

Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education: The State of Student Achievement

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How to Read the Data

What we measure reflects what we value. No single measure tells the full story.

- Student Achievement is multi-dimensional
- Trends matter more than single-year snapshots
- Context matters

Student Achievement in North Carolina is improving, but there is still work to be done.



How to Read the Data

- Blue bars indicate 2025 was the highest result across 2023–2025
- Gray bars indicate 2025 was not the highest result
- Results include multiple measures (state tests, career and college readiness, graduation rate, etc.)
- Each measure reflects a different aspect of student readiness
- Focus on patterns and direction, not isolated results



How to Read the Data

- Acronyms
 - CTE – Career & Technical Education
 - EOC – End of Course Exam
 - EOG – End of Grade Exam
 - NC Extend1 - alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
 - GLP – Grade Level Proficient



How to Read the Data

- Acronyms – Student Groups
 - AMIN – American Indian
 - ASIA – Asian
 - BLCK – Black
 - HISP – Hispanic
 - MULT – Multi-Racial
 - WHITE – White
 - EDS – Economically Disadvantaged Students
 - ELS – English Learner
 - SWD – Students with Disabilities



By the Numbers - NC Public Schools

- **1.5 Million+** Number of Students
- **2,650+** Number of Schools
- **188,000+** Number of Education Professionals



By the Numbers - NC Public School Choices

- 229 magnet schools across the state with specialized themes
- 211 charter schools across 61 counties, plus 3 statewide remote charter academies
- 87 year-round schools in multiple districts across North Carolina
- 138 Early College High Schools
- Dual enrollment opportunities at all 58 community colleges
- 42 Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered across NC schools
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma programs in 33+ schools
- Cambridge International (CIE) high school programs in 8 districts
- More than 32,000 students participate in JROTC programs throughout the state
- North Carolina public schools offer instruction in 19+ languages
- NCVPS offers more than 135 high-quality online courses



Highlights — NC Public Schools



Four-year cohort graduation rate - 87.7%;
highest in the history of North Carolina



Participation and performance on Advanced Placement exams
- highest in the history of North Carolina with over 90,000 taking at least one exam and 72.1% received “passing” scores wherein many colleges will give college credit.

Highlights — NC Public Schools



Participation and performance on Career and Technical Education courses - 36.1% of our students took a CTE course (last year)—second best in the entire nation and last year, students earned more than 380,000 industry level credits, the most in the history of our state.



Participation and performance in college level courses while in high school - 54% of North Carolina's public school 2025 graduates took and passed a college level course.

Highlights — NC Public Schools

- The percentage of students who were proficient in reading and mathematics tests were the highest in the last 3 years for 12 of the 15 tests.
- Results for all race/ethnicity subgroups were the highest in the last three years (composite).
- All end of grade mathematics tests show an increase in the percentage of students proficient for the current year and the previous two years.



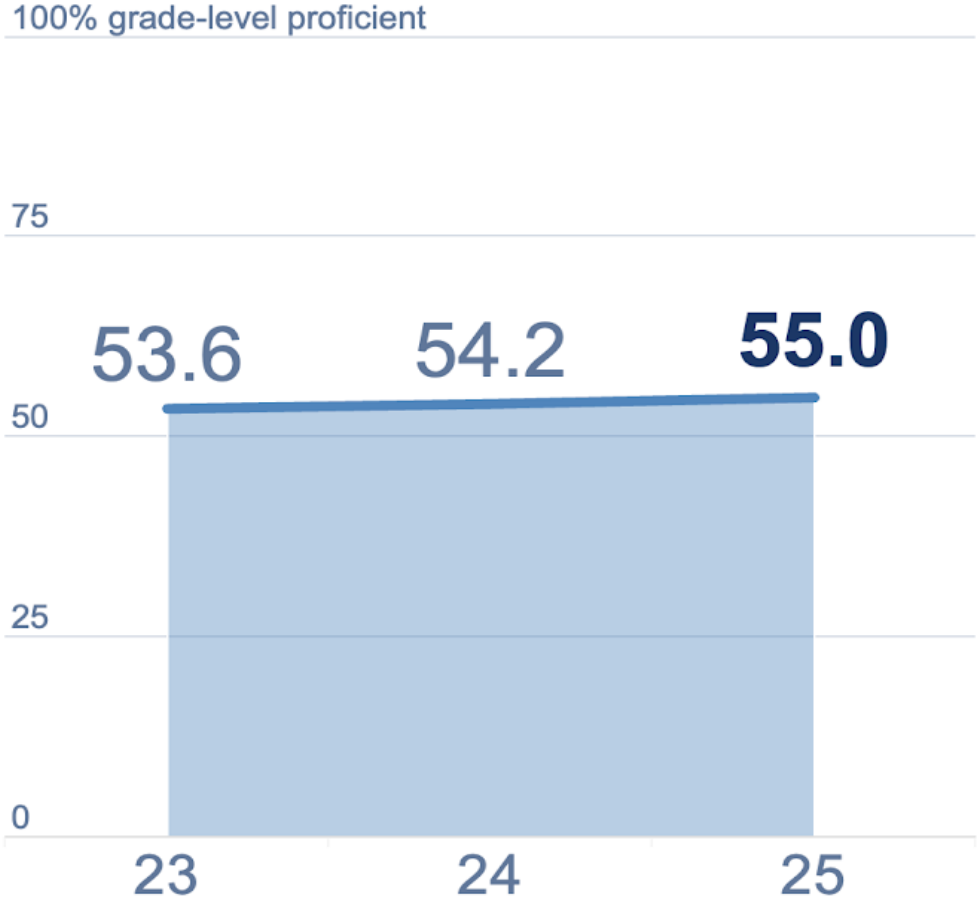
Performance Data

- Based on analysis of all end-of-grade (EOG), end-of-course (EOC) tests, and NCEExtend1 assessments, which are aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study in reading, mathematics, and science for all public schools in North Carolina.
 - Level 3 and above (grade-level proficiency, GLP)



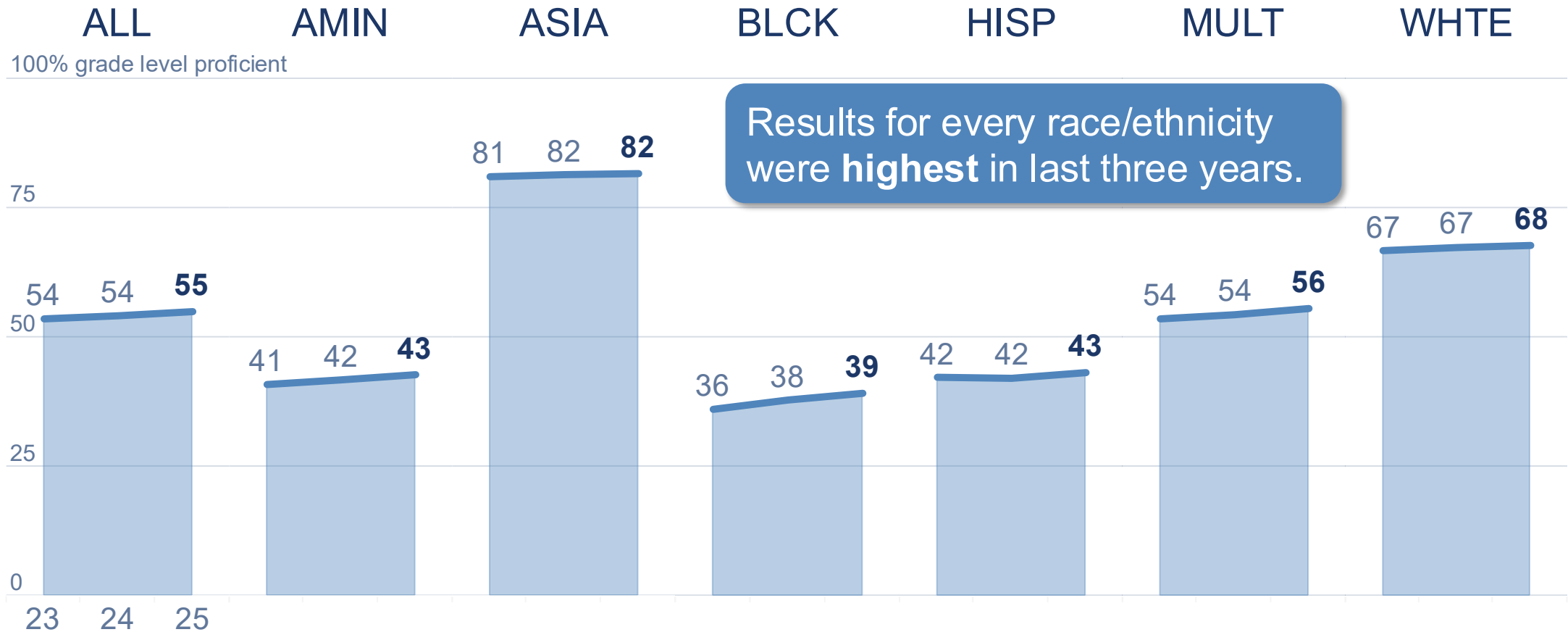
All Subjects and Grades Composite

Percent of students proficient on the composite of all grades and subjects by year (2023, 2024, 2025)



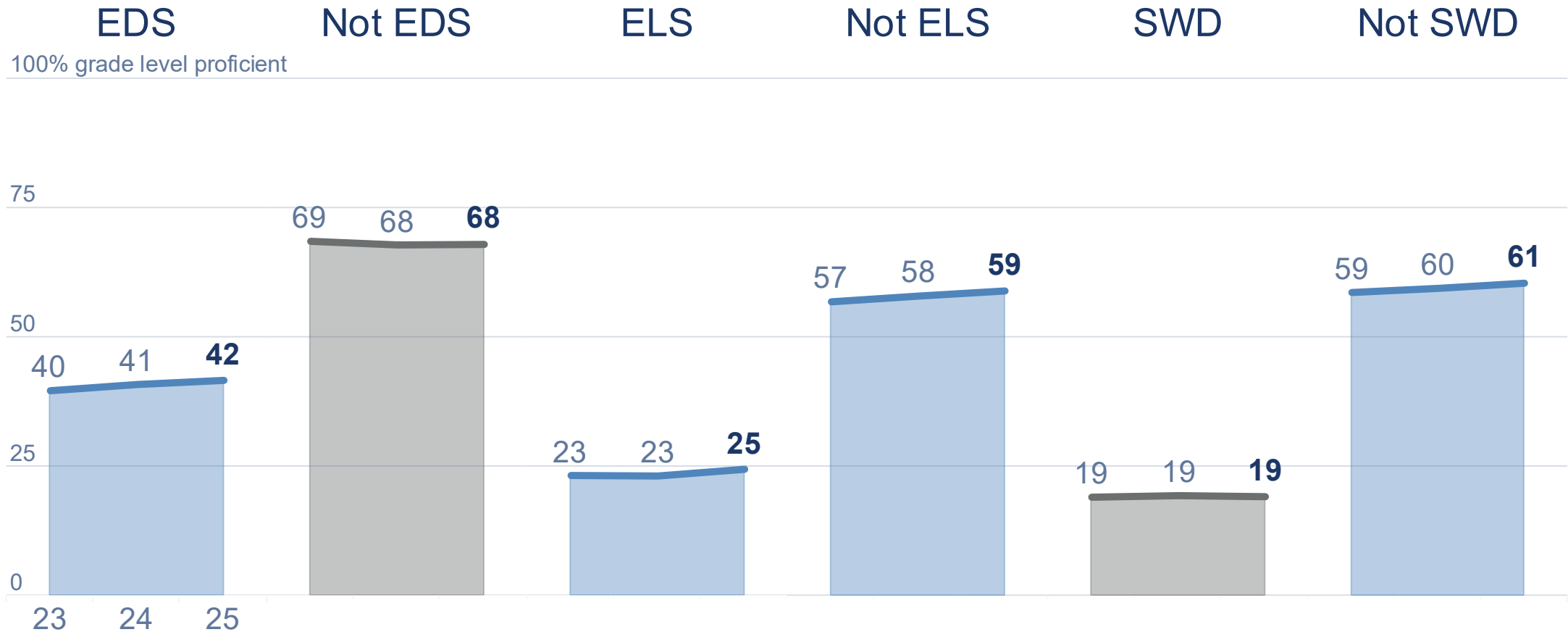
All Subjects and Grades Composite

Percent of students proficient on the composite of all grades and subjects by year (2023, 2024, 2025)



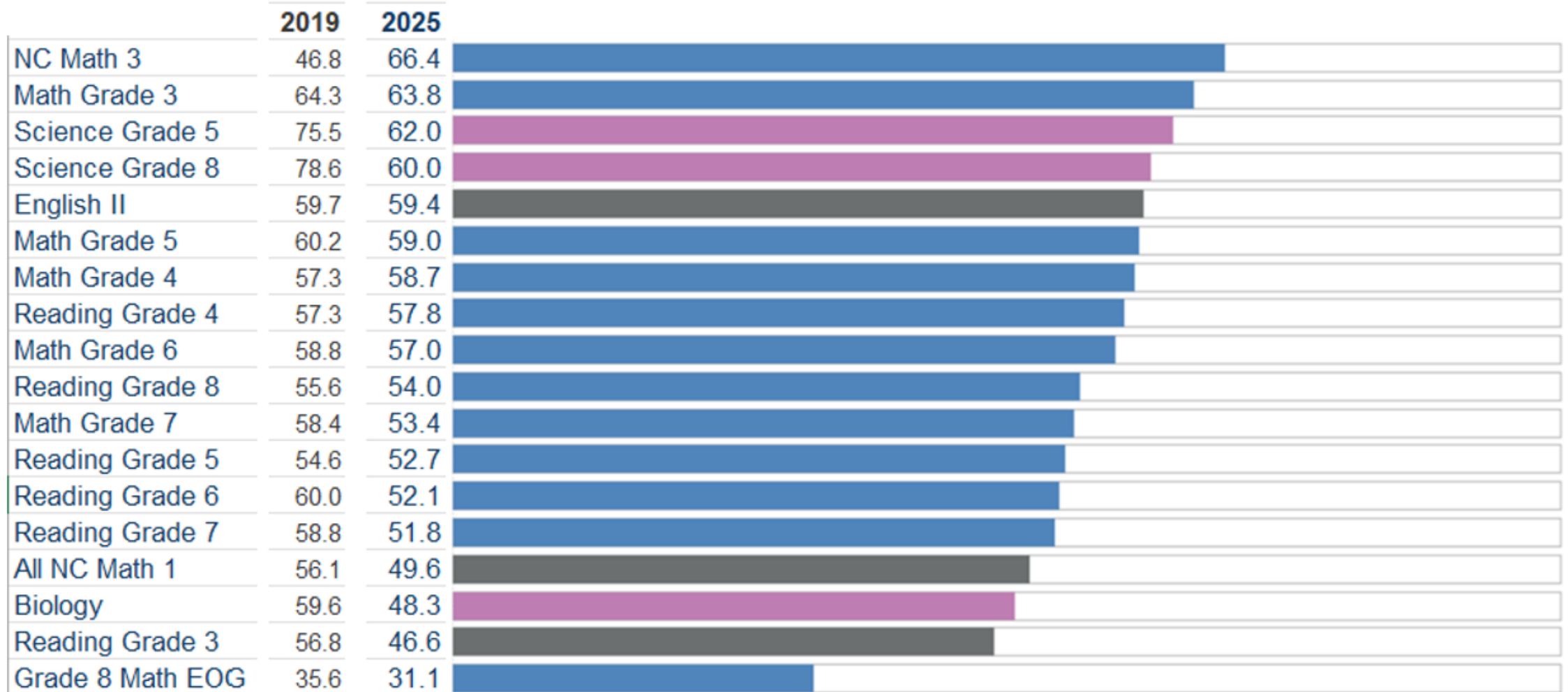
All Subjects and Grades Composite

Percent of students proficient on the composite of all grades and subjects by year (2023, 2024, 2025)



Grade-Level Proficiency Snapshot

Percent of students grade-level proficient by test (2025)



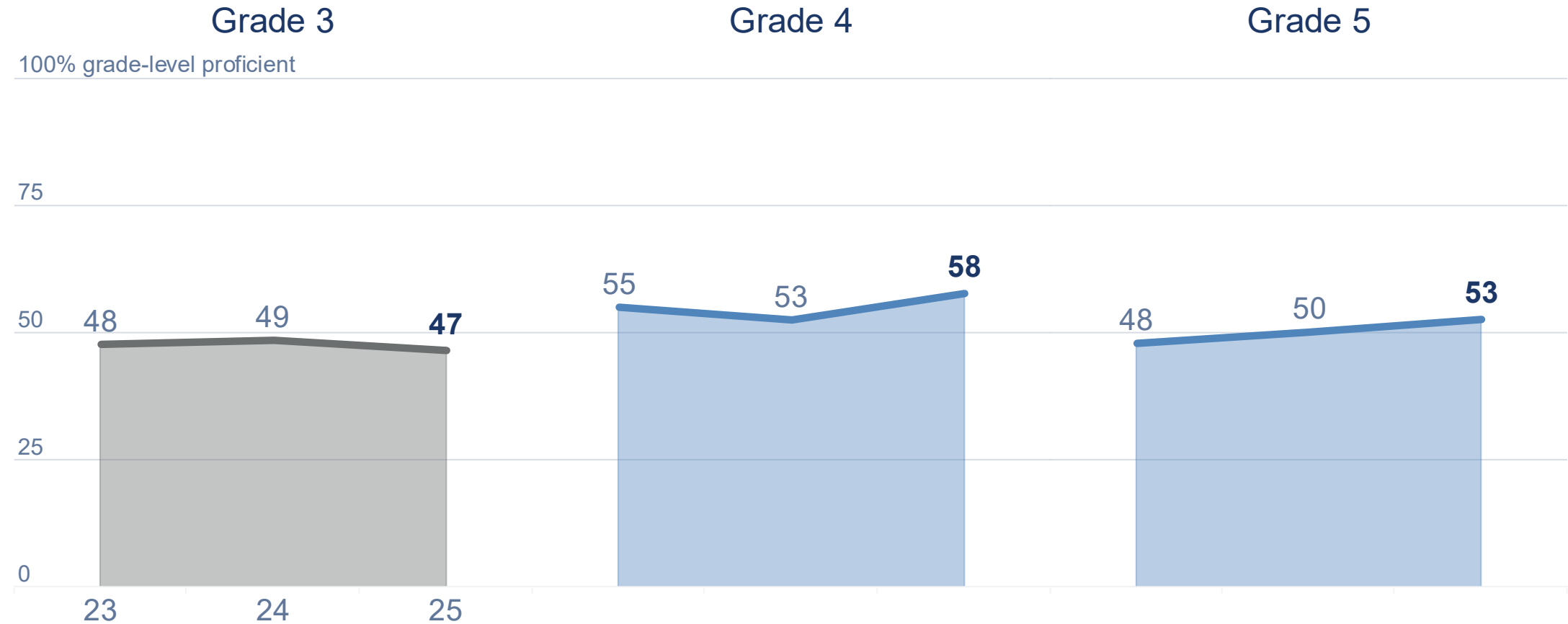
2025 was the **highest** in the last 3 years for 12 of 15 tests (blue bars).

Science tests were newly-implemented in 2025 (purple) and not compared to the previous years' data.



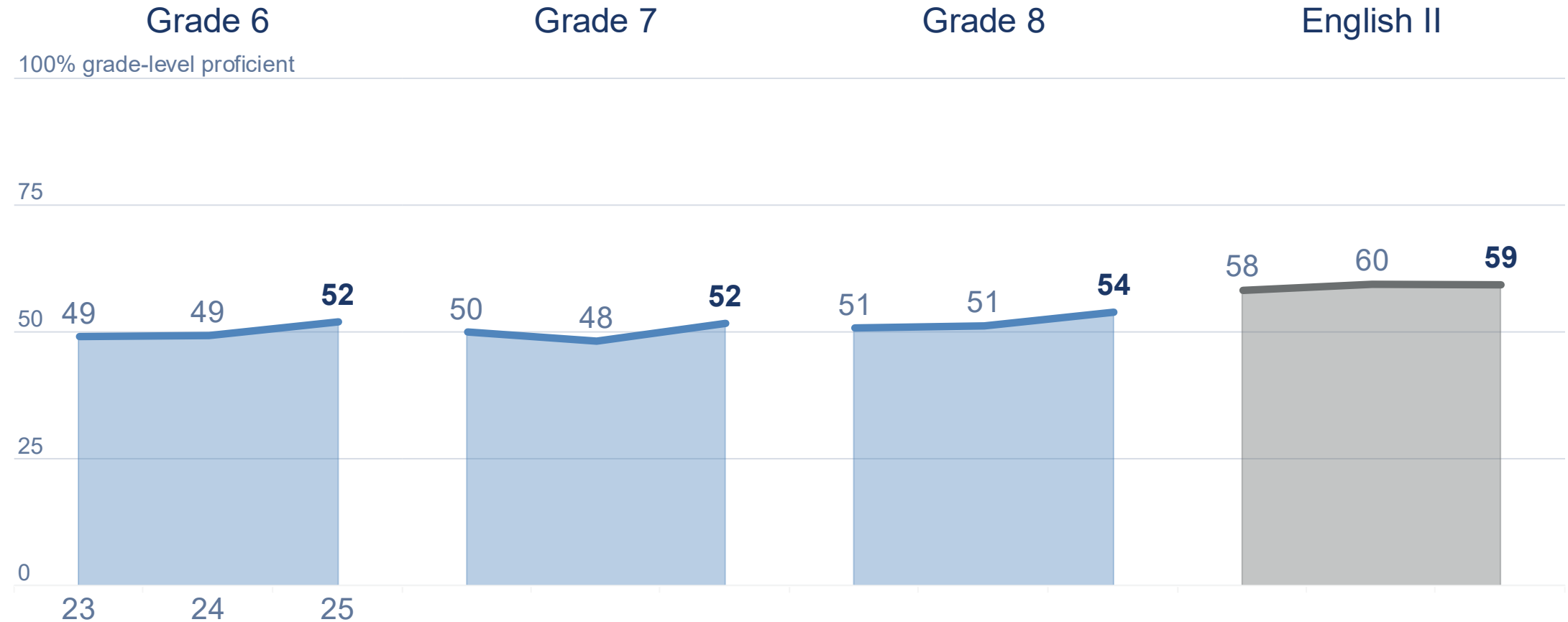
Reading Grades 3–5

Percent of students grade-level proficient by grade and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



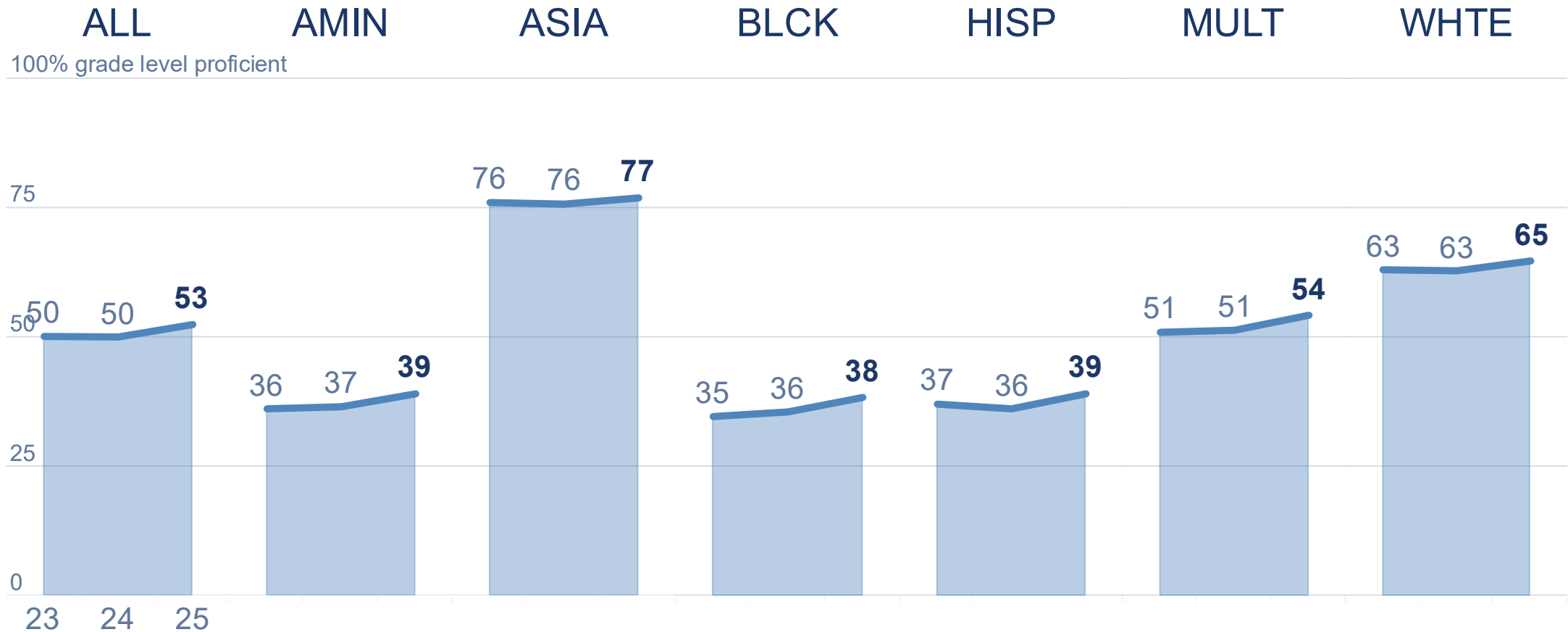
Reading Grades 6–8, English II

Percent of students grade-level proficient by grade and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



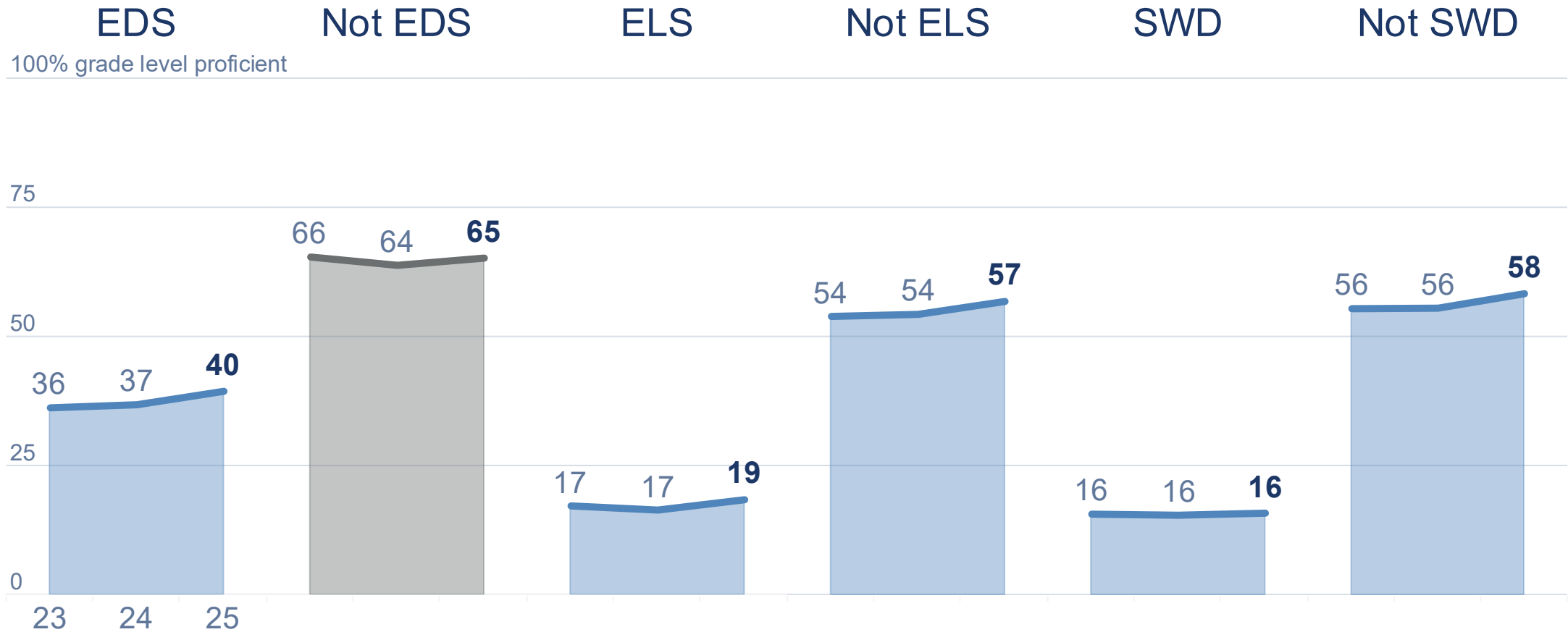
Reading Grades 3–8 Composite

Percent of students grade-level proficient by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



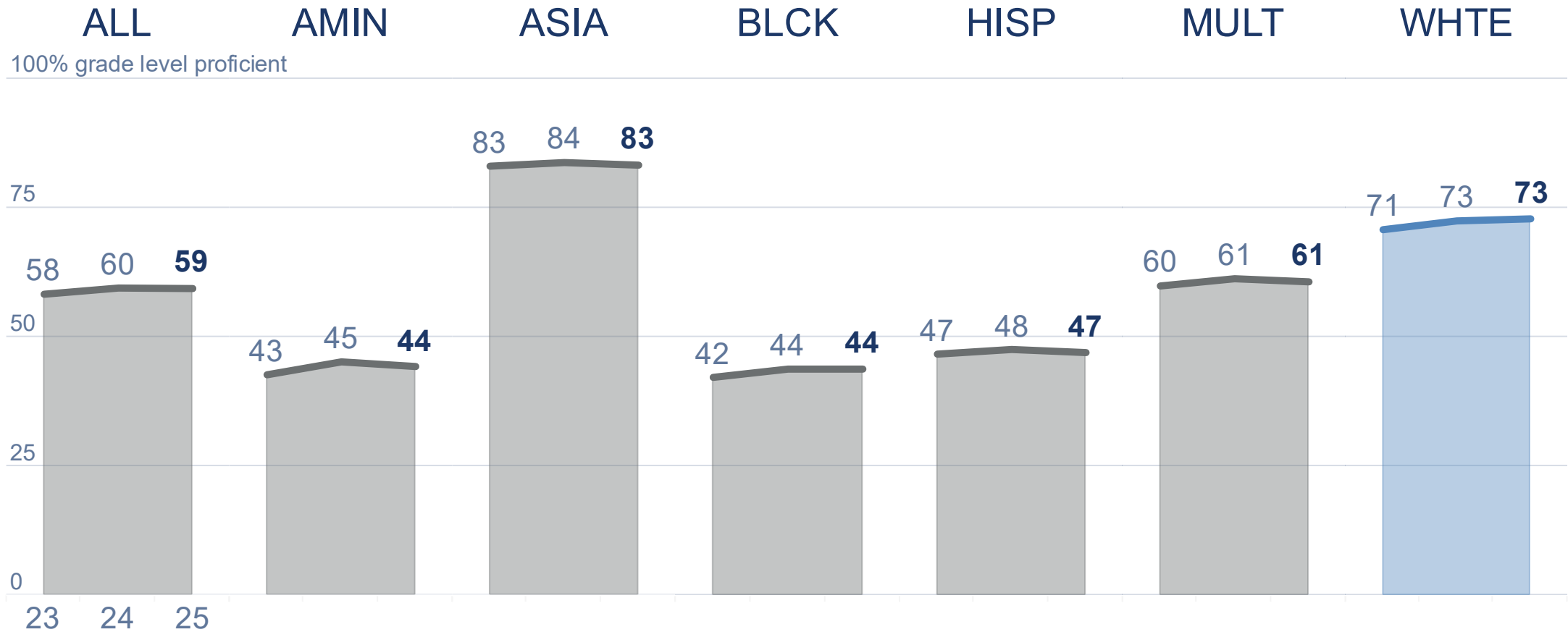
Reading Grades 3–8 Composite

Percent of students grade-level proficient by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



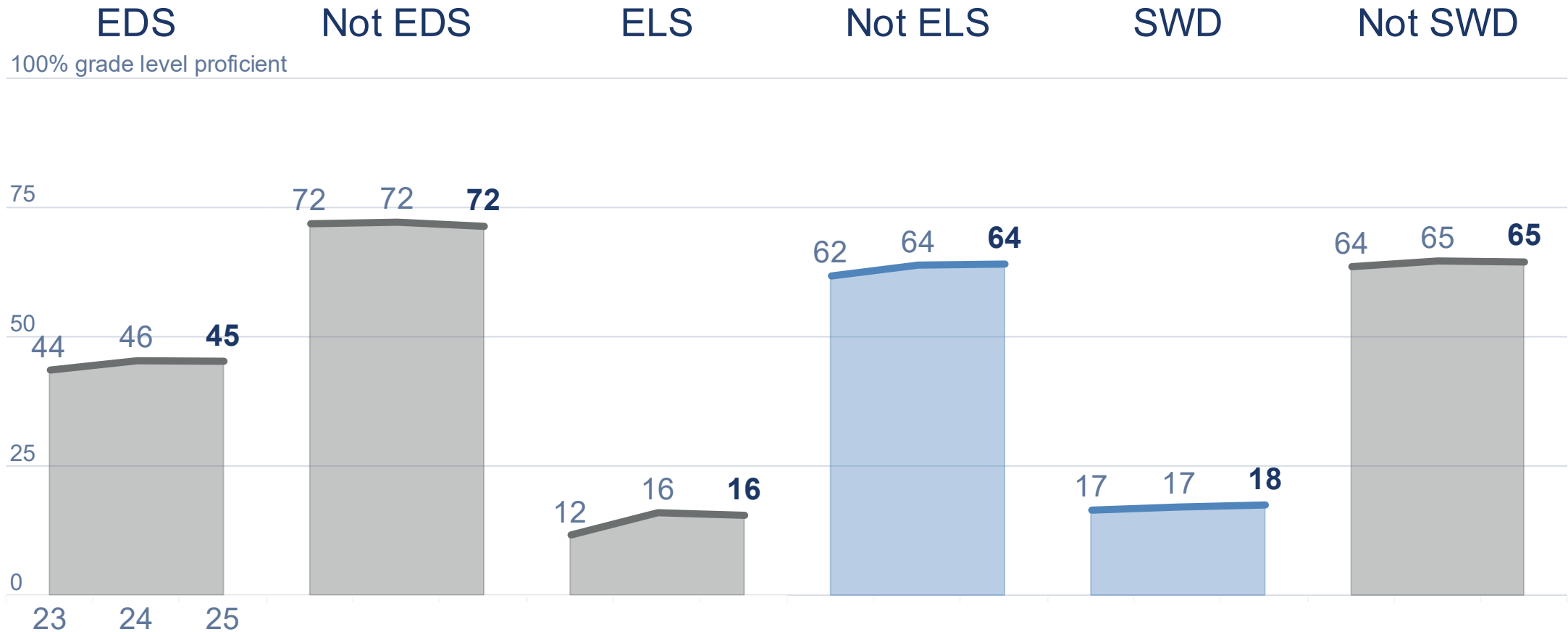
English II

Percent of students grade-level proficient by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



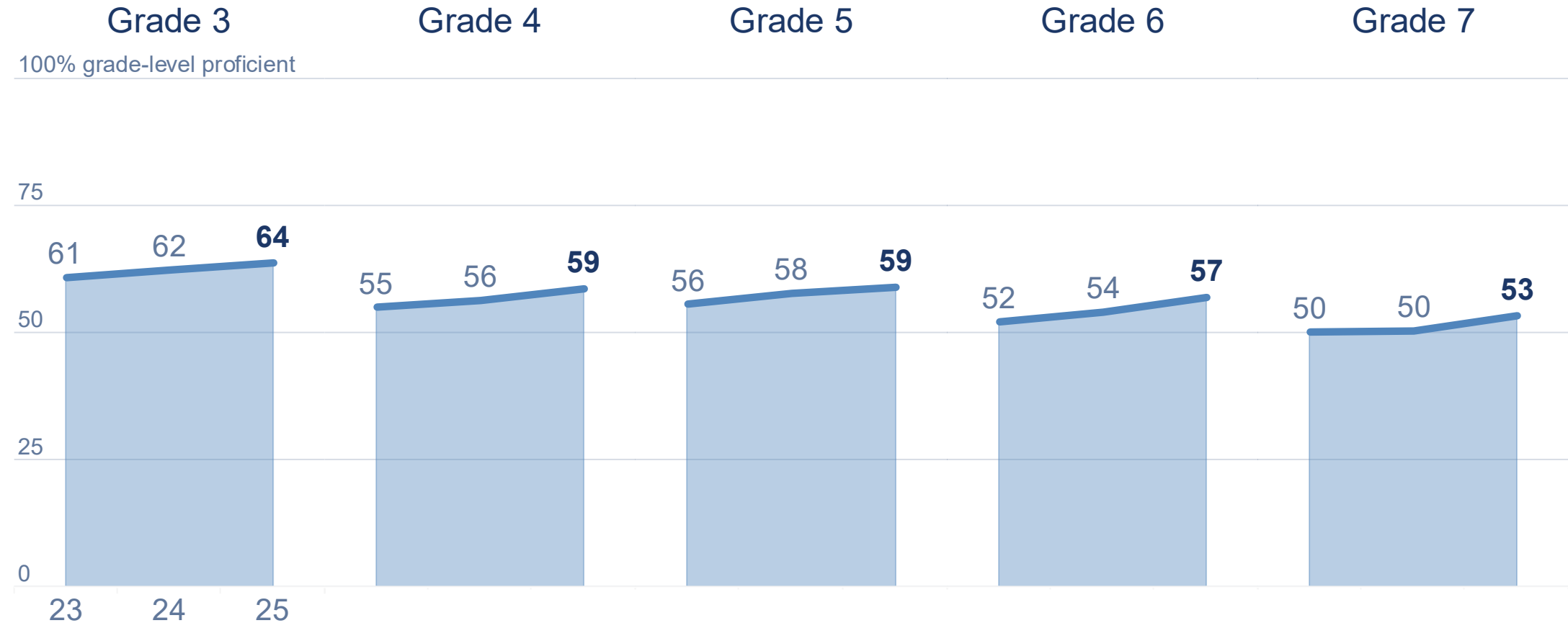
English II

Percent of students grade-level proficient by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



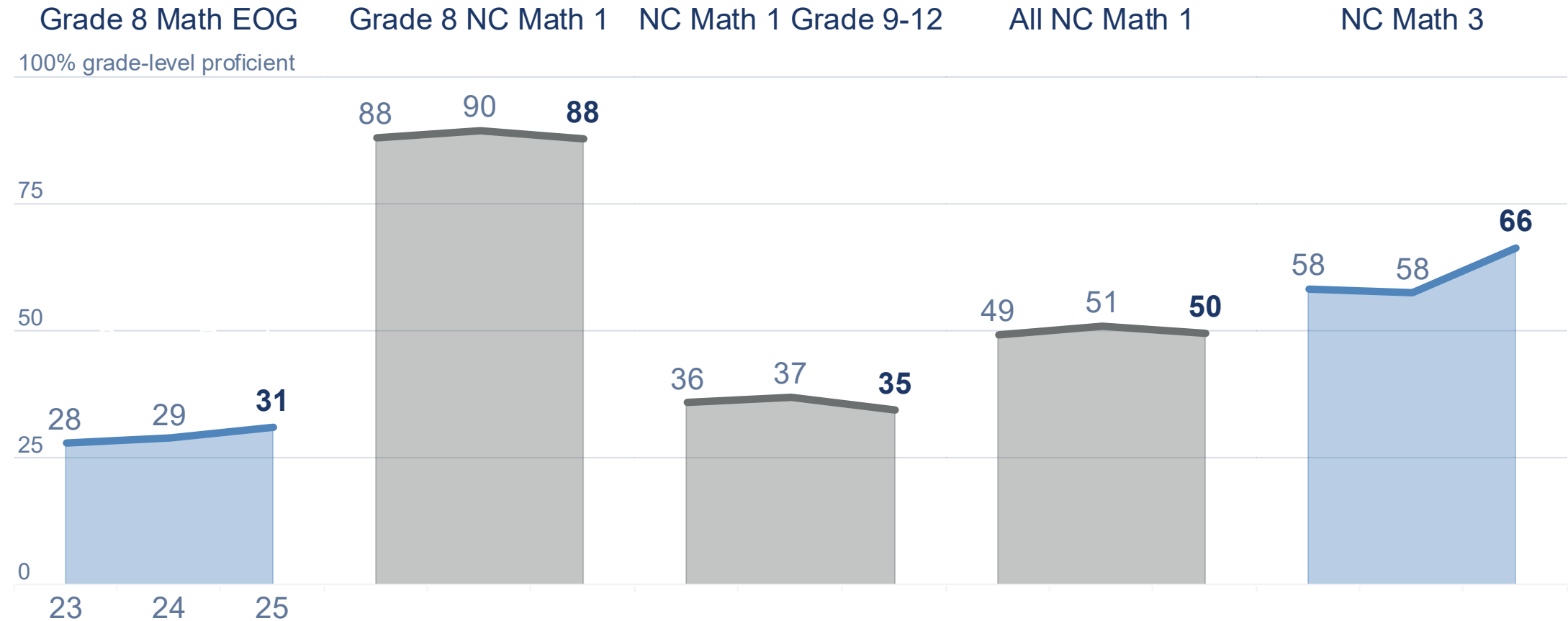
Mathematics Grades 3–7

Percent of students grade-level proficient by grade and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



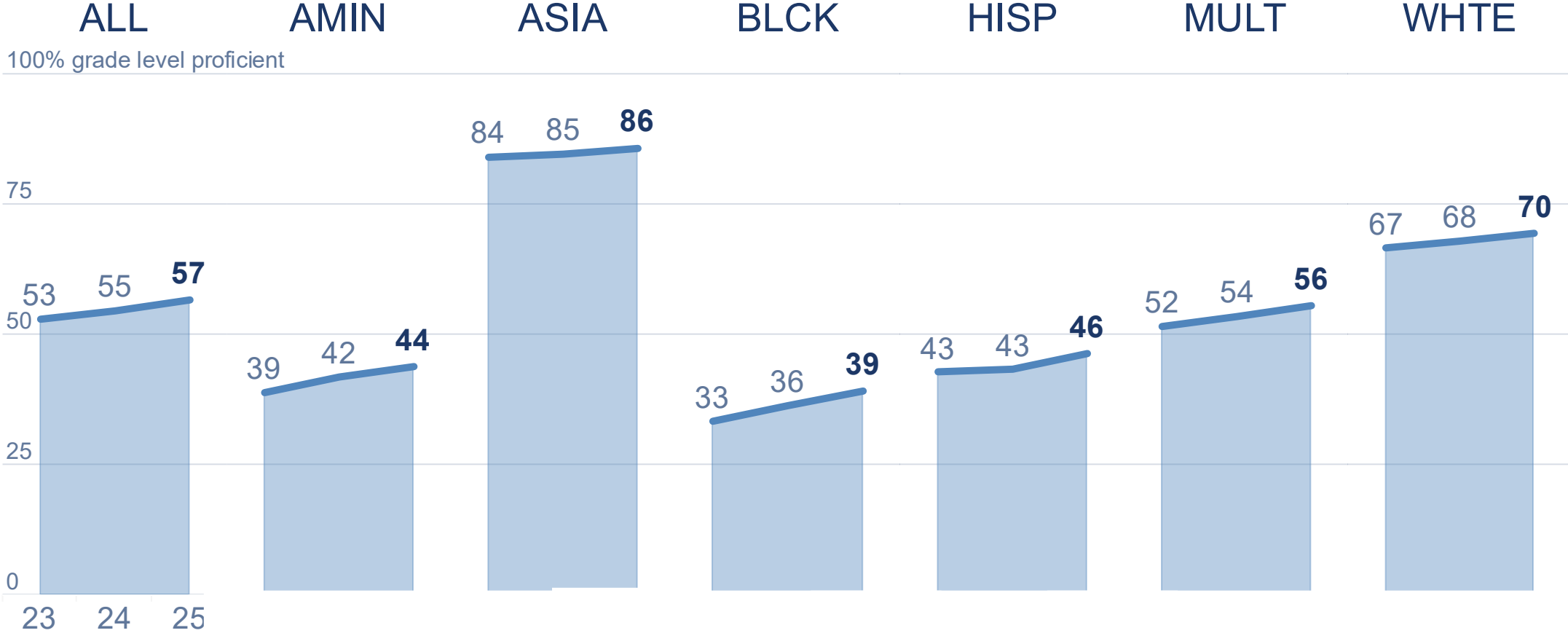
Mathematics Grade 8 and High School

Percent grade-level proficient by tested population and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



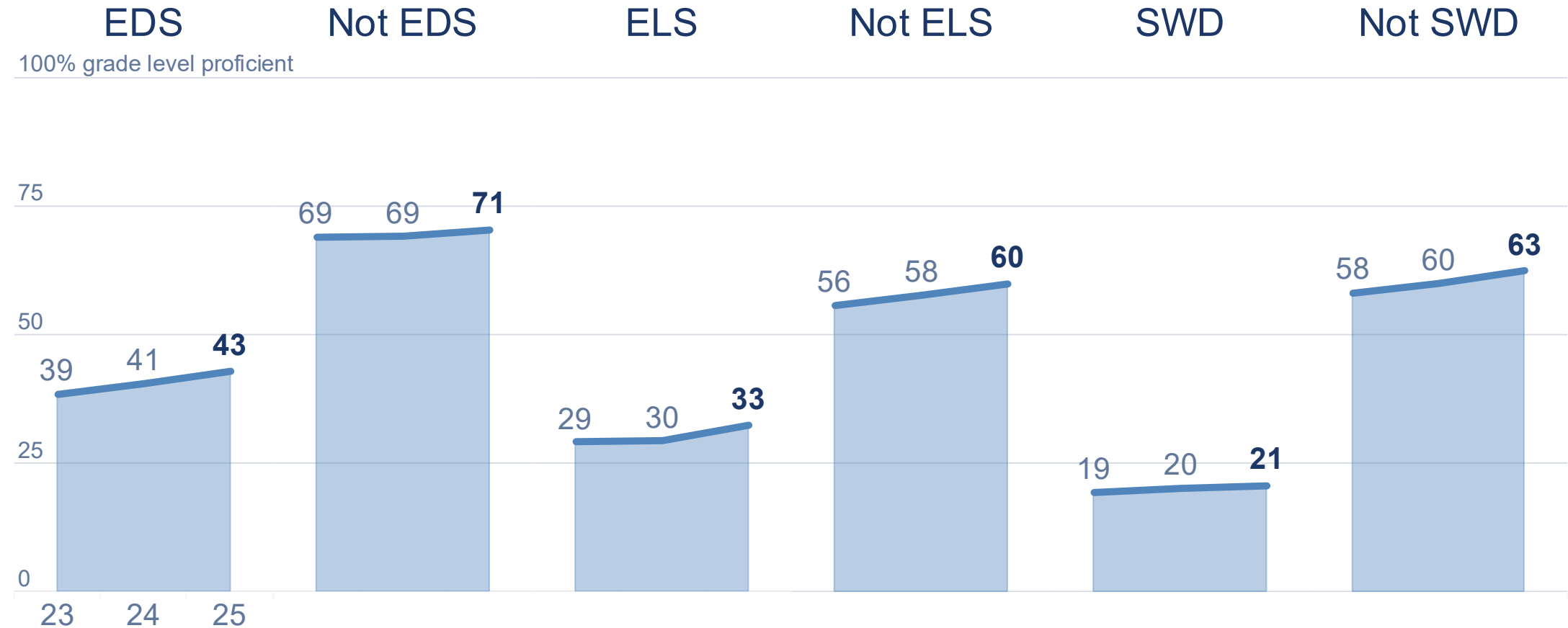
Mathematics Grades 3–8 Composite

Percent of students grade-level proficient by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)
 (Includes NC Math 1 end of course tests taken in grade 8 and below.)



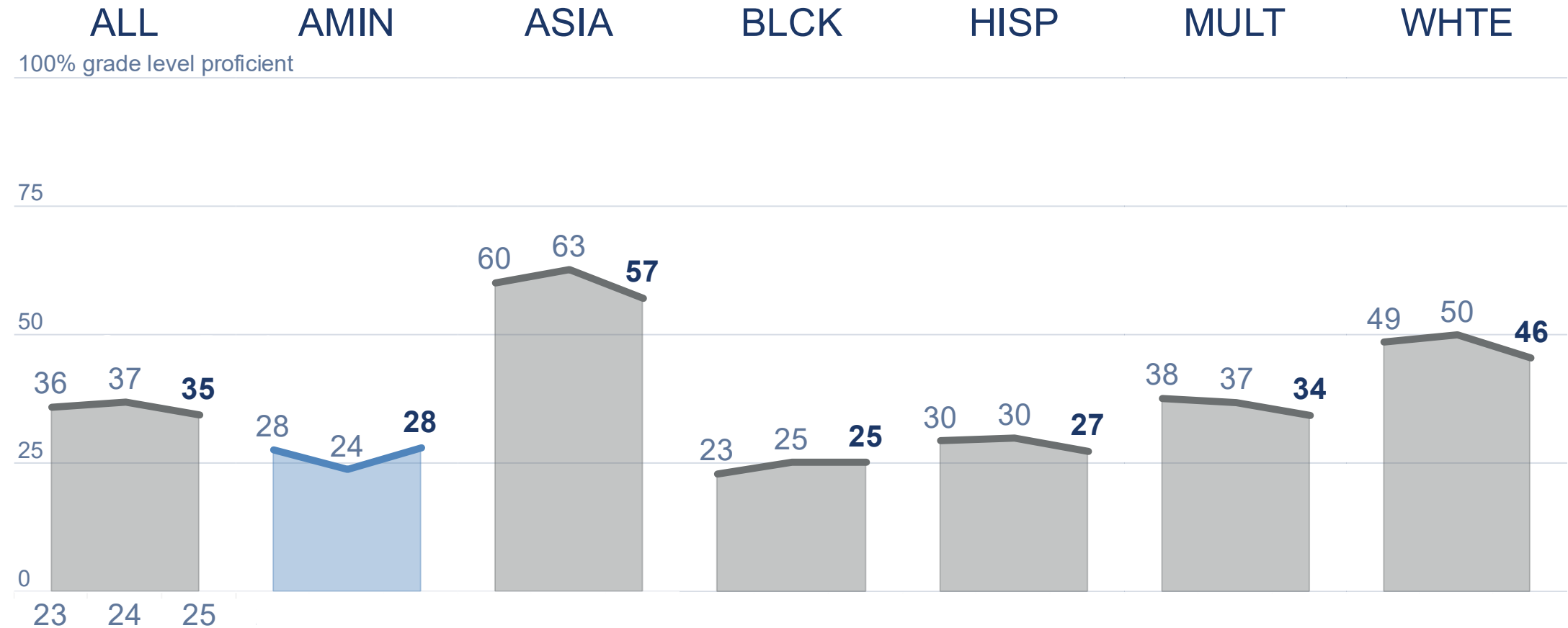
Mathematics Grades 3–8 Composite

Percent of students grade-level proficient by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)
(Includes NC Math 1 end of course tests taken in grade 8 and below.)



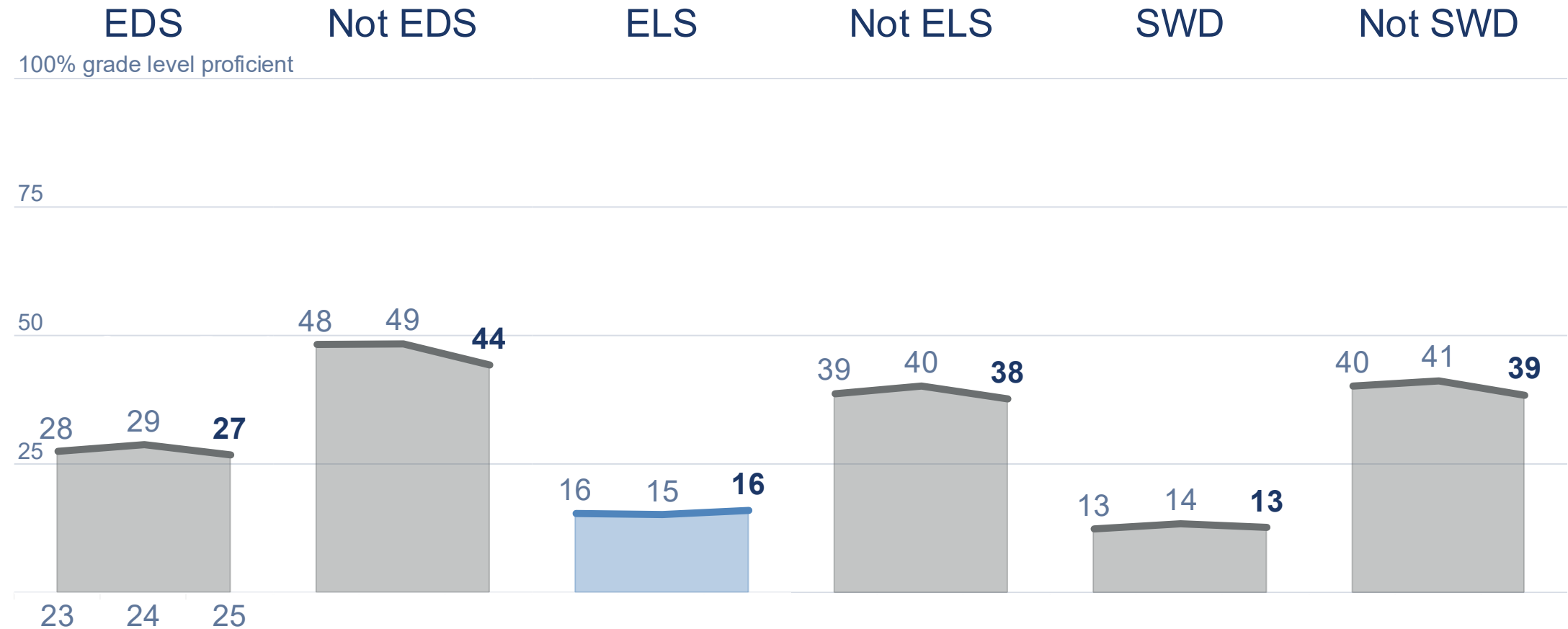
NC Math 1 Grades 9-12

Percent of students grade-level proficient by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



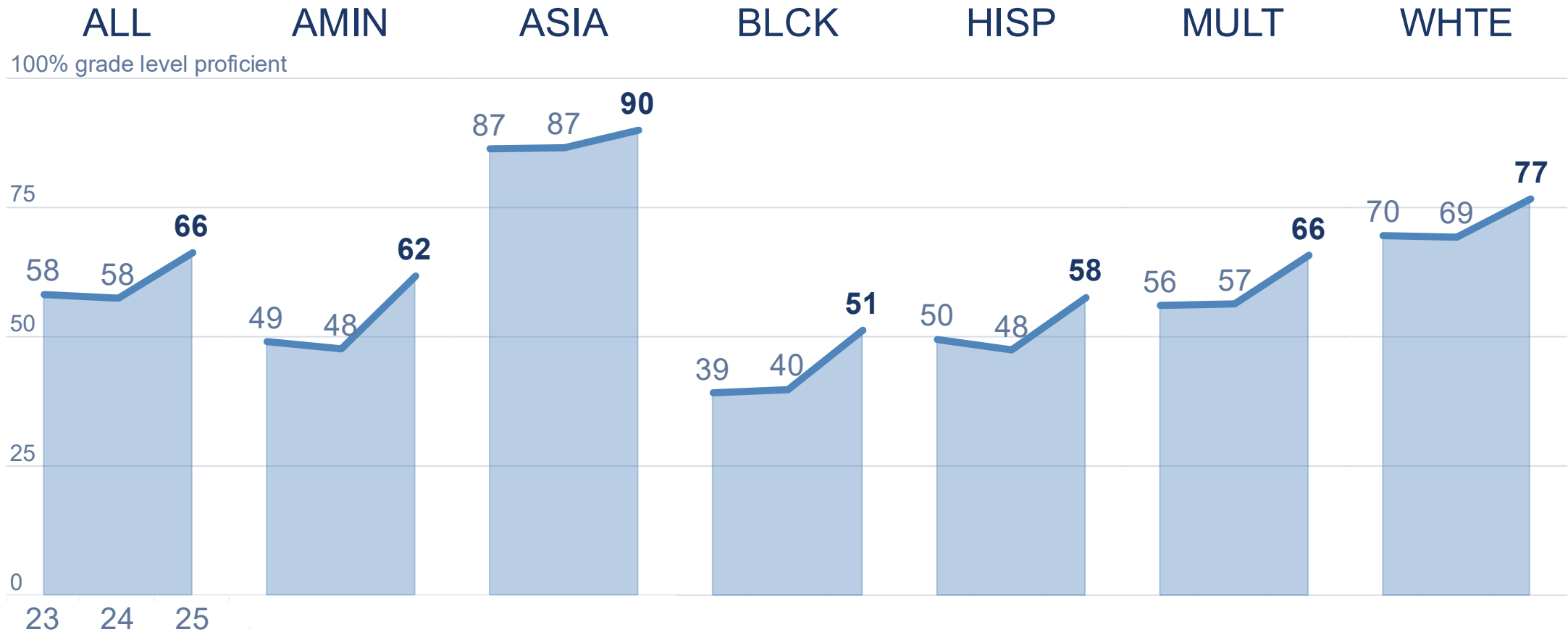
NC Math 1 Grades 9–12

Percent of students grade-level proficient by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



NC Math 3

Percent of students grade-level proficient by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



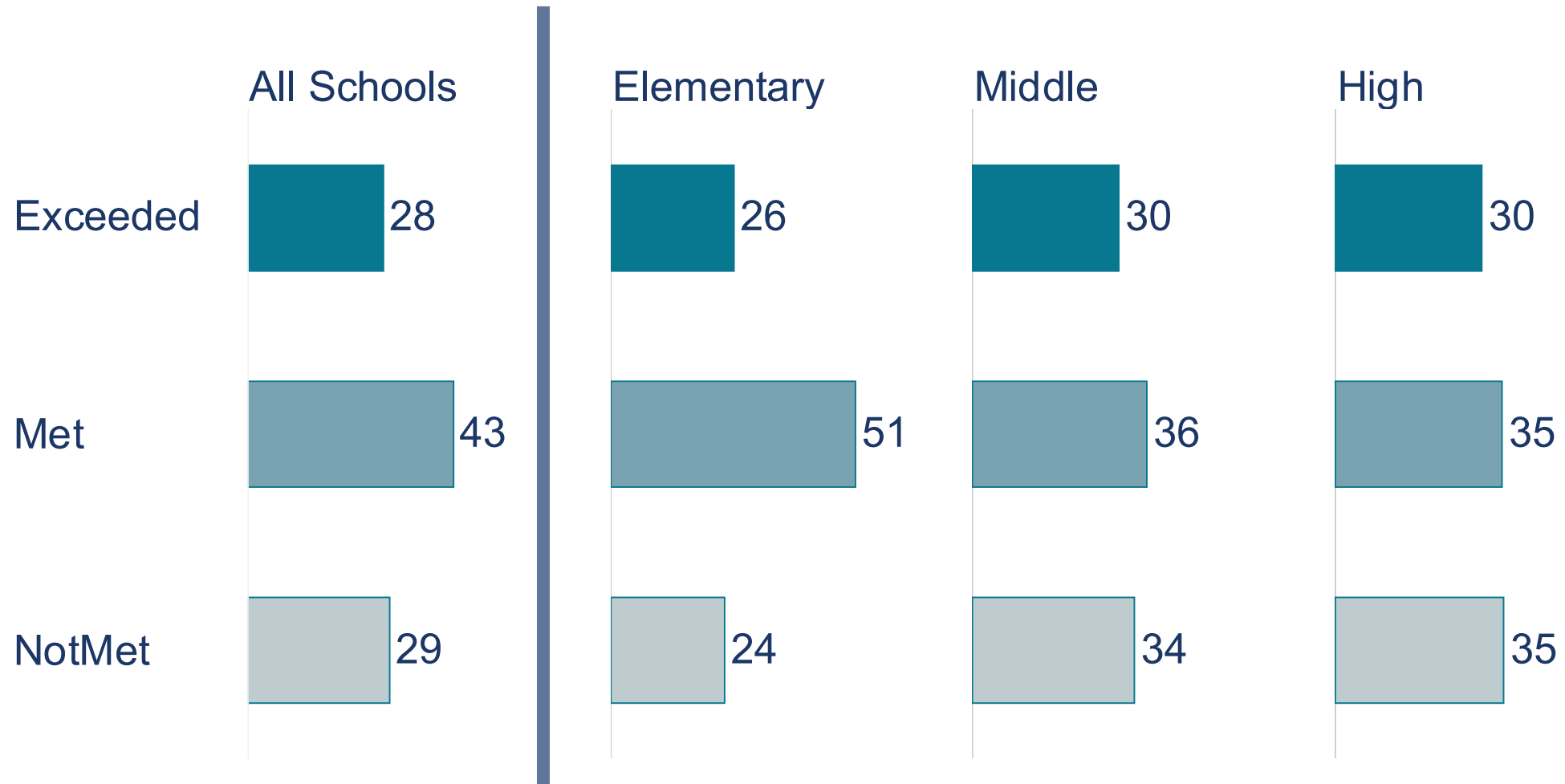
NC Math 3

Percent of students grade-level proficient by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



Growth Status

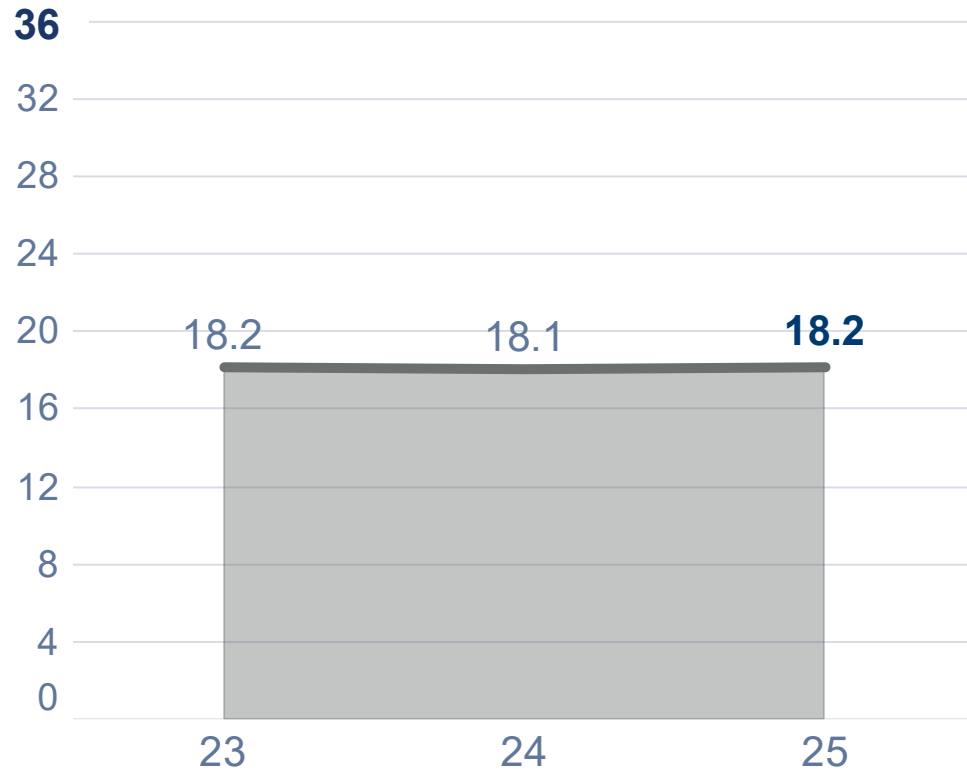
Percent of schools that did not meet, met, or exceeded growth expectations (2025)



ACT (11th Graders)

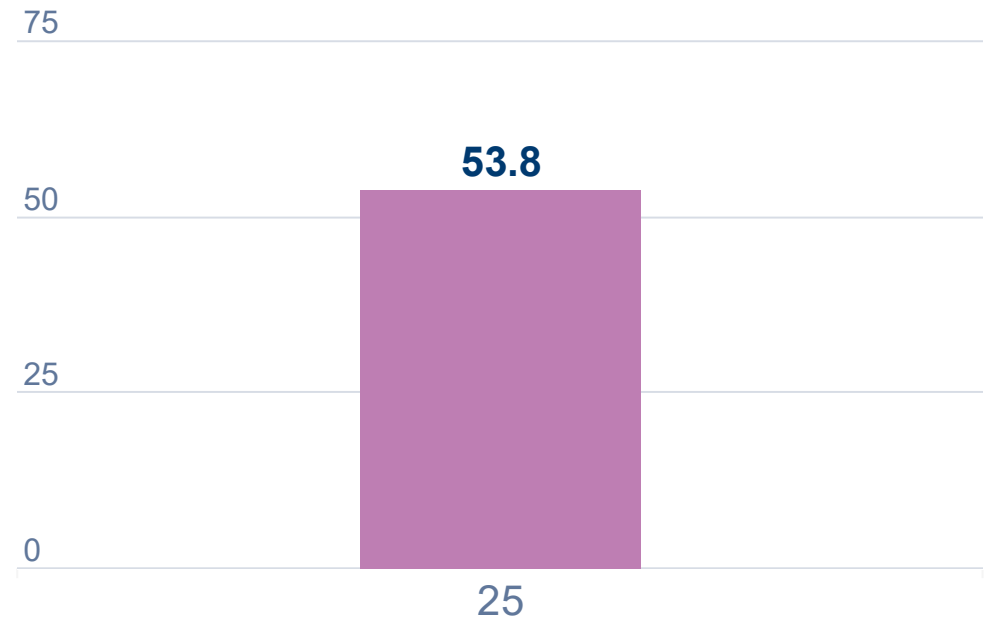
Results by year (2023, 2024, 2025)

ACT Average Composite Score



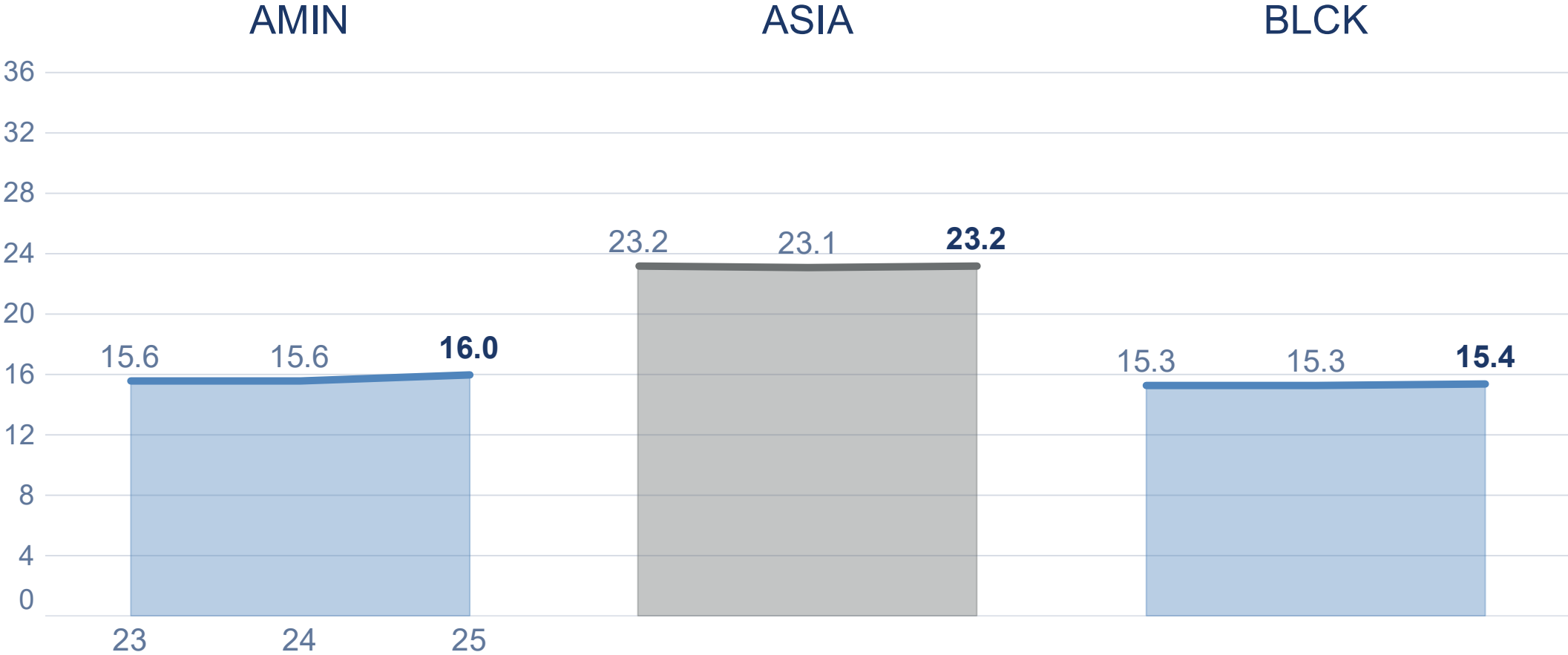
Percentage scoring 17+ on composite

100% score 17 or higher on composite



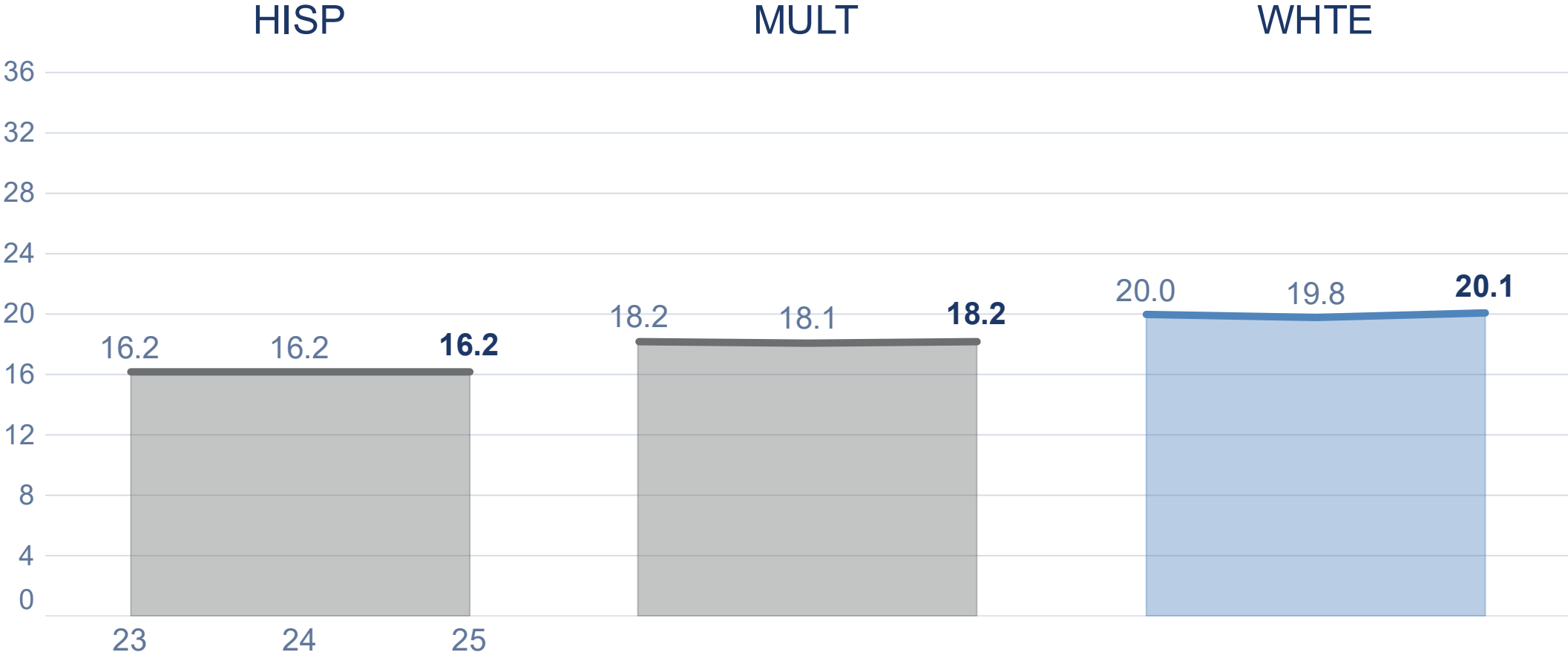
ACT Composite Score (11th Graders)

Average composite score by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



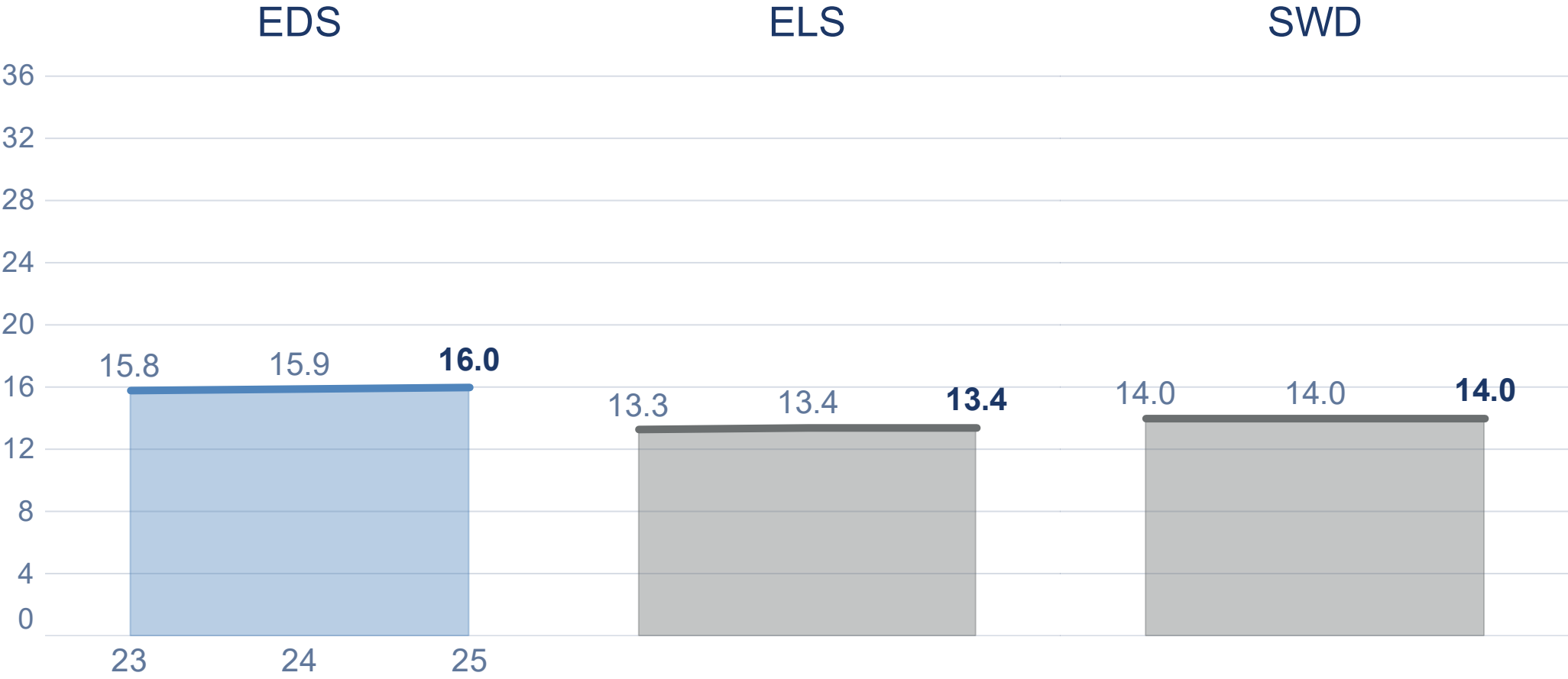
ACT Composite Score (11th Graders)

Average composite score by race/ethnicity and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



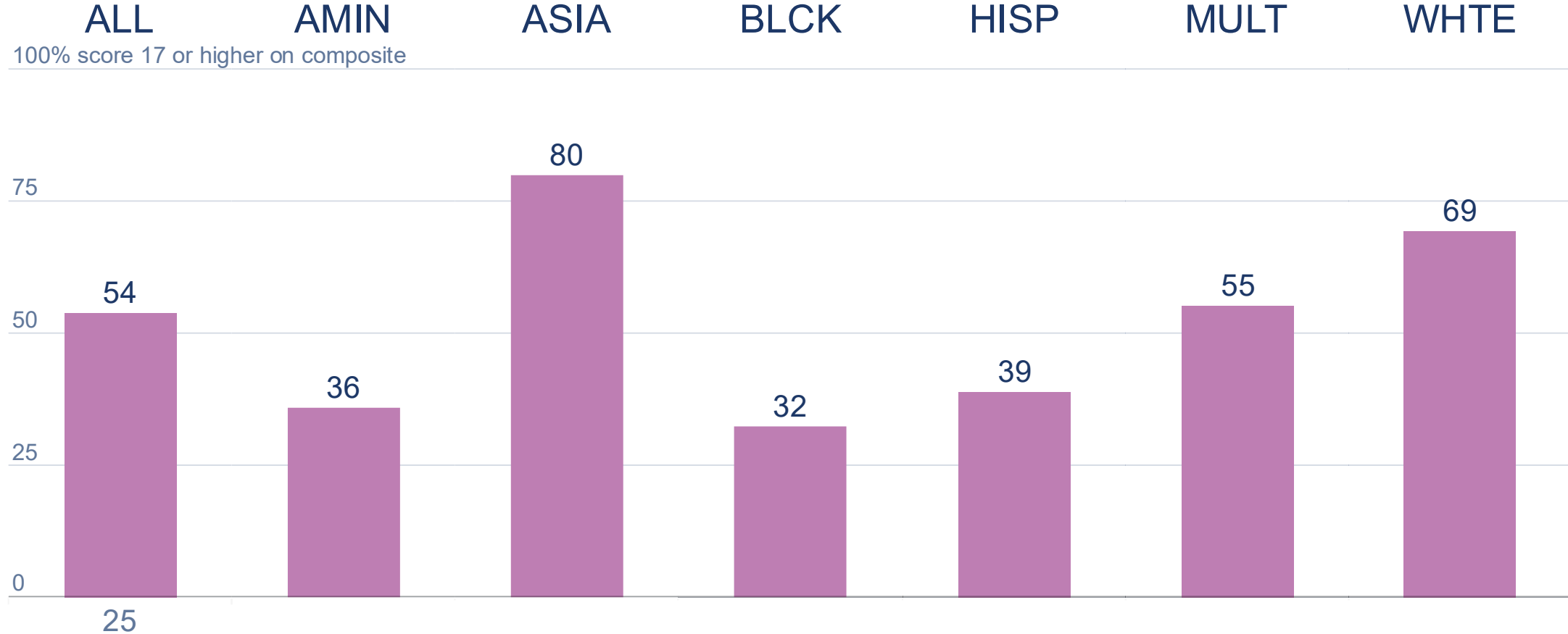
ACT Composite Score (11th Graders)

Average composite score by student subgroup and year (2023, 2024, 2025)



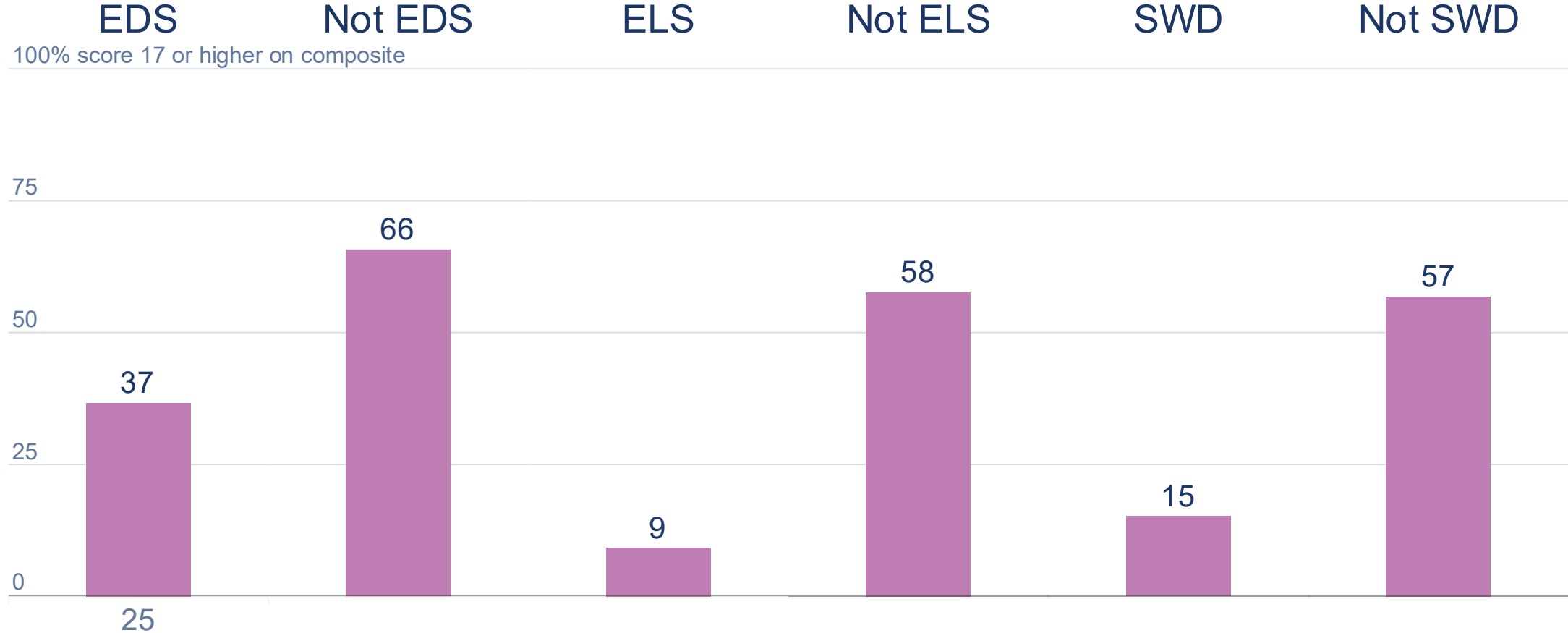
ACT Composite Score (11th Graders)

Percent of students with a composite score of 17 or higher by race/ethnicity (2025)



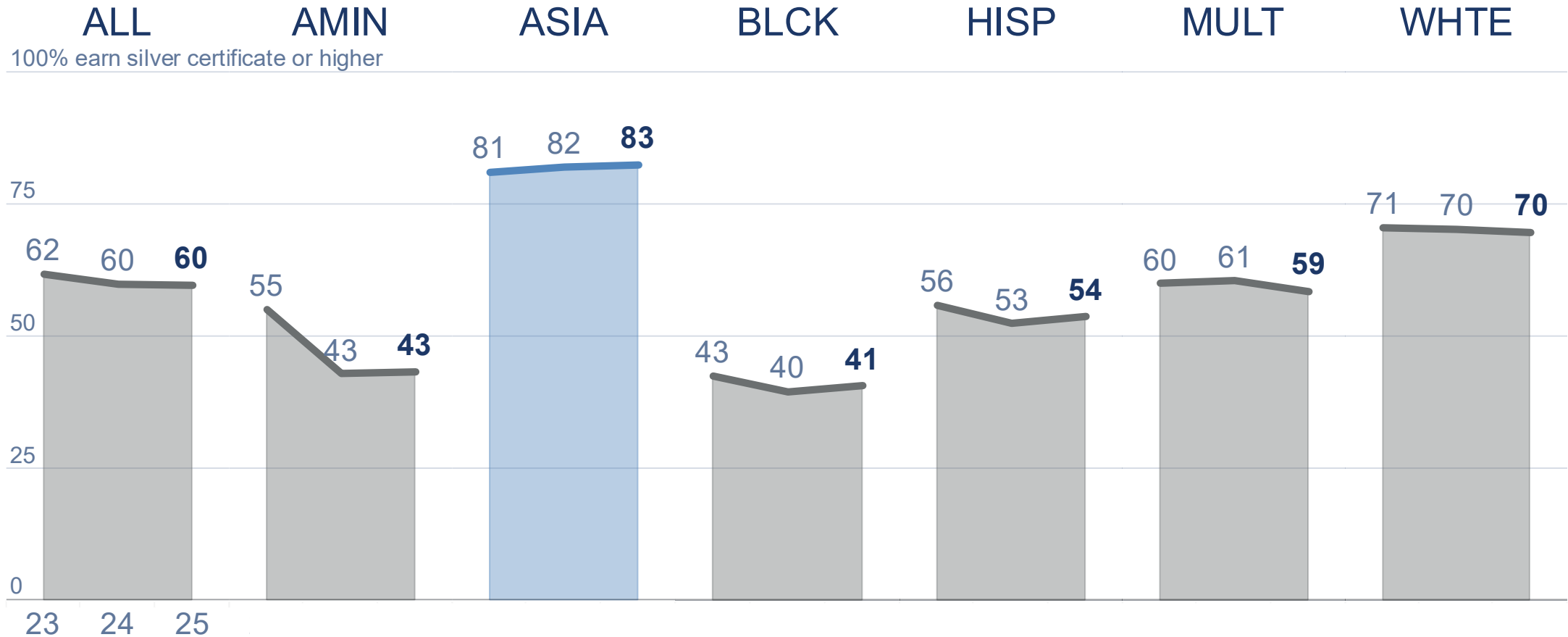
ACT Composite Score (11th Graders)

Percent of students with a composite score of 17 or higher by student subgroup (2025)



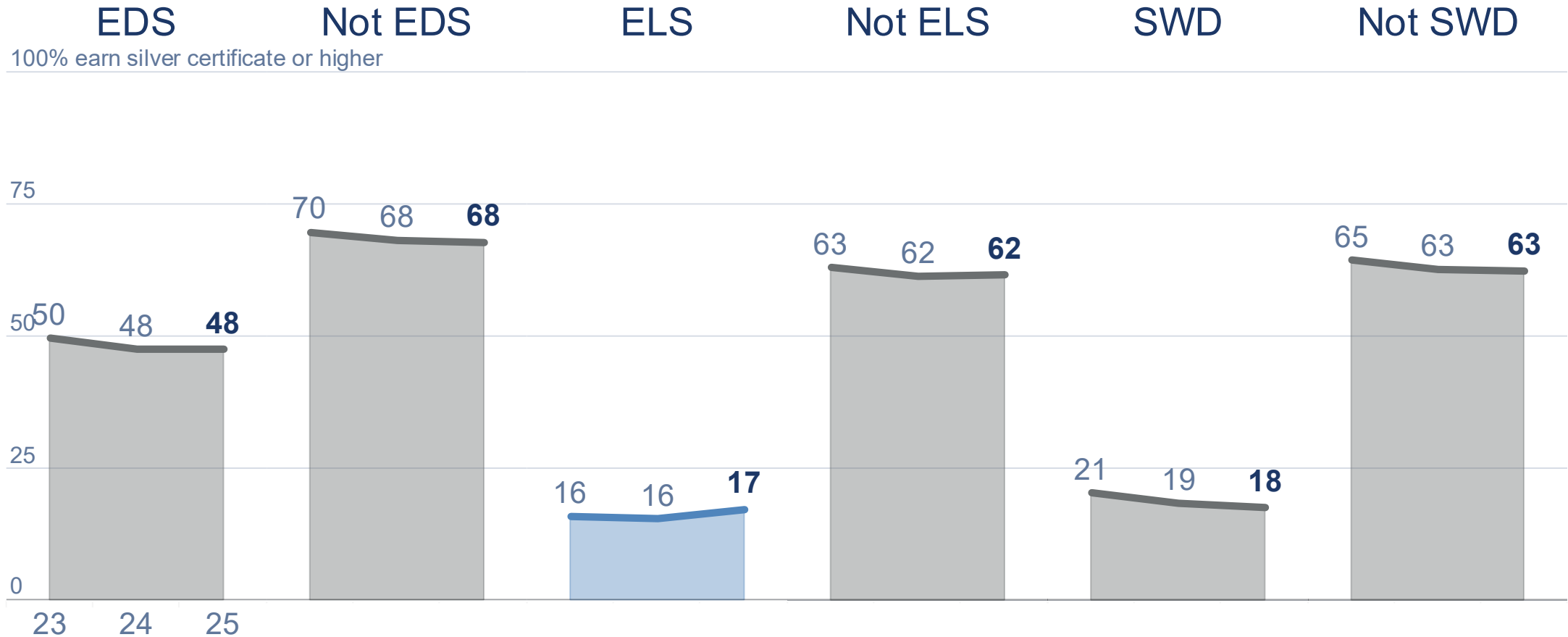
WorkKeys

Percent of students earning silver or higher certificate by year (2023, 2024, 2025)



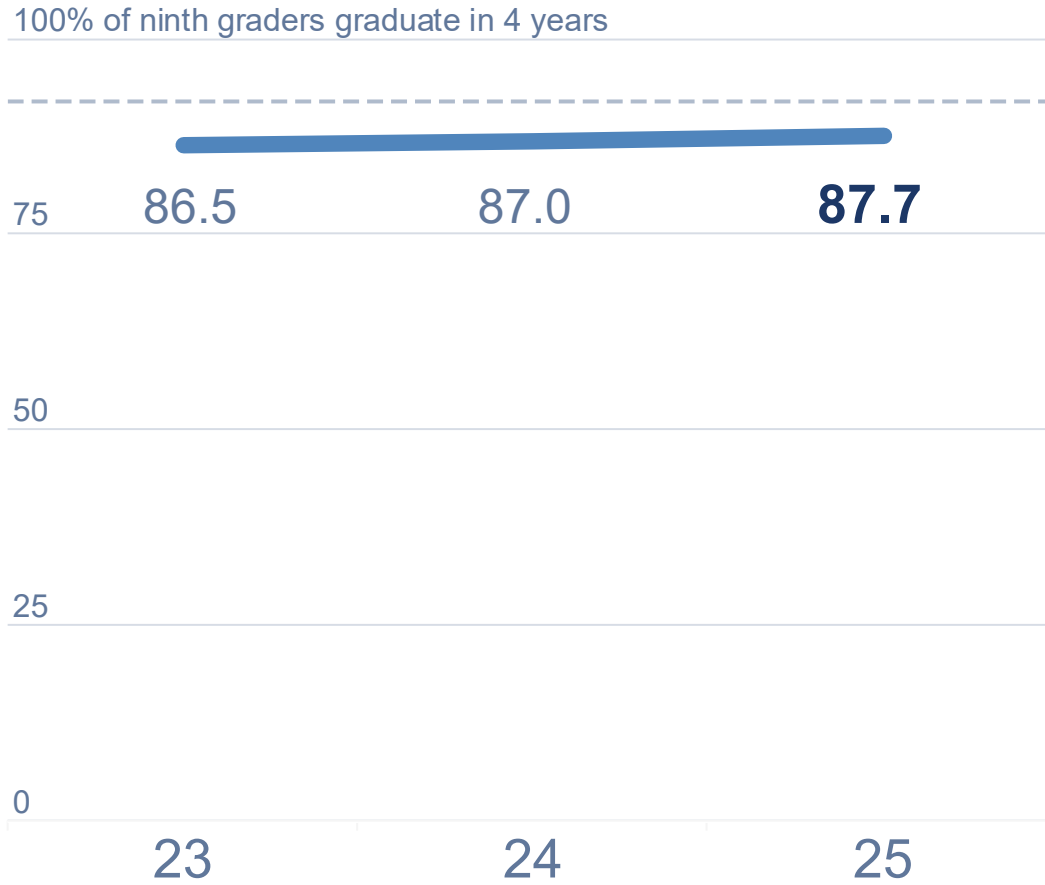
WorkKeys

Percent earning silver or higher certificate by year (2023, 2024, 2025)



Cohort Graduation Rate

Percent of entering ninth-graders graduating high school in four years (2023, 2024, 2025)



Best in nation goal by 2030: 92%

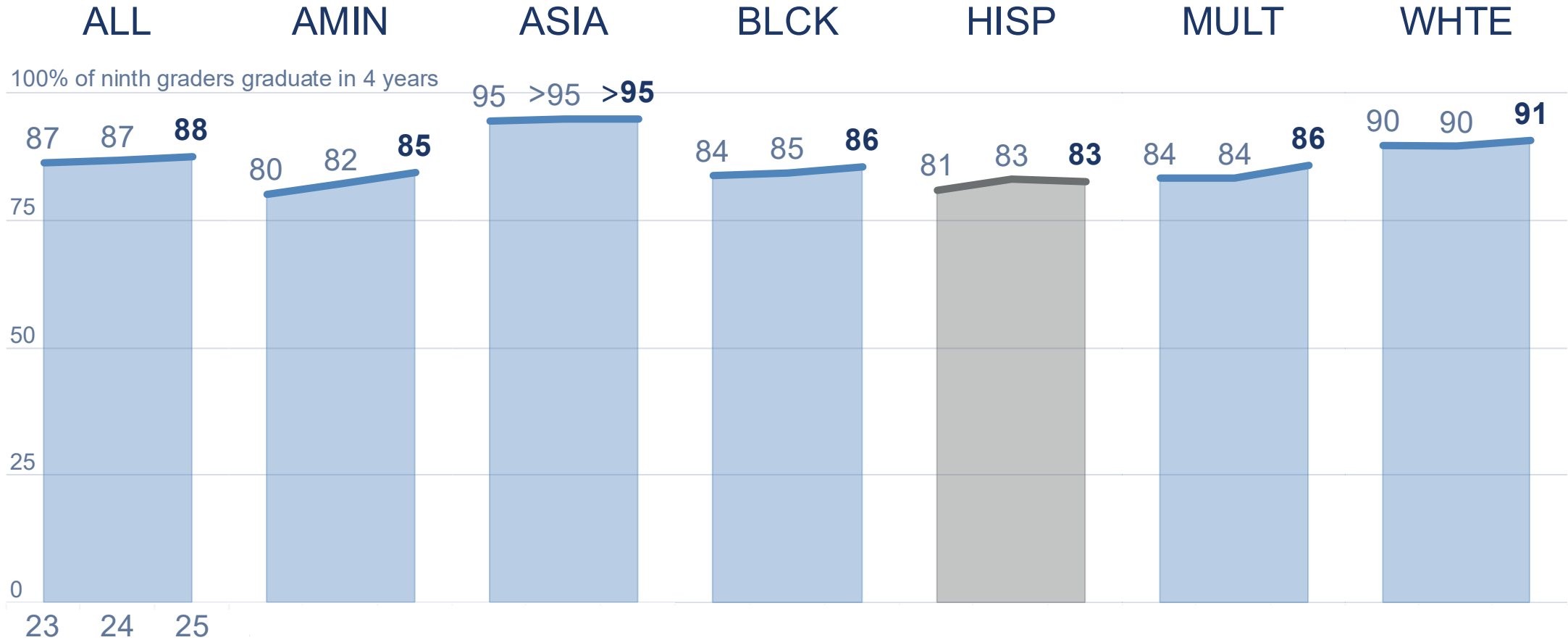
Annual Goals

2029	91%
2028	90%
2027	89%
2026	88%



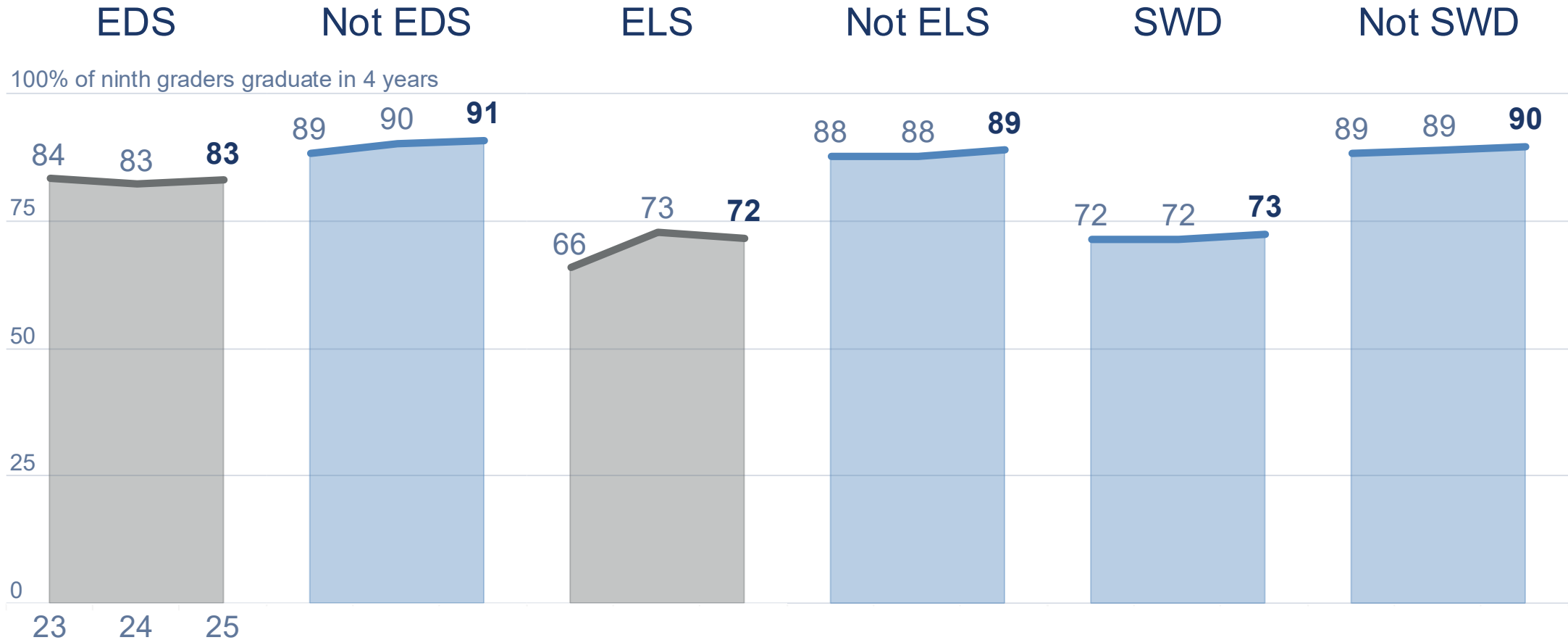
Cohort Graduation Rate

Percent of entering ninth-graders graduating high school in four years (2023, 2024, 2025)



Cohort Graduation Rate

Percent of ninth-graders graduating high school in four years (2023, 2024, 2025)



National Comparison - NAEP

- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
 - Nationally comparable measure of student achievement
 - Assesses reading and mathematics in grades 4 and 8
 - Administered every two years across all states
 - Often referred to as “The Nation’s Report Card”

NAEP provides an external benchmark to contextualize state assessment results



National Trend - NAEP

Assessment	2022 NC	2022 U.S.	2024 NC	2024 U.S.	Trend
Grade 4 Reading	216	216	213	214	↓
Grade 8 Reading	258	260	255	257	↓
Grade 4 Math	236	236	239	237	↑
Grade 8 Math	273	272	276*	272	↑

North Carolina is at or above the national average in mathematics and slightly below in reading.

Trends reflect pandemic-related declines in reading and modest recovery in mathematics

*Indicates significantly different than the nation.



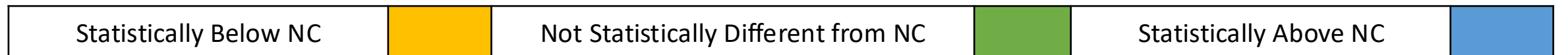
National Comparison - NAEP

NAEP 2024 State Comparison Mean Scale Score

State	Math Grade 4	Math Grade 8	Reading Grade 4	Reading Grade 8
North Carolina	239	276	213	255
Arizona	232	270	208	254
Florida	243	267	218	253
Louisiana	235	267	216	257
Mississippi	239	269	219	253
Texas	241	269	212	252
National (Public)	237	272	214	257

NAEP 2022 State Comparison Mean Scale Score

State	Math Grade 4	Math Grade 8	Reading Grade 4	Reading Grade 8
North Carolina	236	274	216	256
Arizona	232	271	215	259
Florida	241	271	225	260
Louisiana	229	266	212	257
Mississippi	234	266	217	253
Texas	239	273	214	255
National (Public)	235	273	216	259



*Selected States have Accountability Systems Similar to NC with a single A-F Letter Grade

Defining Future Success

**By 2030, North Carolina will
have the best public school
system in the nation.**



“Best in the Nation” Measures

Graduation Rate



87.7%
(2024-25)

92%
2030 Goal

West Virginia
91.2%

ACT Composite Score



18.5
(10th)

20
2030 Goal

Utah
20

AP Exam Participation



21.5%
(15th)

30%
2030 Goal

Washington DC
29.2%

AP Exam Performance



64.5%
(31st)

75%
2030 Goal

Montana
74.3%

“Best in the Nation” Measures

Dual Enrollment



36%

41%
2030 Goal

CTE Participation



36.1%
(2nd)

42%
2030 Goal

Nebraska
41.2%

CTE Credentials



358,069

500,000
2030 Goal

NAEP 4th Grade Reading Score



213

225
2030 Goal

Massachusetts

NAEP 8th Grade Reading Score

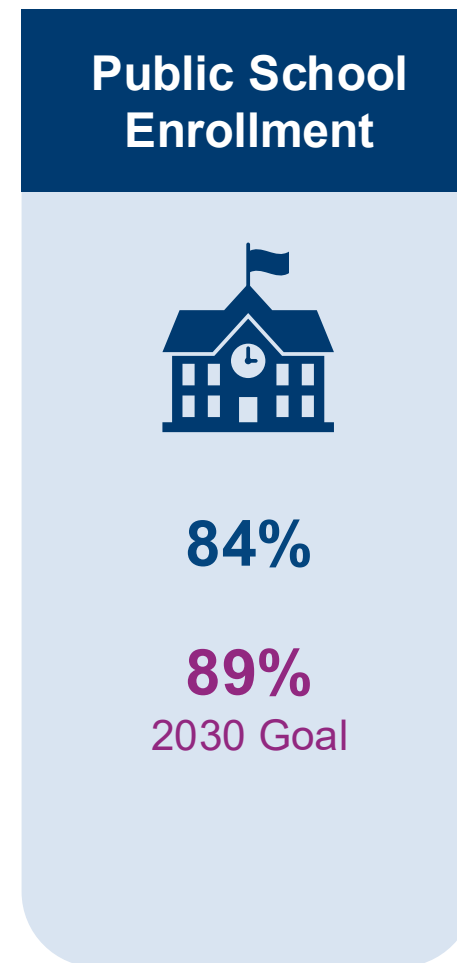
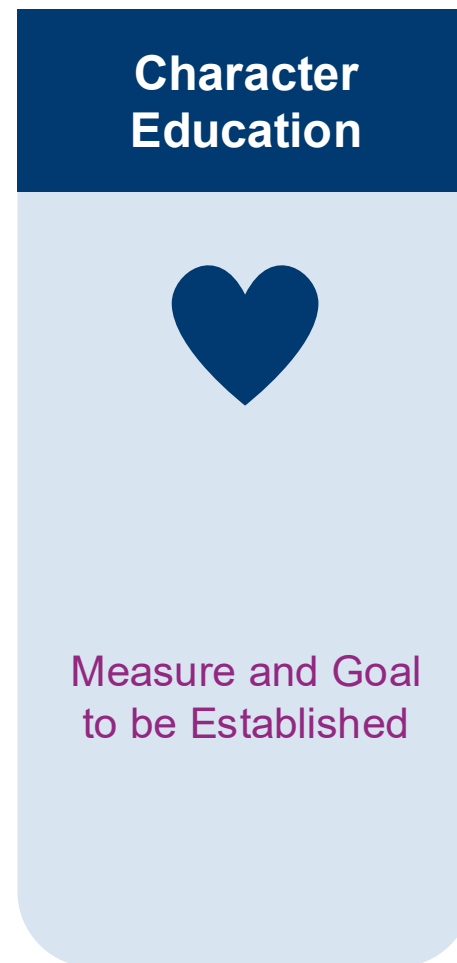


255

268
2030 Goal

Massachusetts

“Best in the Nation” Measures



The Path Forward

- We are making meaningful progress across multiple measures
- Too many students are not yet where we want them to be
- Success requires a focus on the full system, not a single metric
- Our work now is to accelerate progress toward Best in Nation by 2030



Accountability Task Force

Pillar 6, Focus Area 4, Action 1

- Establish an SBE Task Force to develop a new school-level accountability system that will:
 - Consider the variability among high schools with respect to available opportunities and funding, such as Advanced Placement, CTE courses, etc.;
 - **Reliably assess multiple measures of student performance in grades K–12 that includes measures of progress towards ensuring all students graduate prepared for their next phase of life.**



Why System Change Matters

- Current A–F accountability system heavily weighted on
 - Reading and Mathematics test scores
 - Proficiency (80%) over Growth (20%)
- Limited reflection of readiness for college, career, and life
- Inequities across schools and student groups to access
 - College credit earning opportunities
 - Career and technical education opportunities
 - Enrichment opportunities
- Opportunity to modernize and lead nationally



Outcomes

- Define Purpose and Vision of System
 - Recognize excellence in public schools
 - Identify schools in need of support to reach excellence
 - Redefine expectations of what schools should do to support students, parents, and communities
- Guide NCDPI and Work Group's Development of New System
 - Create multiple valid and reliable measures across grades K–12
 - Emphasis on readiness beyond graduation (college, career, military)
 - Recognition of growth and equality of opportunity
 - Transparent reporting for parents, educators, and communities

Task Force Timeline

Phase 1: Foundation (Winter–Summer 2026)

- Establish Task Force and guiding principles
- Develop theory of action
- Identify potential indicators

Phase 2: Design (Summer 2026 –Winter 2026)

- Refine indicators and measures
- Move toward a multi-indicator model
- Begin modeling and technical validation

Task Force Timeline

Phase 3: Recommendation (Spring 2027)

- Formal recommendations to the **State Board of Education**

Phase 4: Policy Consideration (Long Session 2027)

- Engagement with the **General Assembly**
- Alignment with statutory requirements

End Goal

- A system that reflects multiple measures of student success
- Aligns with “**Best in the Nation**” goals for 2030

Additional Data

Accountability Data Sets and Reports | NC DPI

Data Files

Reports

School Identification Lists

Interactive dashboards available

<https://go.ncdpi.gov/AccountabilityDashboards>

North Carolina Department of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION NCDPI Accountability Dashboards

Testing
The testing dashboard provides end-of-grade and end-of-course test results for mathematics, reading, and science. The data is available at the state, region, district, and school levels.

School Performance Grades
The School Performance Grade dashboard provides an overall school performance grade score for schools and subgroups within each school as well as detailed achievement and growth data. This dashboard features a multiple school comparison option which allows stakeholders to compare up to five schools at a time.

Cohort Graduation Rate
The Cohort Graduation Rate dashboard provides the percentages of 5th graders graduating in four and five years at the state, region, district, and school levels.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has developed dashboards to give stakeholders access to test performance, school performance grades, and cohort graduation rates. The dashboards feature an easy-to-read format, as well as historical data for further research. The intent of the dashboards is to provide an expanded view of the data to assist stakeholders in making informed decisions. For more information on the business rules used to determine calculations, please refer to the current year Technical Guide for School Accountability and Testing Results.

Questions?
accountabilityandtesting@dpi.nc.gov

Office of Accountability and Testing
Division of Standards, Accountability, and Research

Results by: State Region District School

Results for: Single School by Subgroup Multiple Schools

Results for: State Region District School