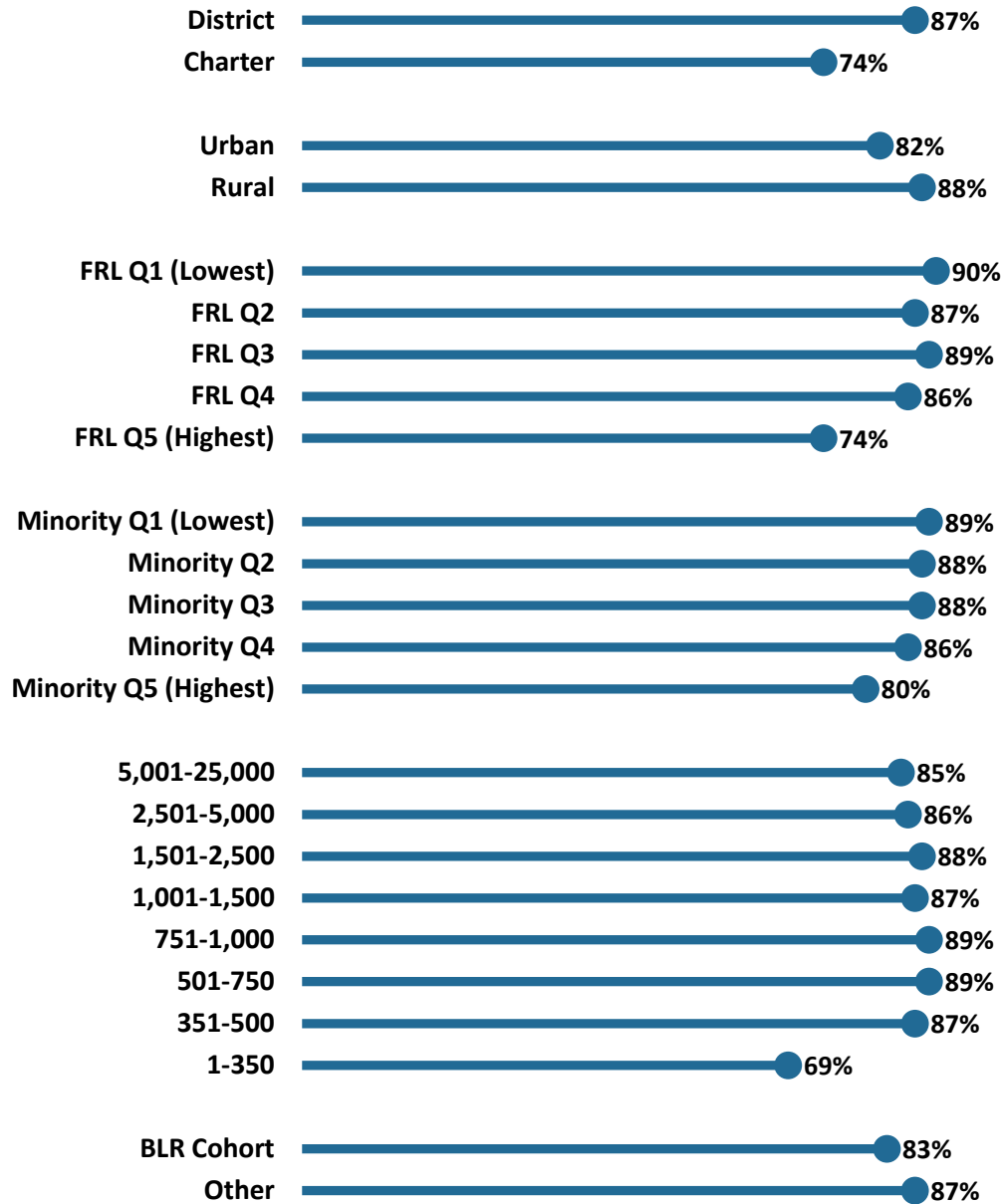
<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> DESE. “Graduation Rate/Graduation Rate Files.” Retrieved from: <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/public-school-accountability/school-performance/graduation-rate--graduation-rate-files>

<sup>32</sup> DESE. “Business Rules for Calculating the 2022 ESSA School Index Scores.” Retrieved from [https://adecm.ade.arkansas.gov/Attachments/2022\\_ESSA\\_Business\\_Rules\\_143646.pdf](https://adecm.ade.arkansas.gov/Attachments/2022_ESSA_Business_Rules_143646.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Email from Dr. Denise Airola, Director of Office of Innovation for Education, University of Arkansas. (June 2, 2022)

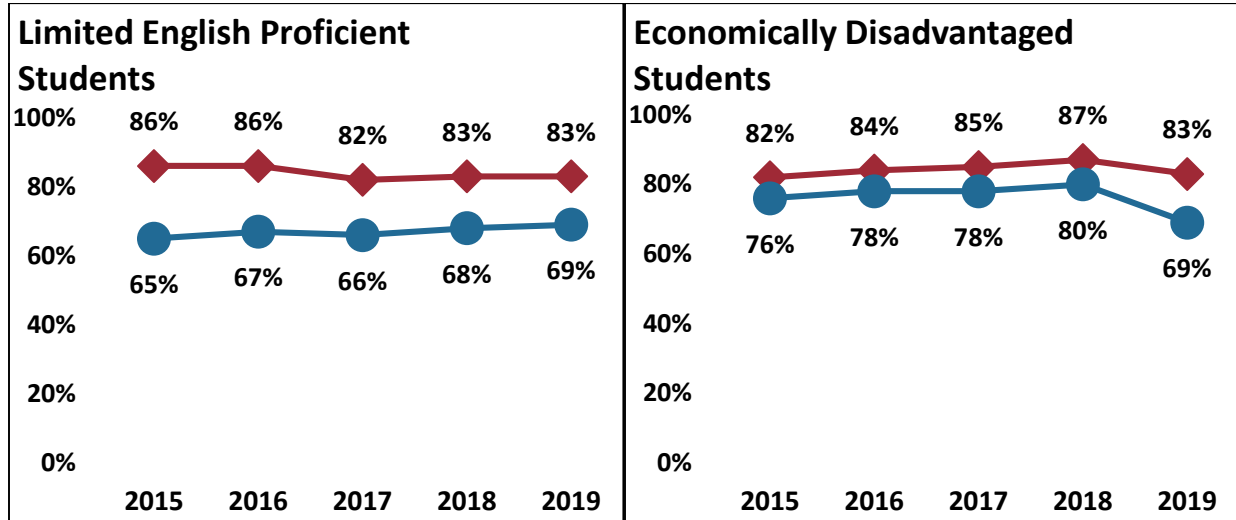
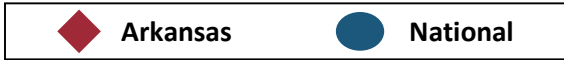
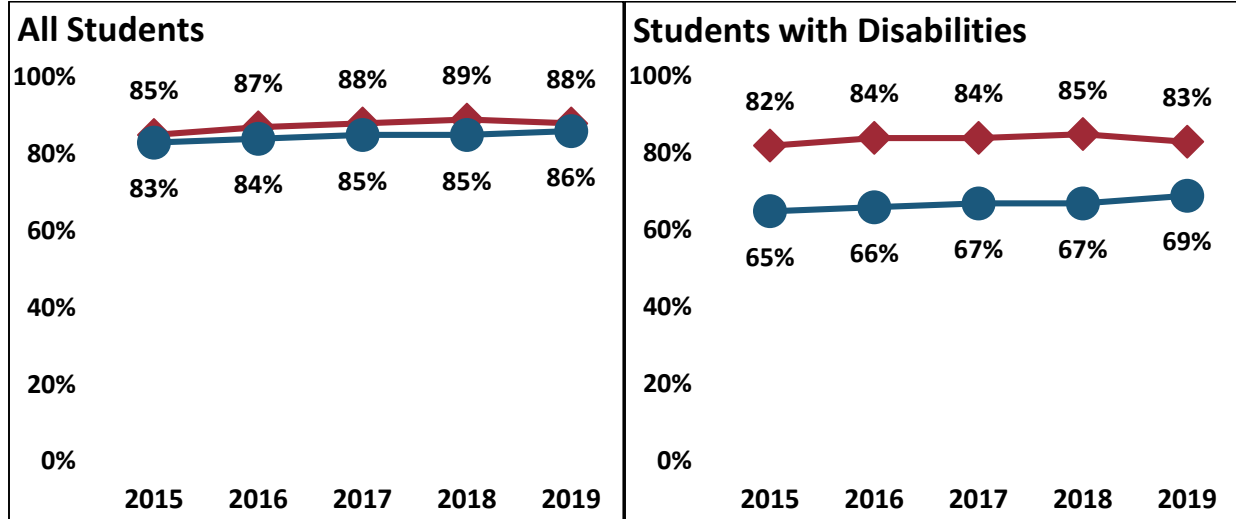
### Arkansas Four-Year Graduation Rate



Region	Four-Year Graduation Rate (2021)
Northwest	88%
Central	83%
North Central	88%
Upper Delta	88%
Southwest	88%
Lower Delta	85%

**NATIONAL COMPARISON**

The following graduation rates are also adjusted cohort graduation rates from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).<sup>34</sup> Graduation rates for the comparison states can be found in Appendix E.



<sup>34</sup> NCES. "Table 219.46 Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), by selected student characteristics and state: 2010-11 through 2018-19." Retrieved from: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20\\_219.46.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_219.46.asp)

## 2021 Legislation

*ACT 251* (SB124) requires the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide for statewide student assessments that are scored and returned for public school and school district use by August 1 of each year.

## Appendix A: NAEP Scores – All Students – Comparison States

	4th Grade Math	4th Grade Reading	8th Grade Math	8th Grade Reading
<b>Top NAEP States</b>				
Massachusetts	50%	45%	47%	45%
New Jersey	48%	42%	44%	43%
New Hampshire	46%	38%	38%	38%
Minnesota	53%	38%	44%	34%
Wyoming	48%	41%	37%	34%
Virginia	48%	38%	38%	33%
Vermont	39%	37%	38%	40%
Indiana	47%	37%	37%	37%
Connecticut	45%	40%	39%	41%
Utah	46%	40%	37%	38%
<b>Top SREB States</b>				
Virginia	48%	38%	38%	33%
Florida	48%	38%	31%	34%
Maryland	39%	35%	33%	36%
No. Carolina	41%	36%	37%	33%
Kentucky	40%	35%	29%	33%
Georgia	36%	32%	31%	32%
Tennessee	40%	35%	31%	32%
Texas	44%	30%	30%	25%
<b>Contiguous States</b>				
Missouri	39%	34%	32%	33%
Tennessee	40%	35%	31%	32%
Texas	44%	30%	30%	25%
Oklahoma	35%	29%	26%	26%
Arkansas	<b><u>33%</u></b>	<b><u>31%</u></b>	<b><u>27%</u></b>	<b><u>30%</u></b>
Mississippi	39%	32%	24%	25%
Louisiana	29%	26%	23%	27%

Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.

## Appendix B: NAEP Scores – By Race/Ethnicity – Comparison States

	4th Grade Math			4th Grade Reading			8th Grade Math			8th Grade Reading		
	B	H	W	B	H	W	B	H	W	B	H	W
<b>Top NAEP States</b>												
<b>Massachusetts</b>	28%	30%	59%	24%	25%	54%	21%	24%	55%	26%	26%	51%
<b>New Jersey</b>	24%	30%	61%	23%	26%	53%	19%	23%	56%	21%	21%	53%
<b>New Hampshire</b>	29%	26%	47%	N/A	26%	39%	20%	22%	39%	N/A	N/A	39%
<b>Minnesota</b>	26%	21%	65%	19%	19%	46%	14%	21%	53%	11%	11%	41%
<b>Wyoming</b>	N/A	36%	52%	N/A	30%	44%	N/A	25%	41%	N/A	N/A	38%
<b>Virginia</b>	26%	36%	57%	19%	26%	46%	16%	30%	46%	15%	15%	41%
<b>Vermont</b>	N/A	N/A	40%	N/A	N/A	37%	N/A	N/A	39%	N/A	N/A	41%
<b>Indiana</b>	20%	34%	54%	17%	24%	43%	15%	24%	43%	16%	16%	42%
<b>Connecticut</b>	21%	26%	56%	17%	22%	53%	14%	17%	50%	22%	22%	51%
<b>Utah</b>	N/A	25%	52%	N/A	20%	46%	N/A	15%	43%	N/A	N/A	43%
<b>Top SREB States</b>												
<b>Virginia</b>	26%	36%	57%	19%	26%	46%	16%	30%	46%	15%	22%	41%
<b>Florida</b>	28%	43%	59%	23%	34%	46%	13%	26%	42%	17%	30%	45%
<b>Maryland</b>	23%	27%	54%	22%	22%	48%	14%	18%	50%	20%	21%	50%
<b>No. Carolina</b>	22%	32%	56%	20%	23%	49%	19%	26%	47%	14%	28%	42%
<b>Kentucky</b>	20%	27%	44%	14%	25%	39%	11%	20%	32%	14%	27%	36%
<b>Georgia</b>	19%	25%	52%	17%	23%	48%	14%	25%	43%	18%	25%	43%
<b>Tennessee</b>	23%	20%	49%	18%	21%	43%	12%	19%	38%	15%	22%	37%
<b>Texas</b>	32%	35%	59%	16%	21%	48%	16%	21%	44%	11%	19%	35%
<b>Contiguous States</b>												
<b>Missouri</b>	15%	35%	45%	18%	28%	38%	11%	22%	36%	12%	28%	37%
<b>Tennessee</b>	23%	20%	49%	18%	21%	43%	12%	19%	38%	15%	22%	37%
<b>Texas</b>	32%	35%	59%	16%	21%	48%	16%	21%	44%	11%	19%	35%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	18%	21%	42%	13%	19%	35%	7%	19%	31%	13%	16%	32%
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Mississippi</b>	22%	42%	55%	19%	34%	43%	10%	23%	38%	12%	30%	37%
<b>Louisiana</b>	13%	20%	43%	13%	24%	37%	9%	22%	34%	13%	31%	36%

Note: "B" = Black; "H" = Hispanic; "W" = White

Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.

## Appendix C: NAEP Scores – By Gender – Comparison States

	4th Grade Math		4th Grade Reading		8th Grade Math		8th Grade Reading	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Top NAEP States</b>								
Massachusetts	52%	48%	40%	51%	46%	49%	39%	51%
New Jersey	50%	46%	39%	45%	45%	43%	38%	48%
New Hampshire	49%	42%	34%	43%	41%	36%	31%	44%
Minnesota	56%	50%	37%	40%	43%	45%	27%	41%
Wyoming	51%	44%	39%	42%	35%	39%	28%	40%
Virginia	50%	46%	36%	41%	38%	38%	26%	41%
Vermont	41%	37%	33%	41%	38%	38%	34%	47%
Indiana	51%	43%	34%	41%	39%	36%	31%	43%
Connecticut	49%	41%	36%	44%	38%	40%	35%	47%
Utah	49%	43%	36%	45%	40%	35%	32%	44%
<b>Top SREB States</b>								
Virginia	50%	46%	36%	41%	38%	38%	26%	41%
Florida	51%	44%	33%	42%	31%	30%	30%	38%
Maryland	41%	37%	33%	37%	33%	32%	32%	40%
No. Carolina	43%	40%	31%	41%	35%	38%	27%	39%
Kentucky	41%	39%	33%	37%	29%	29%	28%	39%
Georgia	37%	36%	30%	35%	31%	31%	26%	38%
Tennessee	43%	37%	33%	36%	30%	32%	26%	38%
Texas	46%	41%	27%	34%	29%	30%	21%	29%
<b>Contiguous States</b>								
Missouri	41%	37%	30%	38%	32%	31%	26%	41%
Tennessee	43%	37%	33%	36%	30%	32%	26%	38%
Texas	46%	41%	27%	34%	29%	30%	21%	29%
Oklahoma	37%	32%	27%	30%	27%	24%	20%	31%
Arkansas	<b>35%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Mississippi	41%	37%	29%	34%	24%	25%	21%	29%
Louisiana	31%	26%	22%	29%	23%	23%	24%	31%

Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.



## Appendix D: NAEP Scores – Special Populations – Comparison States

	4th Grade Math			4th Grade Reading			8th Grade Math			8th Grade Reading		
	ELL	NSL	SPED	ELL	NSL	SPED	ELL	NSL	SPED	ELL	NSL	SPED
<b>Top NAEP States</b>												
<b>Massachusetts</b>	15%	28%	20%	10%	26%	15%	4%	25%	11%	3%	24%	11%
<b>New Jersey</b>	13%	26%	19%	6%	22%	15%	3%	22%	12%	3%	23%	11%
<b>New Hampshire</b>	18%	28%	10%	20%	21%	9%	-	19%	6%	-	20%	7%
<b>Minnesota</b>	15%	31%	24%	6%	2%	13%	4%	22%	12%	1%	18%	7%
<b>Wyoming</b>	15%	33%	17%	13%	27%	10%	-	24%	6%	-	21%	6%
<b>Virginia</b>	19%	30%	19%	9%	20%	9%	2%	19%	9%	1%	18%	7%
<b>Vermont</b>	17%	27%	8%	23%	21%	4%	-	23%	5%	-	28%	5%
<b>Indiana</b>	30%	33%	23%	19%	24%	9%	17%	23%	9%	19%	25%	8%
<b>Connecticut</b>	15%	23%	12%	7%	20%	7%	1%	18%	9%	4%	23%	6%
<b>Utah</b>	15%	32%	19%	10%	22%	15%	8%	1%	8%	5%	25%	9%
<b>Top SREB States</b>												
<b>Virginia</b>	19%	30%	19%	9%	20%	9%	2%	19%	9%	1%	18%	7%
<b>Florida</b>	17%	38%	21%	6%	28%	12%	3%	19%	11%	6%	25%	10%
<b>Maryland</b>	15%	21%	8%	11%	19%	12%	2%	14%	5%	1%	18%	8%
<b>No. Carolina</b>	17%	26%	11%	10%	21%	8%	4%	20%	6%	3%	20%	7%
<b>Kentucky</b>	11%	29%	15%	7%	25%	11%	4%	18%	4%	3%	23%	8%
<b>Georgia</b>	14%	22%	15%	11%	20%	10%	4%	17%	5%	3%	21%	8%
<b>Tennessee</b>	8%	22%	20%	4%	18%	14%	3%	15%	5%	2%	17%	5%
<b>Texas</b>	29%	32%	13%	12%	19%	8%	8%	19%	5%	4%	15%	3%
<b>Contiguous States</b>												
<b>Missouri</b>	21%	28%	12%	15%	23%	8%	-	18%	5%	-	21%	6%
<b>Tennessee</b>	8%	22%	20%	4%	18%	14%	3%	15%	5%	2%	17%	5%
<b>Texas</b>	29%	32%	13%	12%	19%	8%	8%	19%	5%	4%	15%	3%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	11%	24%	13%	9%	20%	10%	6%	16%	5%	5%	17%	4%
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Mississippi</b>	37%	31%	17%	19%	26%	15%	-	17%	6%	-	19%	4%
<b>Louisiana</b>	9%	20%	11%	7%	18%	8%	-	14%	5%	-	19%	5%

Note: "ELL" = English Language Learners; "NSL" = National School Lunch Eligible Students; "SPED" = Students with Disabilities

Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.

## Appendix E: NCES Graduation Rates – Comparison States

	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Limited English Proficient Students	Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Top NAEP States</b>				
Massachusetts	88%	74%	65%	79%
New Jersey	91%	79%	75%	84%
New Hampshire	88%	72%	65%	77%
Minnesota	84%	63%	67%	71%
Wyoming	82%	59%	67%	72%
Virginia	88%	63%	56%	80%
Vermont	85%	71%	63%	76%
Indiana	87%	71%	76%	83%
Connecticut	89%	68%	71%	80%
Utah	87%	72%	73%	77%
<b>Top SREB States</b>				
Virginia	88%	63%	56%	80%
Florida	87%	81%	75%	83%
Maryland	87%	64%	54%	78%
No. Carolina	87%	70%	71%	82%
Kentucky	91%	76%	74%	88%
Georgia	82%	63%	59%	77%
Tennessee	91%	74%	72%	84%
Texas	90%	78%	78%	87%
<b>Contiguous States</b>				
Missouri	90%	77%	73%	83%
Tennessee	91%	74%	72%	84%
Texas	90%	78%	78%	87%
Oklahoma	85%	79%	69%	79%
<u>Arkansas</u>	<u>88%</u>	<u>83%</u>	<u>83%</u>	<u>85%</u>
Mississippi	85%	42%	66%	82%
Louisiana	80%	65%	41%	74%

Note: Please see the Methodologies and Definitions Report for a description of how the Top NAEP states were determined.