

Salem Public Schools 2025 MCAS, ACCESS & Accountability Results

School Committee Meeting
October 6, 2025



State Performance

Our achievement gaps with all high school content areas and Grades 3-8 ELA is smaller than it was in 2019.

	State % M or E change compared to 2024	SPS % M or E change compared to 2024
ELA Grades 3-8	+3	+8
ELA Grade 10	-4	-7
Math Grades 3-8	0	+2
Math Grade 10	-3	-1
Science Grades 5 & 8	0	+3
Science Grade 10	-3	-3

In **Grades 3-8**, Salem Public Schools improved the percentage of students meeting/exceeding expectations between 2024 and 2025 at a rate higher than the state average in all 3 content areas tested.

At the **high school level**, the rate of improvement of Salem Public School students meeting/exceeding expectations between 2024 and 2025 as compared to the state average was variable. Some evidence of impact from Question 2.

MA Accountability System

- 1 The Massachusetts accountability system consists of two components...

Normative Component (Accountability Percentile)

measures the performance of all students in a school compared to other schools in the state that serve similar grades, and is reported as a percentile from 1 to 99

Criterion-Referenced Component (Targets)

measures a district's or school's progress towards improvement targets, and is reported as a percentage

- 2 ...that measure performance of groups, schools, and districts on specific indicators...

Achievement

Student Growth

High School Completion

English Learner Proficiency

Additional Indicators

- 3 ...and are used to categorize schools and districts as requiring assistance/intervention or not.

Not requiring assistance or intervention					Requiring assistance or intervention	
Schools of recognition	Meeting or exceeding targets	Substantial progress toward targets	Moderate progress toward targets	Limited or no progress toward targets	Focused/targeted support	Broad/comprehensive support
Recognized for high achievement, high growth, or exceeding targets	Cumulative criterion-referenced target percentage 75-100	Cumulative criterion-referenced target percentage 50-74	Cumulative criterion-referenced target percentage 25-49	Cumulative criterion-referenced target percentage 0-24	•Percentiles 1-10 •Low graduation rate •Low performing group(s) •Low participation	•Underperforming schools •Chronically underperforming schools

2025 Accountability Percentile Ranks

Over two years, Salem Public Schools has made **significant progress** toward meeting targets (66%).

	2023	2024	2025	
School	Percentile Rank	Percentile Rank	Percentile Rank	Progress Toward Target (over 2 years)
Bates	38	49	56	Substantial Progress (71%)
BAIS	16	21	25	Moderate Progress (49%)
Carlton	37	41	36	Limited or No Progress (24%)
CMS	9	11	21	Substantial Progress (68%)
HMLS	18	23	14	Moderate Progress (47%)
Salts	24	33	34	Substantial Progress (67%)
WHES	25	34	38	Substantial Progress (65%)
SHS	20	33	43	Substantial Progress (54%)

Accountability Reflections

- During the last two years, Salem has met or exceeded more accountability targets than any Gateway City in the Commonwealth.
- Over half of Salem schools (5 out of 8) made substantial progress toward their targets in 2025 (Bates, Collins, Saltonstall, Witchcraft and Salem High School).
- 6 out of 8 schools improved their percentile rank in two consecutive years (Bates, Bentley, Collins, Saltonstall, Witchcraft and Salem High School).
- All schools but 1 have a designation of ***“Not requiring assistance or intervention”***.
 - Salem High School is listed as ***“Requiring assistance or intervention”*** due to low participation of English Learners (ELs) or Former English Learners (FELs). Every subgroup must have a 95% participation rate, and ELs/FELs at Salem High School participated at 94%. If one more student in this group had tested, the school would have had a designation of “not requiring assistance”.
- The Salem Public Schools as a District met or exceeded 66% of the established targets which is considered making ***“Substantial progress toward targets”***.

Accountability Reflections

- Chronic absenteeism rates continue to improve such that we had the third lowest rate of absenteeism out of [26 Gateway City](#) school districts.
- 73% of our students passed an advanced coursework class in 11th or 12th grade (3rd among Gateways).
- Our achievement gaps with the state in all high school content areas and Grades 3-8 ELA are smaller than they were before the pandemic.

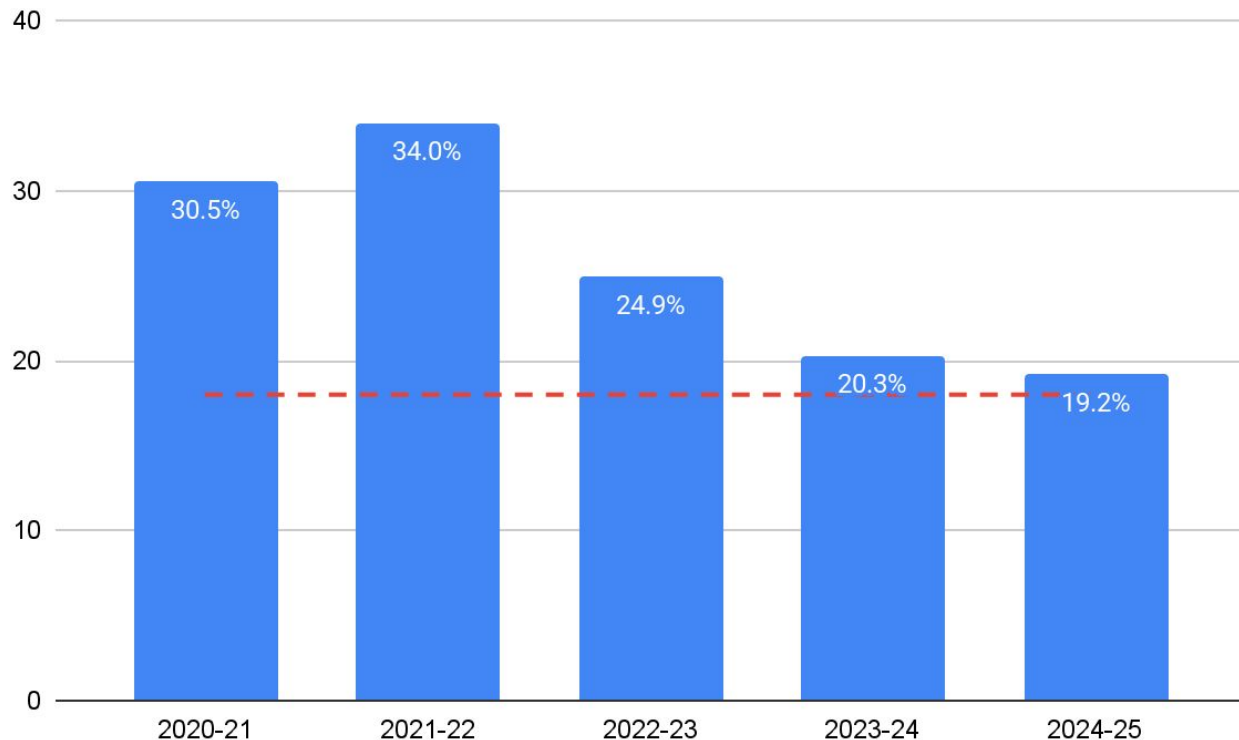
	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Total AP Students	253	147	115	89	60	147	180
Number of Exams	496	265	207	146	133	273	335
AP Students with 3+ Scores	168	40	58	40	31	65	72
Percentage of students with 3+	66.4%	44.94%	50.43%	44.94%	51.67%	44%	40%
SHS Enrollment	952	948	888	803	860	886	916



Performance and Attendance

Chronic Absenteeism

DESE definition of chronic absenteeism = a student missing at least 10% of their enrolled days in a school year, including excused and unexcused.



The **dotted red line** indicates our strategic plan goal of **18%** chronic absenteeism.

Chronic absenteeism decreased from **34% to 19.2%** from the 2021-22 to 2024-25 SY (**-15% decrease**)

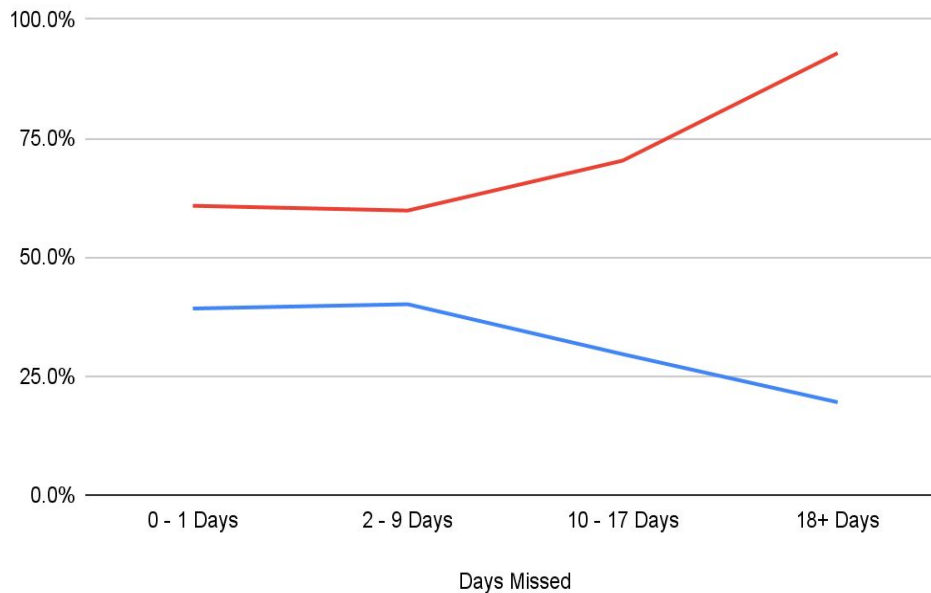
Our chronic absenteeism rates continue to improve such that Salem Public Schools has the third lowest rate of chronic absenteeism out of 26 Gateway cities.

Chronic Absenteeism & MCAS Performance

Achievement begins to significantly decline after ~9-10 out of school. Specifically, as absences accumulate, fewer of these students ***meet or exceed expectations*** on MCAS and most end up in the ***not meeting expectations*** category.

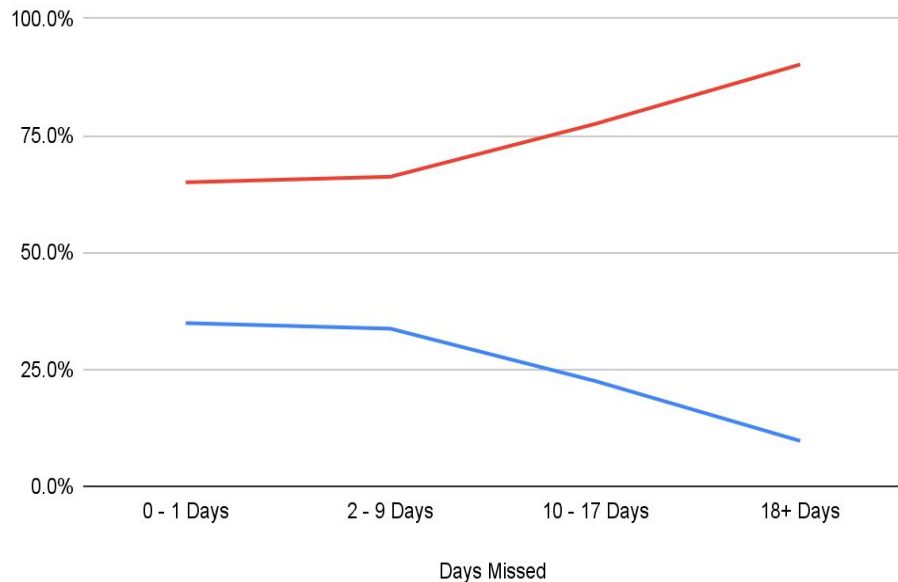
ELA

Meeting / Exceeding Not / Partially Meeting



Math

Meeting / Exceeding Not / Partially Meeting

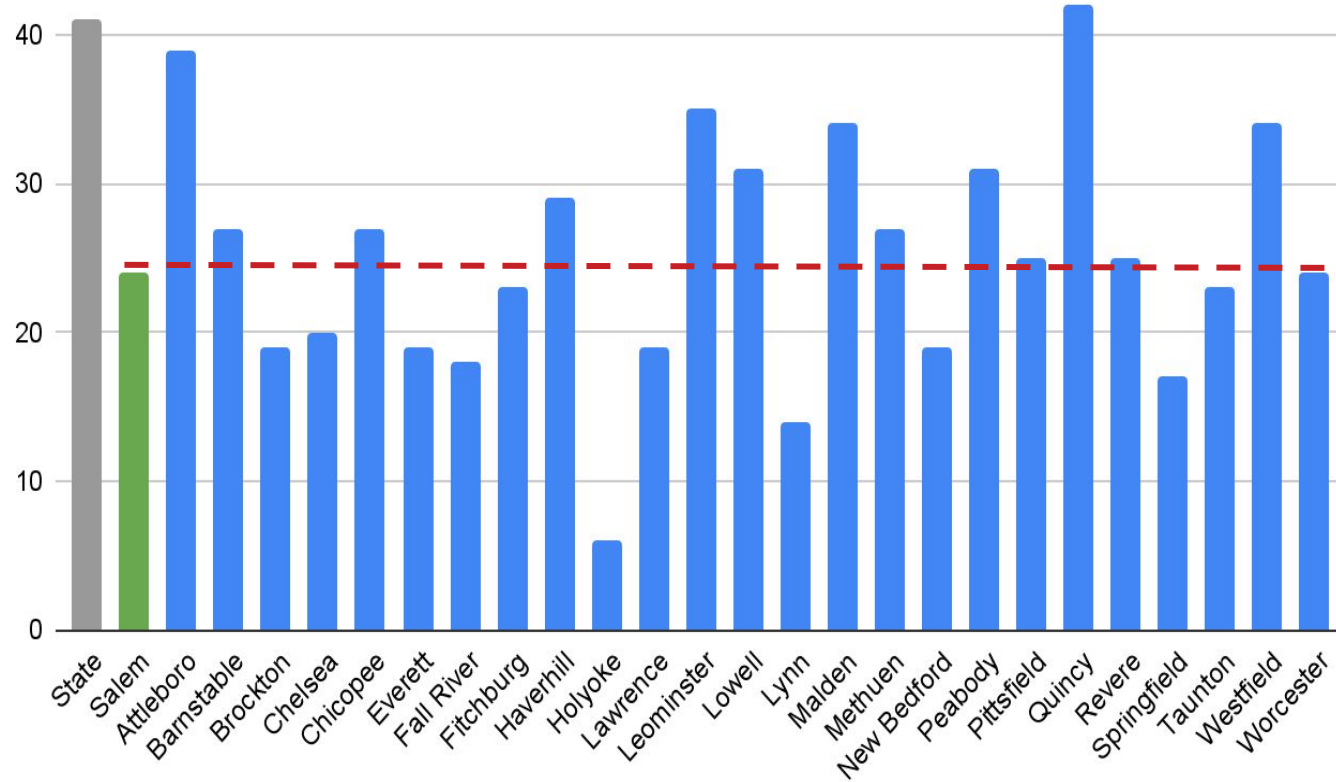




District-level MCAS Results

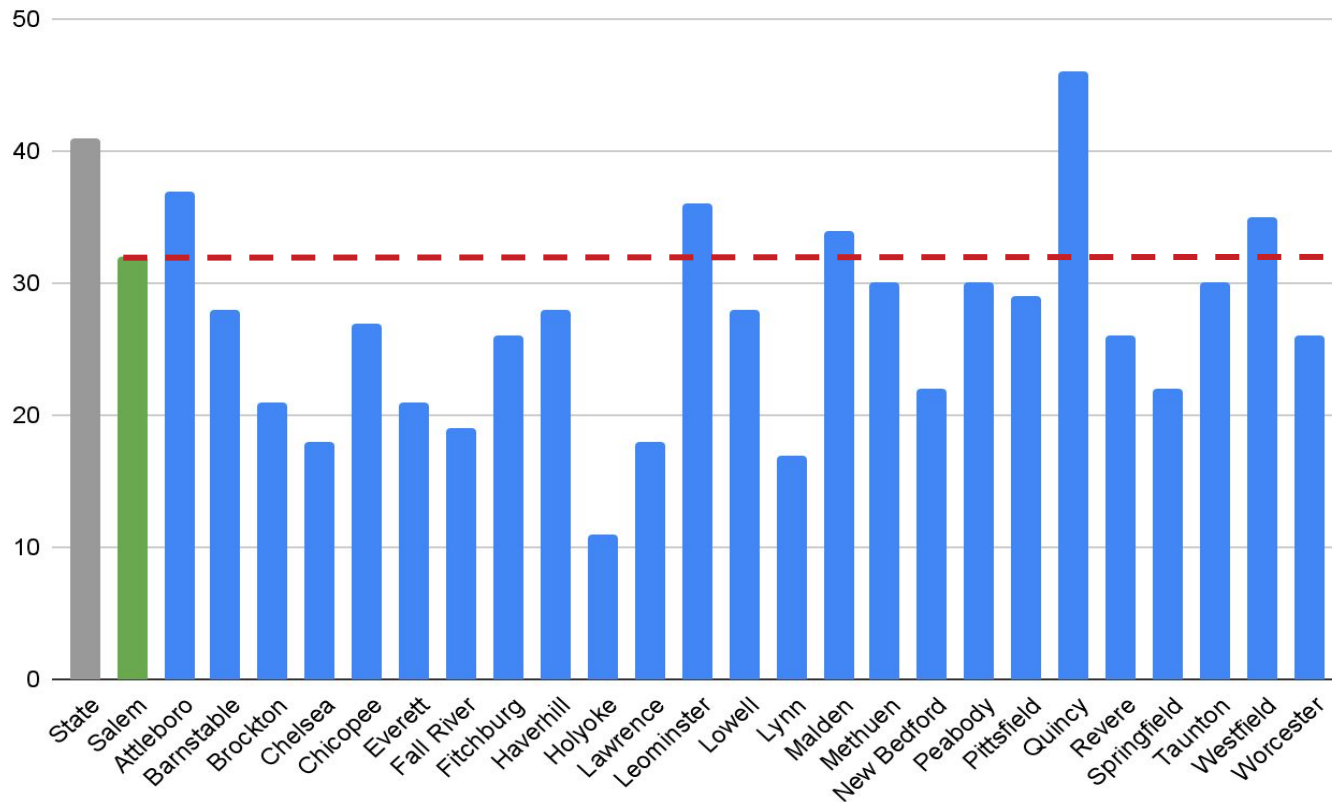
Comparison to Gateway Cities 3-8 Math

Grade 3-8 math results place us in the *middle tier* of Massachusetts Gateway Cities.



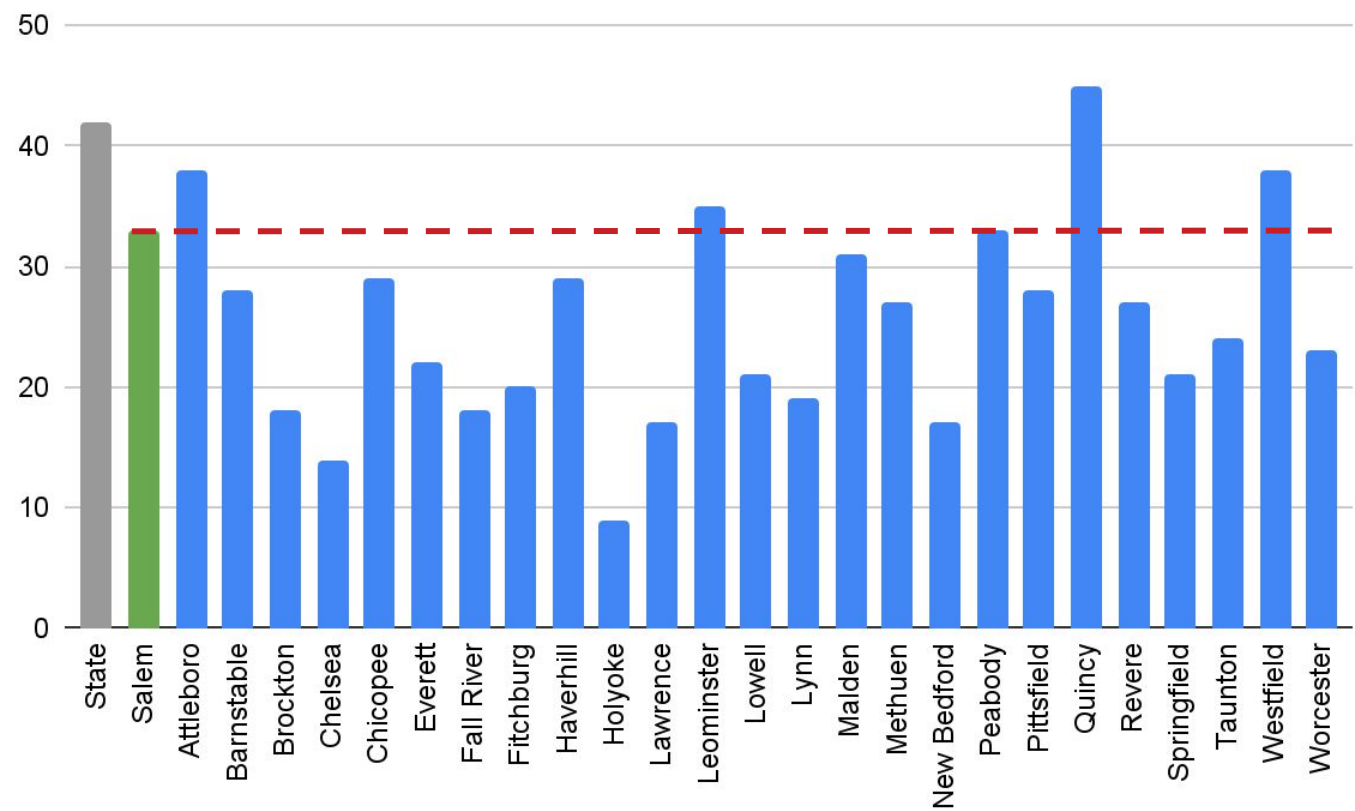
Comparison to Gateway Cities 3-8 ELA

Salem *outperformed* 20 out of 25 other Gateway Cities on 3-8 ELA.



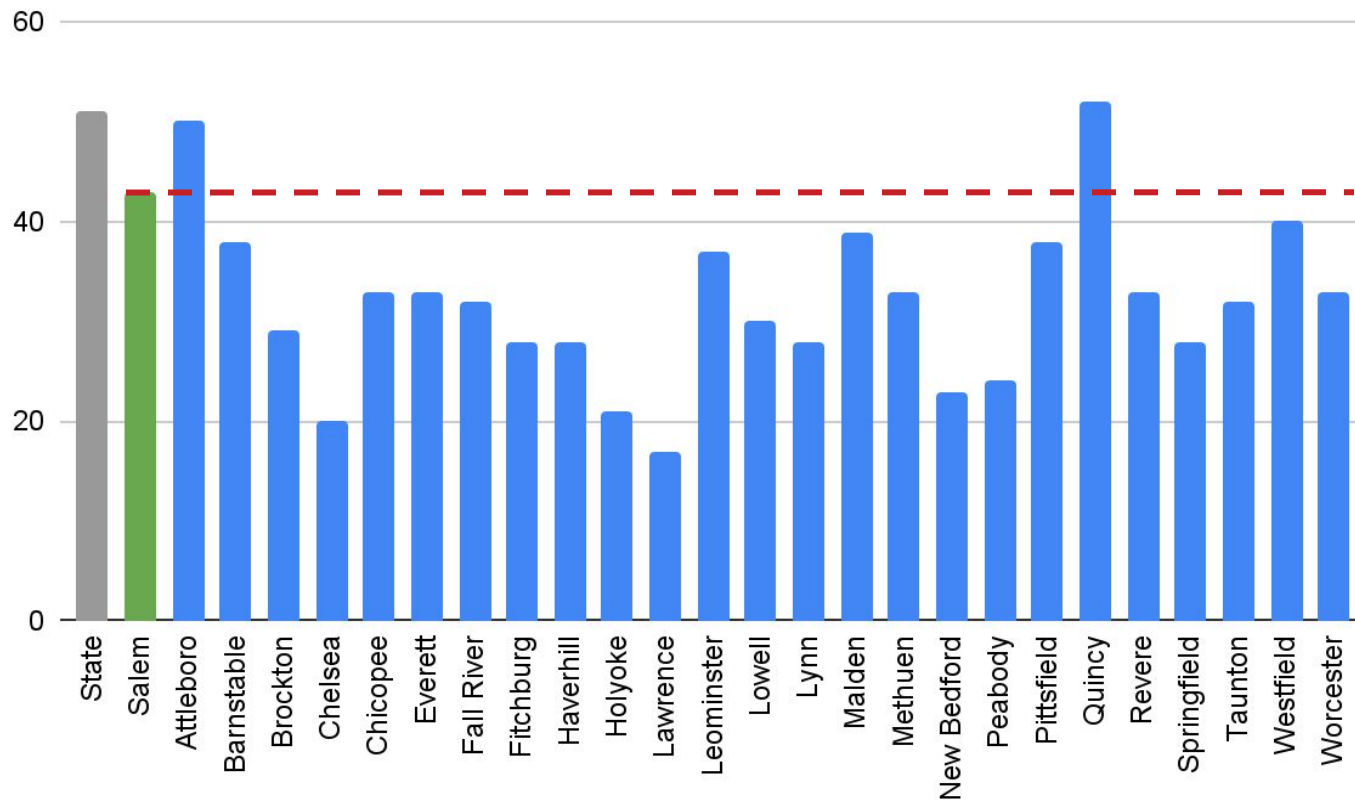
Comparison to Gateway Cities 5 & 8 Science

Salem *outperformed* 20 out of 25 other Gateway Cities on 5th and 8th Science.



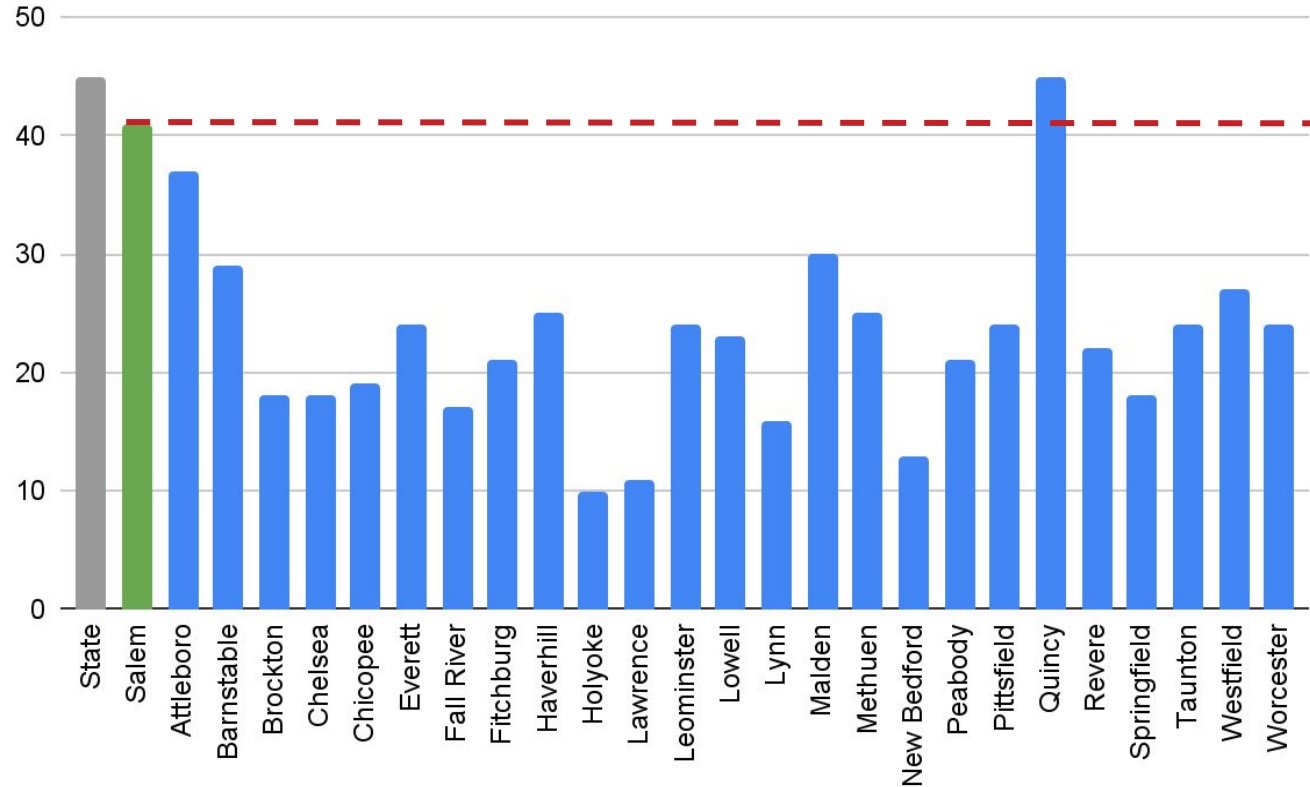
Grade 10 ELA Gateway Comparisons

Performance on grade 10 ELA ***exceeded*** that of 23 out of 25 other Gateway Cities.



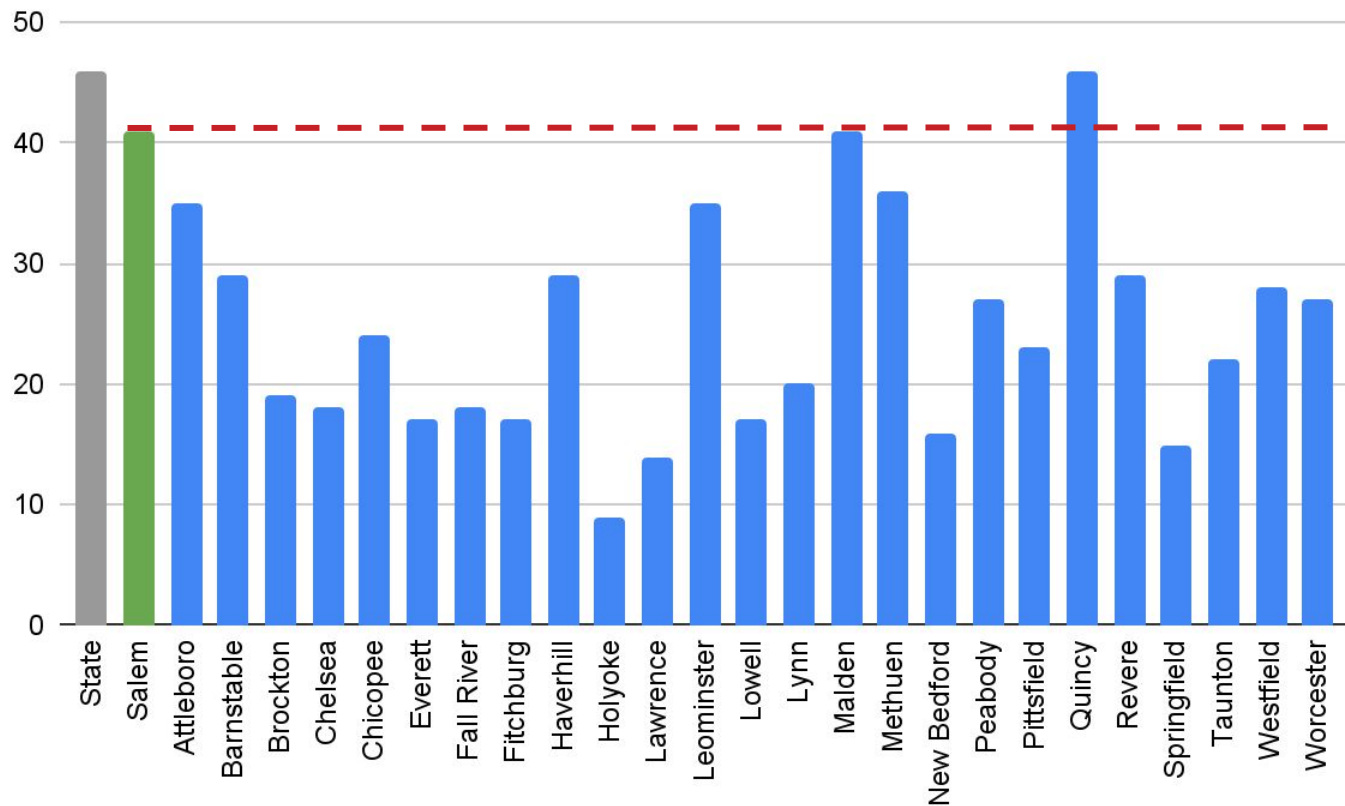
Grade 10 Math Gateway Comparisons

Salem performed **better** than every other Gateway City except for Quincy on in grade 10 math.



Comparison to Gateway Cities 10 Science

Salem performed **better** than every other Gateway City except for Quincy on in grade 10 Science.



MCAS Essay Writing

Idea Development is scored out of 4 in grades 3-5 and out of 5 in grades 6-8 and 10

Grade	% 0-1 Points	% Max Points
Grade 3	85%	1%
Grade 4	76%	2%
Grade 5	56%	3%
Grade 6	46%	10%
Grade 7	43%	3%
Grade 8	35%	7%
Grade 10	22%	25%

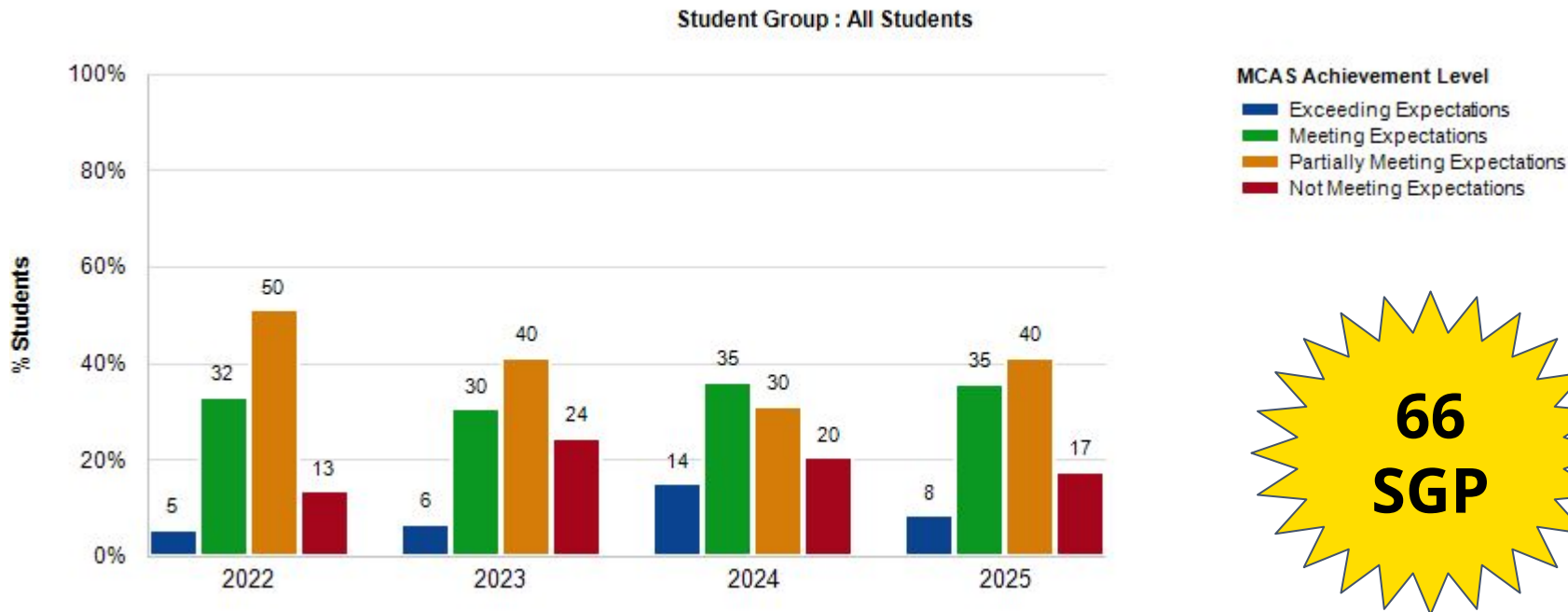
We see relative strength in idea development as students enter middle and high school. However, Idea development in the early grades is of particular concern as it reflects our students ability to communicate complex ideas in writing effectively, a critical skill for future successes.



MCAS Results Salem High Schools

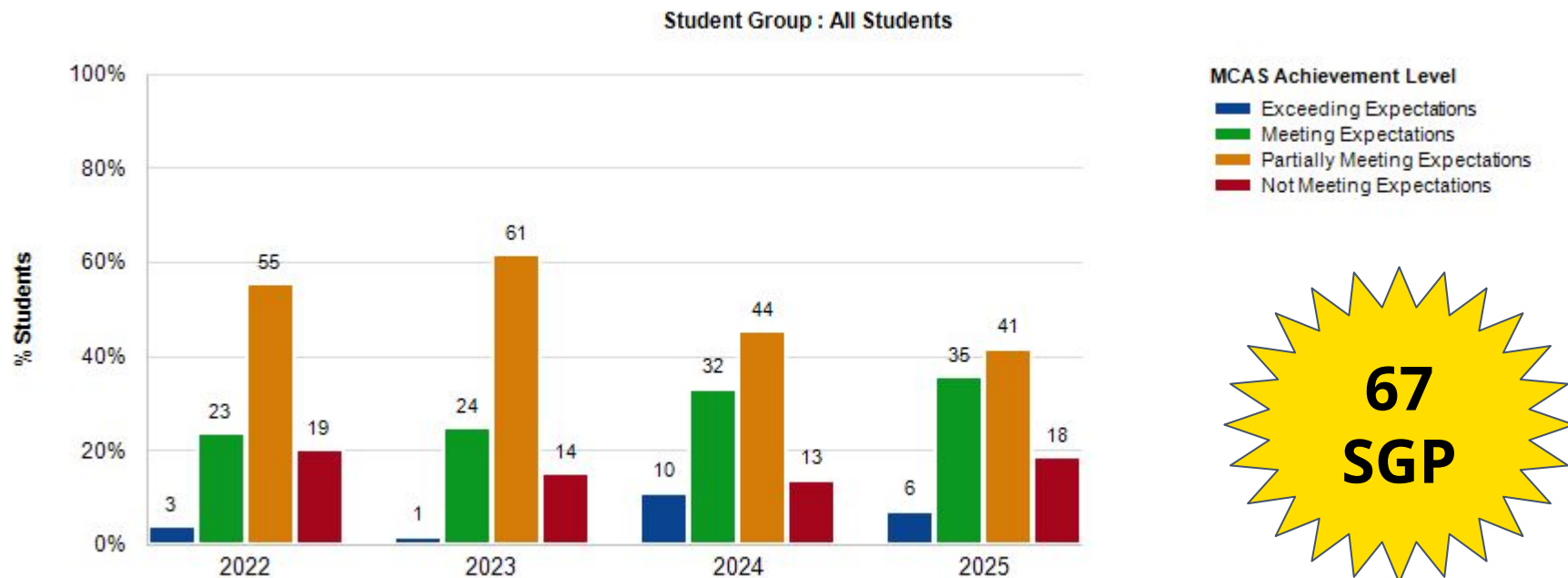
ELA 10th Grade

While there was a slight decrease in the number of students exceeding, there was a decrease in the number of students not meeting in grade 10 ELA. High growth was achieved with 66 SGP.



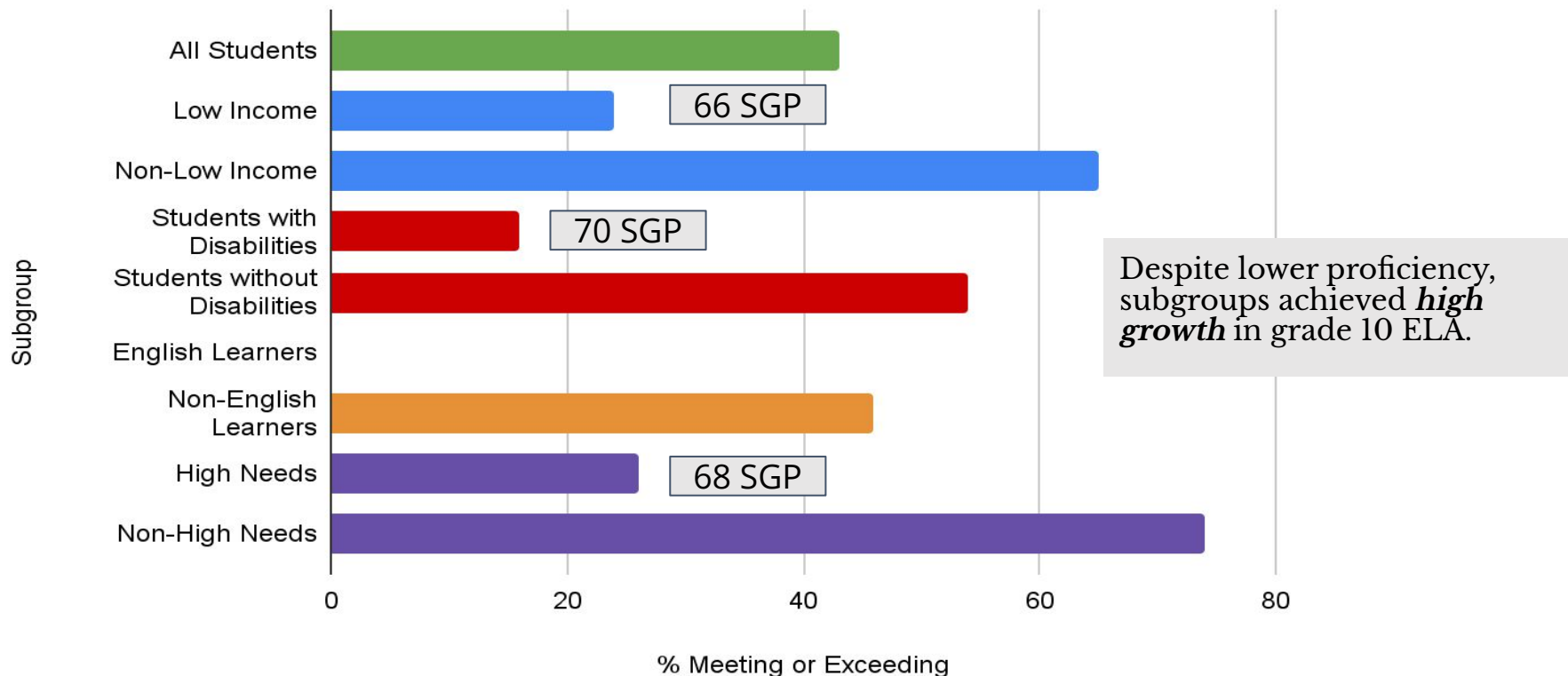
Math 10th Grade

While the number of students meeting increased slightly, the number of students not meeting also increased in grade 10 math. High growth was achieved with 67 SGP.



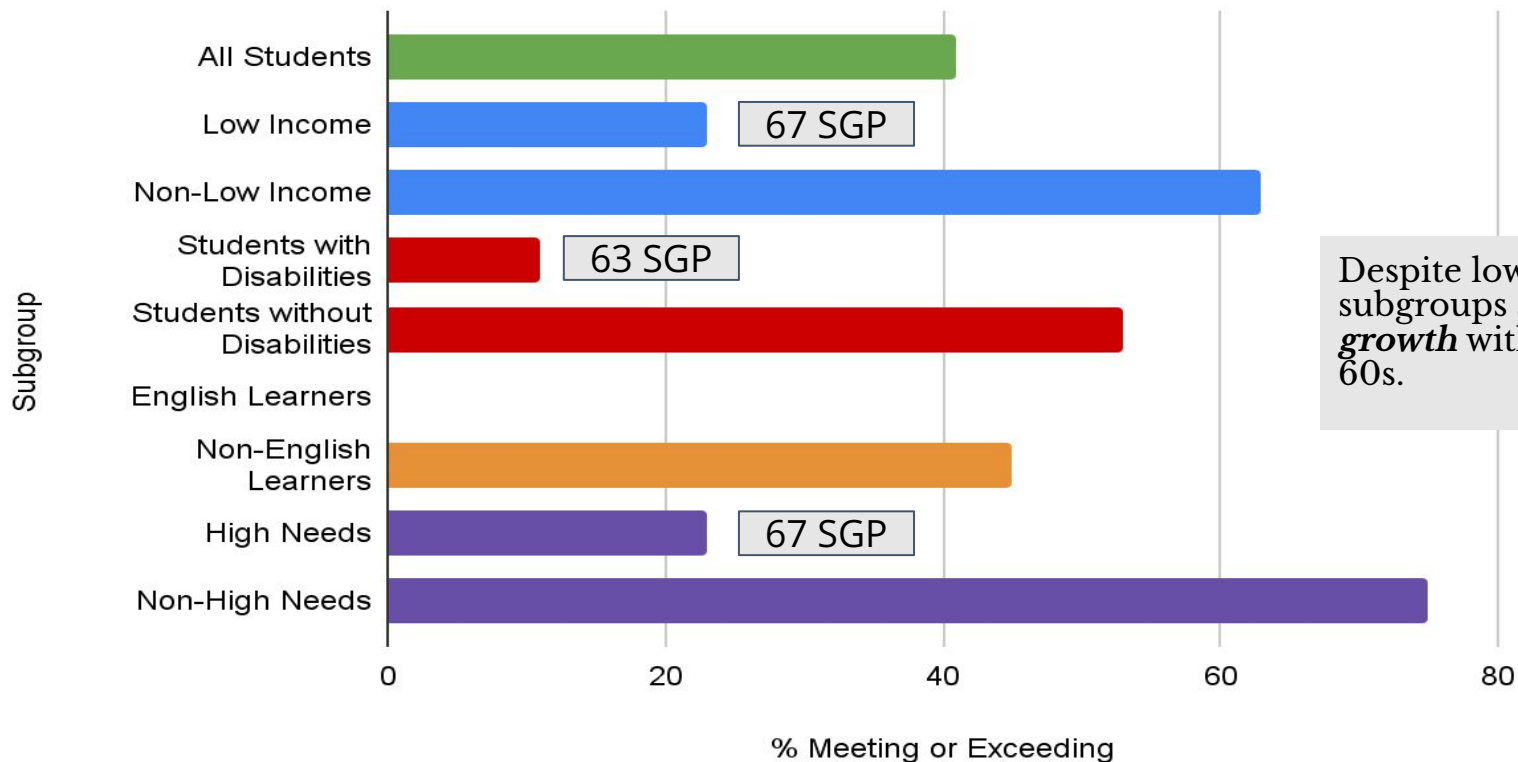
ELA Subgroup Achievement Grade 10

SGP is not available for English Learners as the sample size was too small to calculate. Students need two year's worth of data to calculate an SGP.



Math Subgroup Achievement Grade 10

SGP is not available for English Learners as the sample size was too small to calculate. Students need two year's worth of data to calculate an SGP.



Despite lower proficiency, subgroups achieved **high growth** with SGPs in the 60s.



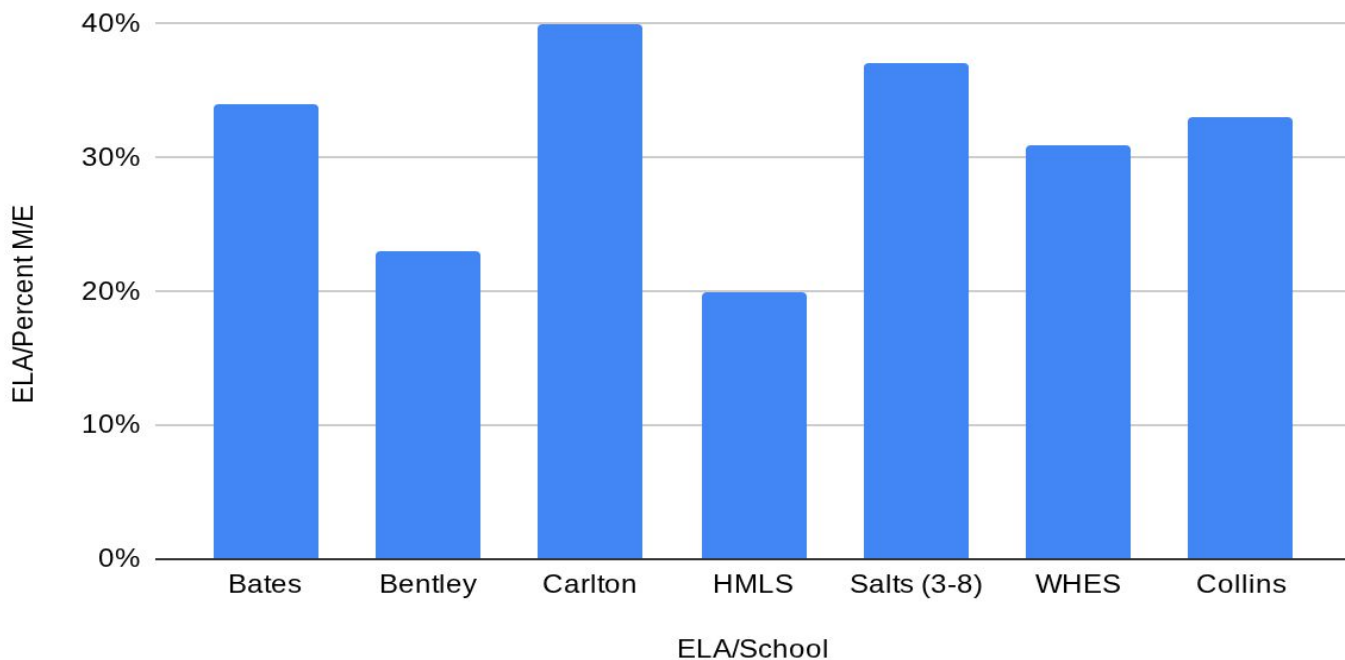
MCAS ELA Results

Grades 3-8

ELA by School

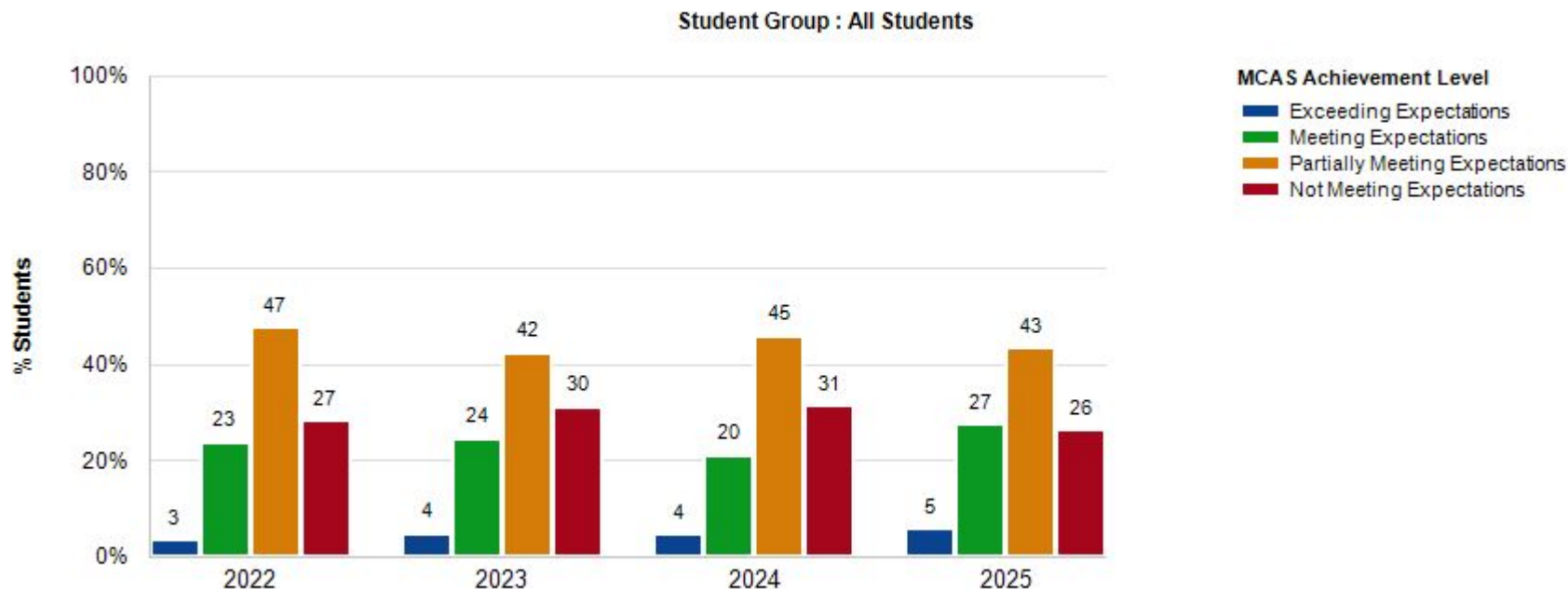
5 out of 6 schools have proficiency above 30 percent.

ELA Percent Meeting/Exceeding by School (3-8)



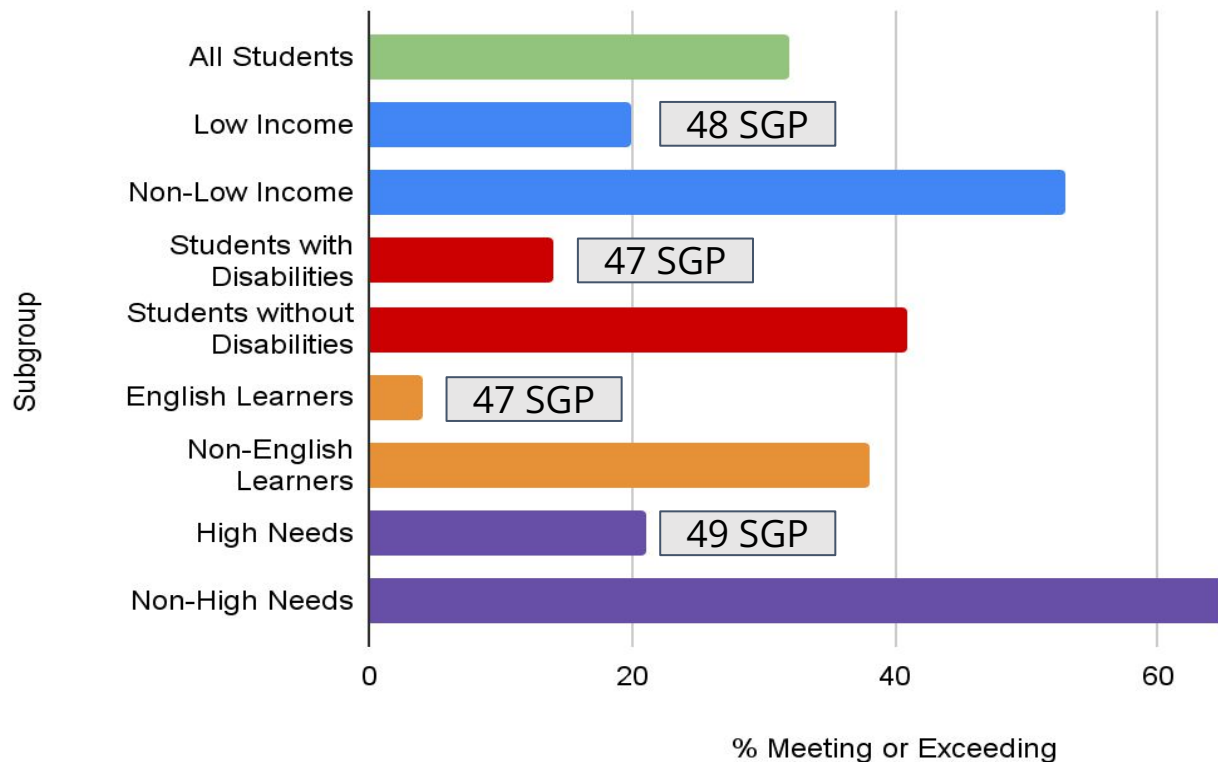
3-8 ELA Year to Year Comparisons

There was an increase in the percentage of students meeting and exceeding and a decrease in the number of students not meeting in 3-8 ELA and represents the strongest achievement in ELA for the last four years.



ELA Subgroup Achievement 3-8

There is significant *disproportionality* in achievement for grades 3-8 ELA and *moderate growth* for subgroups.



**56 SGP
for FEL**

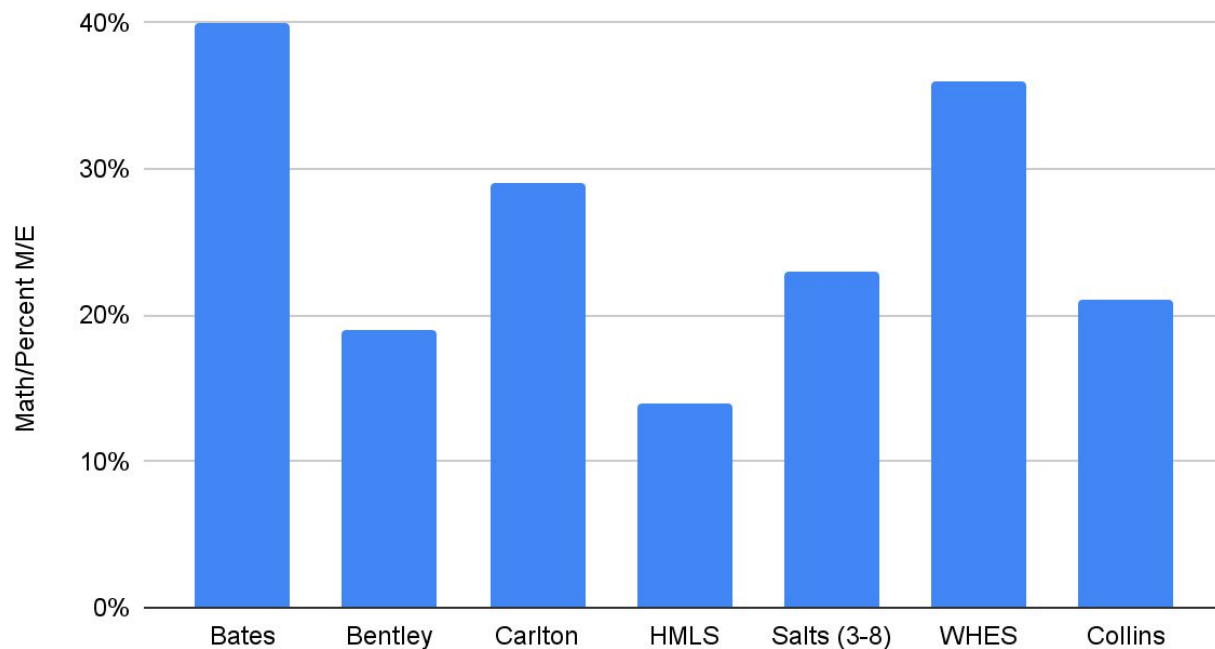


MCAS Math Results Grades 3-8

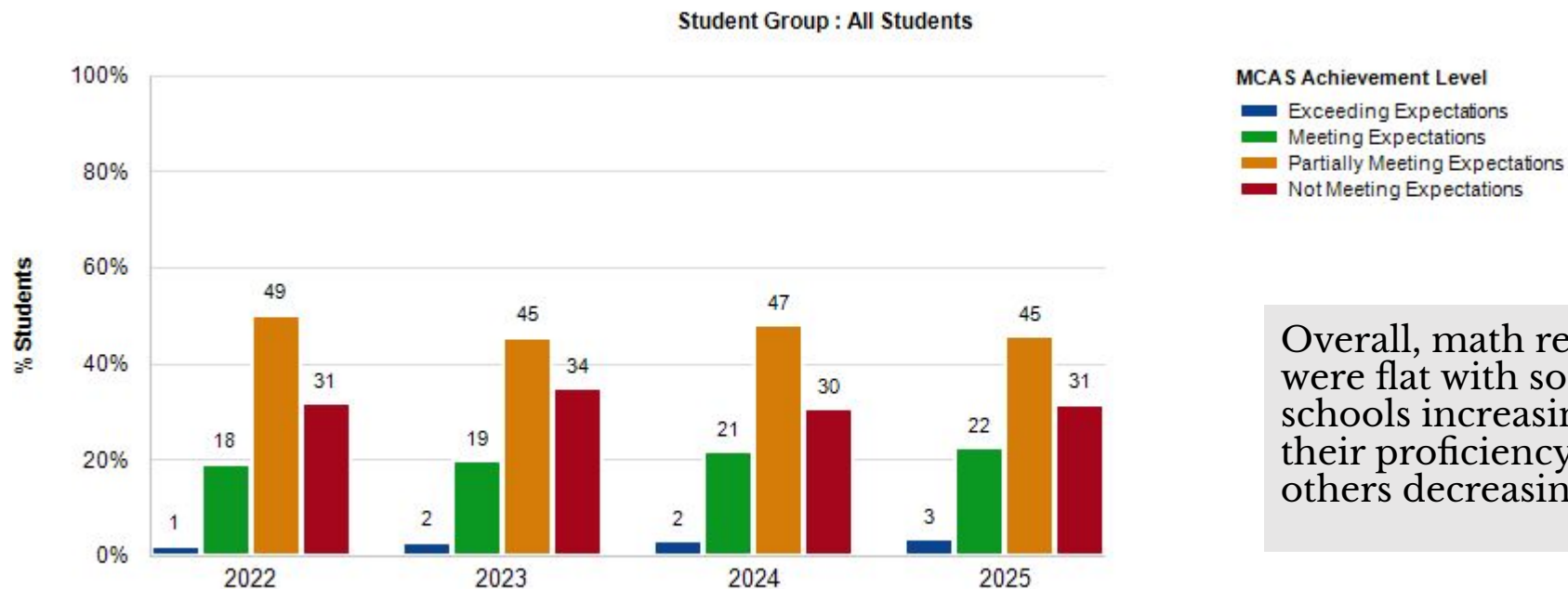
Math by School

Bates is leading elementary and middle schools with 40% of students proficient with Witchcraft Heights following close behind.

Math Percent Meeting/Exceeding by School (3-8)



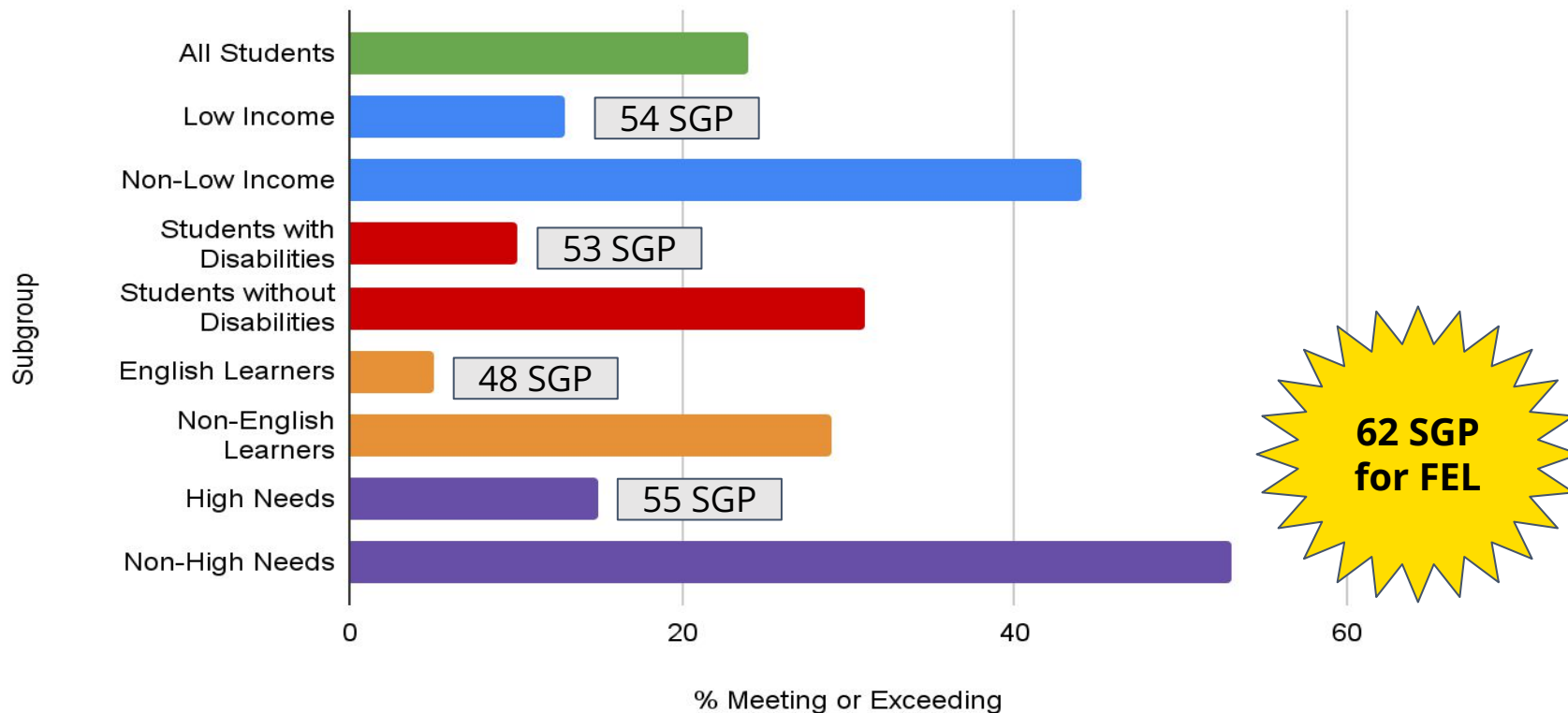
3-8 Math Year to Year Comparison



Overall, math results were flat with some schools increasing their proficiency with others decreasing.

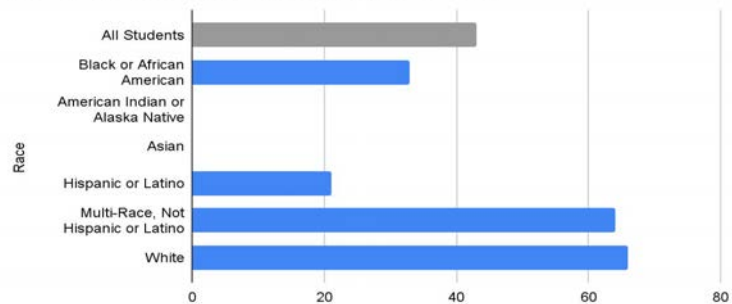
Math Subgroup Achievement 3-8

SGPs for subgroups were in the moderate to high-moderate range.

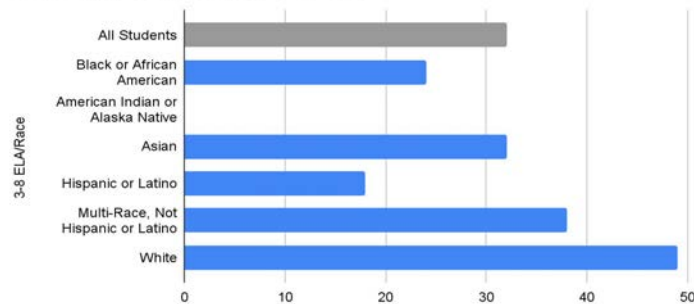


Racial Demographics

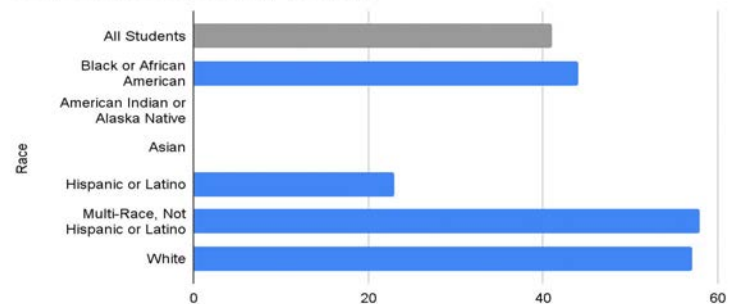
10 ELA/% Meeting or Exceeding vs. 10 ELA



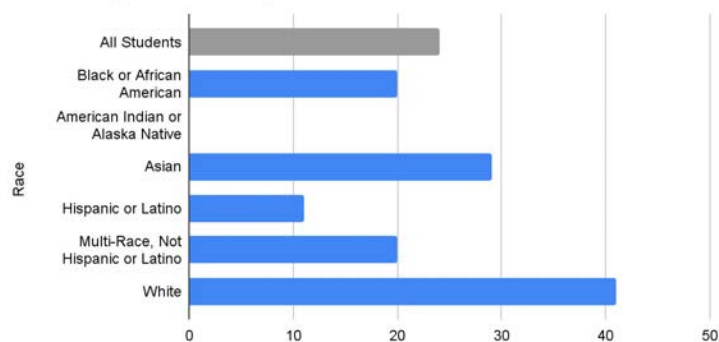
% Meeting or Exceeding 3-8 ELA



% Meeting or Exceeding 10 Math



% Meeting or Exceeding 3-8 Math



There is a persistent *racial disparity* in performance demonstrating the need for further work in creating inclusive environments where all students experience a sense of belonging.



Spotlight—SPS Middle Schools

District Middle School ELA

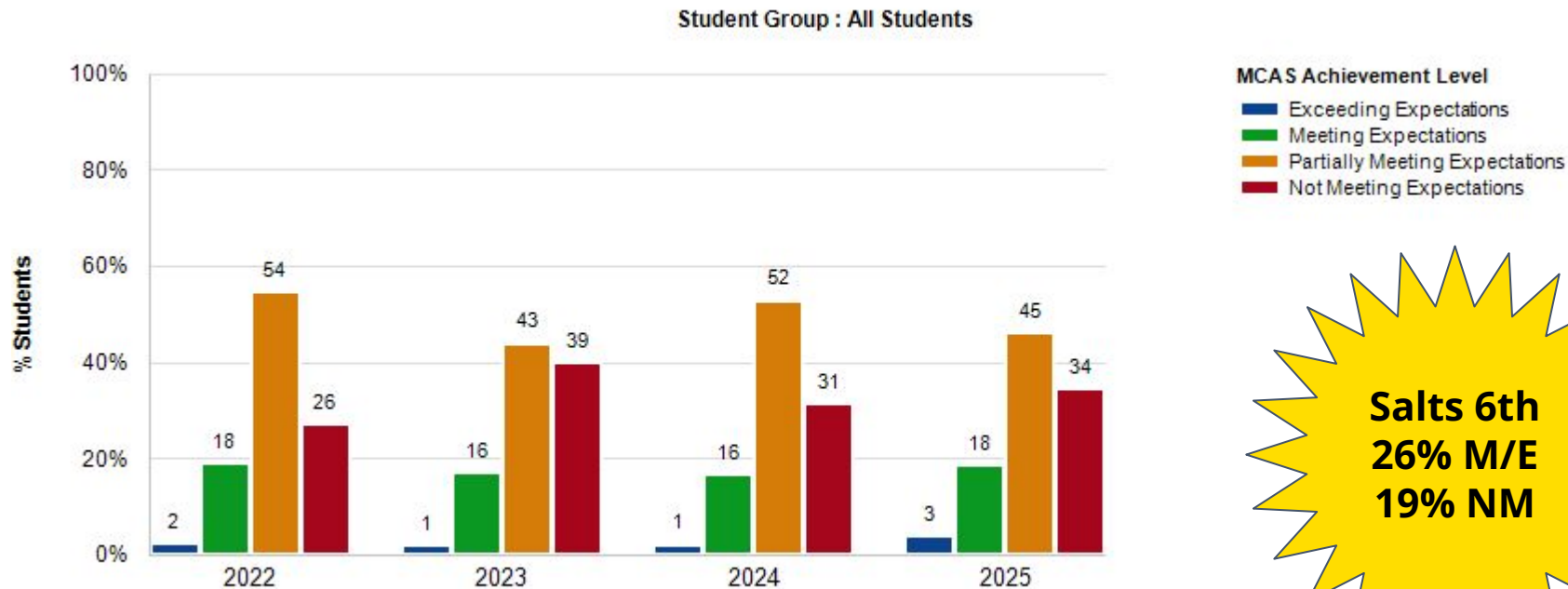
	2024	2025	Change
CMS 6	14%	32%	+18
Salts 6	5%	44%	+39
CMS 7	23%	34%	+11
Salts 7	26%	21%	-5
CMS 8	25%	33%	+8
Salts 8	29%	35%	+6

Collins and Saltonstall (6-8) significantly increased the percent of students meeting or exceeding in ELA.

While 7th grade data for Saltonstall is the lowest in 2025, it reflects a significant increase of 16 points from the previous year for this cohort of students.

Math Collins Middle School

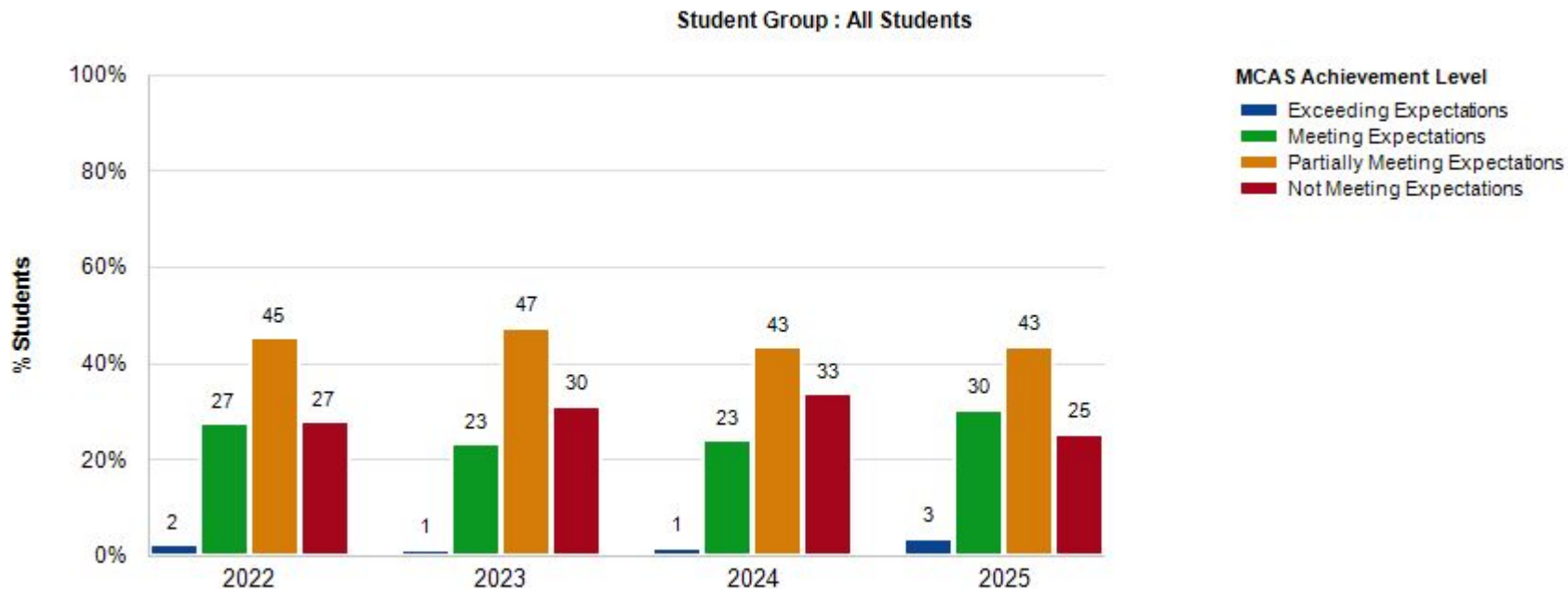
Collins Middle School increased the percentage of students meeting and exceeding overall.



Salts 6th
26% M/E
19% NM

Science Collins Middle School

In addition to outperforming neighboring gateway cities, the % of students meeting and exceeding increased by 9 points.



SGP

Every school had moderate or high growth in ELA and math. Only one school had low growth in either content area.

School	ELA	Math
Bates	61	60
BAIS	52	56
Carlton	47	49
HMLS	45	38
Salts	61	44
WHES	55	50
CMS	58	51
SHS	66	67



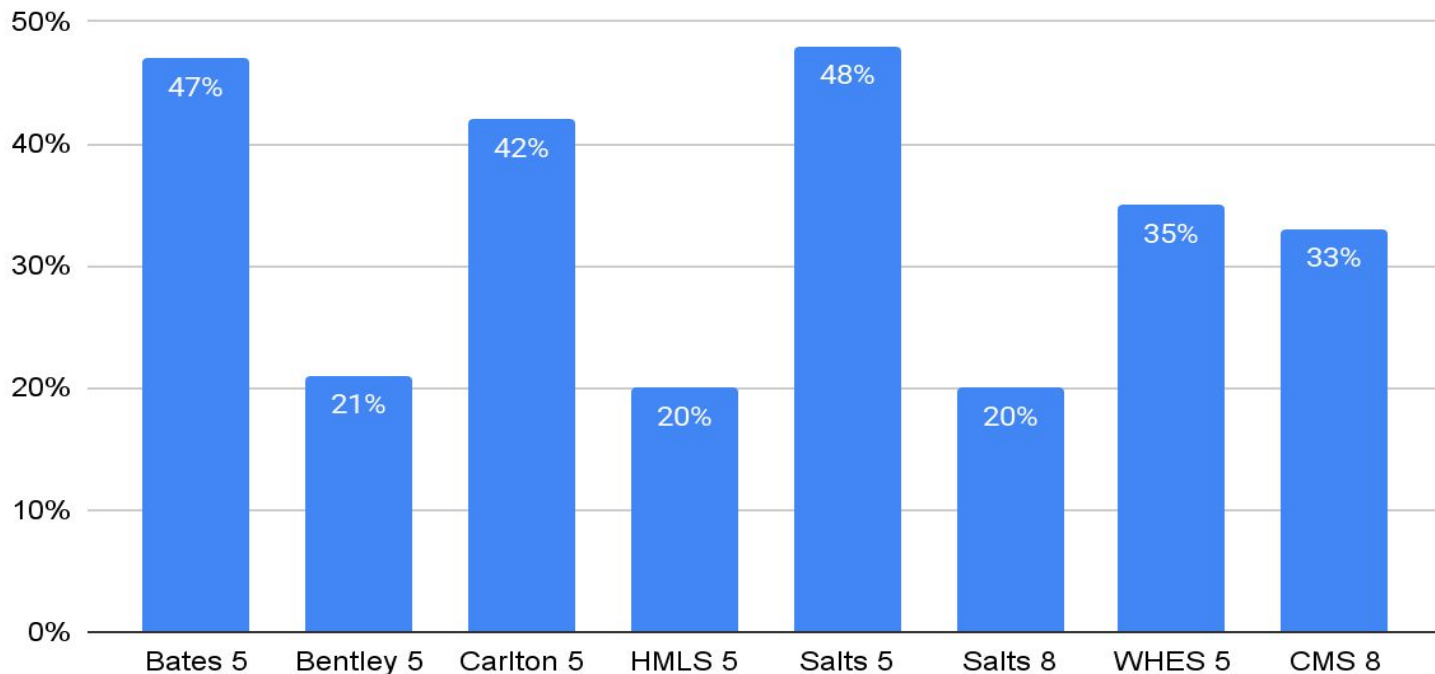
MCAS Science Results

Grades 3-8

Science by School

The performance in science varies significantly by school with Saltonstall 5th graders leading other schools with 48% proficient.

Science MCAS % Meeting or Exceeding by School





MCAS Civics Results

Grade 8

Gr. 8 Civics – Background

Domains Assessed:

- Foundations of Government
- Government Structures
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Civics Practices
- Civic Knowledge
- Civic-based Questions
- Analyzing Sources
- Explanations and Reasoning

Timeline

2018 - DESE launches new History/SS Framework

2023 - Pilot of items and format

2024 - Field test across the entire state

2025 - 1st year of full implementation

Format

The Civics assessment has 2 sessions:

State-Level Performance Task:

- ★ Addresses one topic in-depth
 - Three 1-point constructed-response questions
 - One 4-point constructed-response question
 - Seven 1-point selected-response questions which include multiple-choice, multiple-select, and technology-enhanced items.

End-of-Course Test:

- ★ Addresses all of the standards
 - 32 machine-scored test questions
 - Item types include multiple-choice, multiple-select, and technology-enhanced questions

[F.A.Q.](#)

Gr. 8 Civics – Background

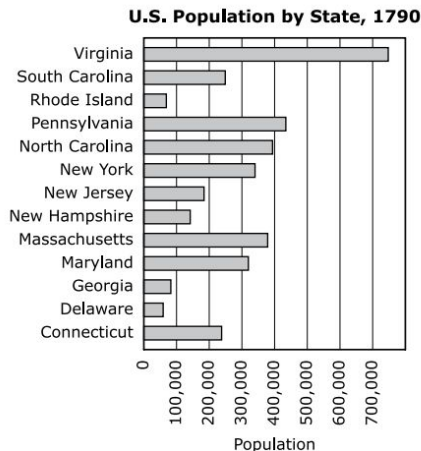
Source Analysis and Content Knowledge Multiple Choice Constructed Response

Read and examine the source. Then answer questions 5–7.

The following text describes a conflict about congressional representation during the Constitutional Convention.

Twelve of the original thirteen states sent delegates to the Constitutional Convention. The states disagreed over representation in the federal government. Two states introduced plans to solve this conflict. The Virginia Plan proposed representation based on the total population of each state. The New Jersey Plan proposed equal representation for each state.

The following graph shows the total population for each of the original thirteen states as recorded in the 1790 U.S. Census.



5 Based on the source, which of the following questions were the delegates to the Constitutional Convention trying to resolve when they proposed the Virginia and New Jersey plans?

- (A) How will states join the new government?
- (B) How will states choose leaders for local legislatures?
- (C) How will citizens participate in creating new national laws?
- (D) How will the government resolve problems between two states?

6 During the Constitutional Convention, states voted on the Virginia and the New Jersey plans.

Based on the text and the graph, which pair of states most likely supported the **Virginia Plan** at the Constitutional Convention?

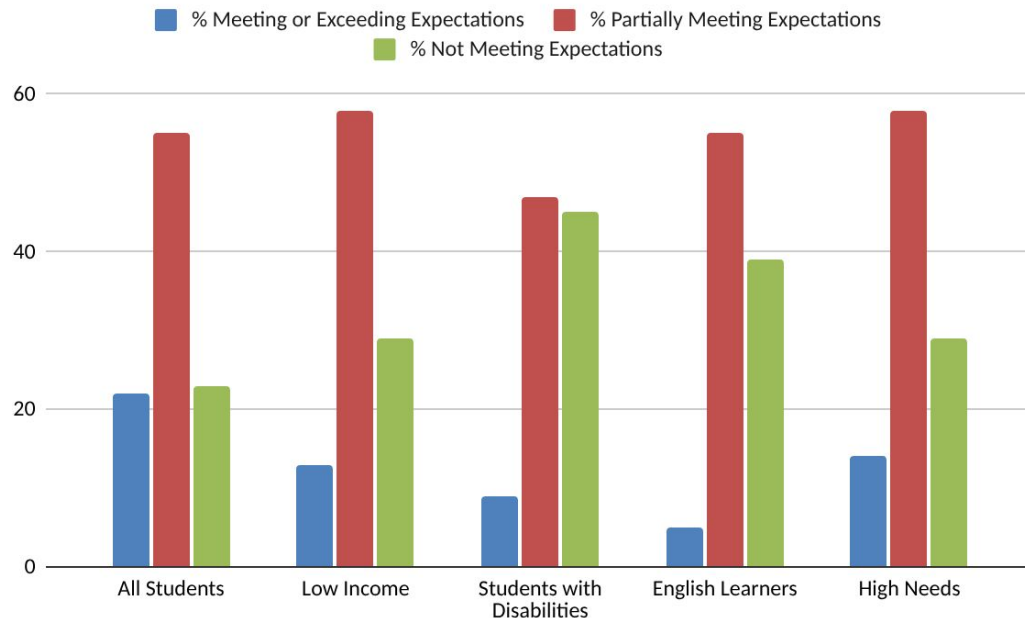
- (A) Delaware and Massachusetts
- (B) Delaware and New Hampshire
- (C) Massachusetts and Pennsylvania
- (D) New Hampshire and Pennsylvania

Based on the text and the graph, which pair of states most likely supported the **New Jersey Plan** at the Constitutional Convention?

- (A) Pennsylvania and Delaware
- (B) Delaware and New Hampshire
- (C) Massachusetts and Pennsylvania
- (D) New Hampshire and Massachusetts

7 Delegates from North Carolina supported the Virginia Plan. Explain one reason why the state most likely supported that plan. Include data from the graph to support your reasoning.

Gr. 8 Civics — Baseline Results



2025 was the first year of full implementation of the 8th Grade Civics MCAS.

Based on data shared, students are scoring 5% points below the state on the constructed response items and 8% on selected response.

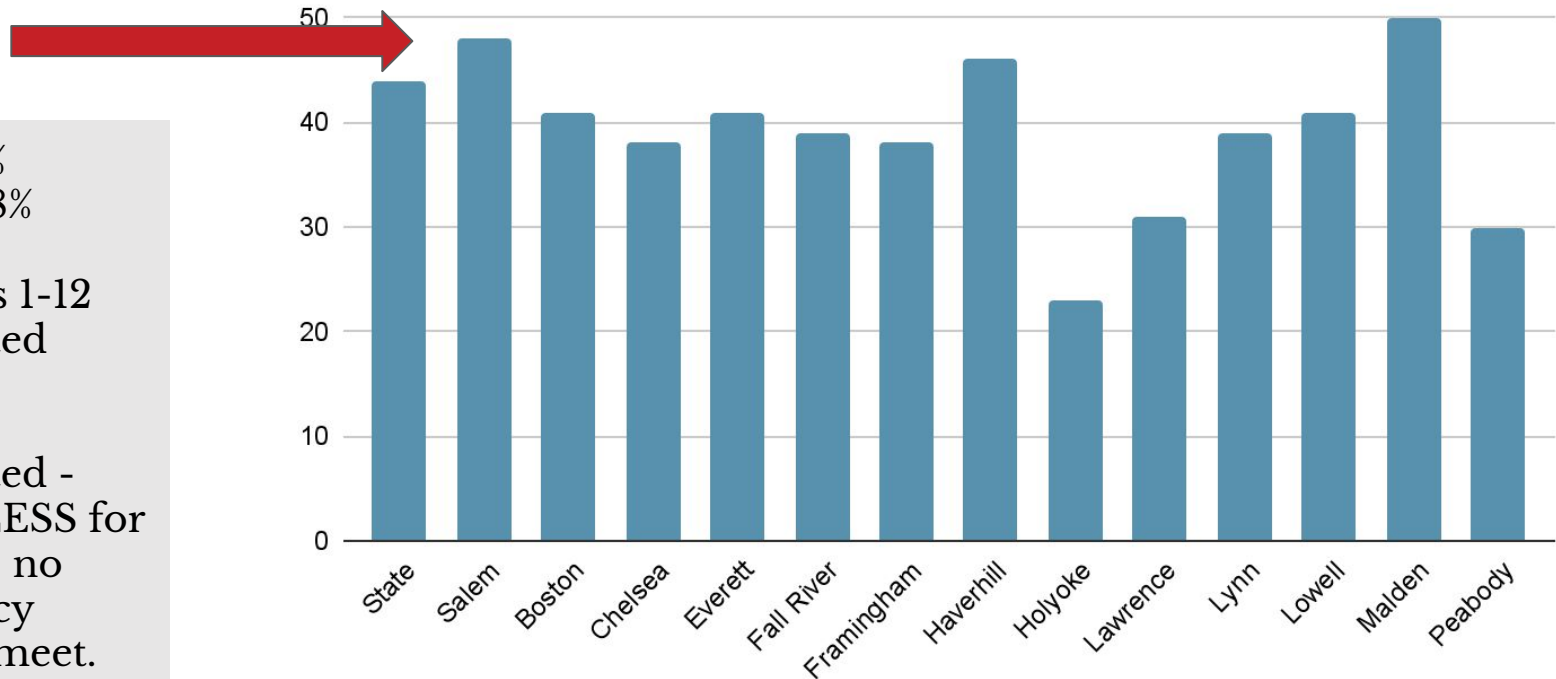


ACCESS Results

Grades K-12

ACCESS 2025 Results

Percentage of Students Meeting Proficiency Targets 1-12



State: 43%
Salem: 48%

All grades 1-12
represented

K not
represented -
took ACCESS for
first time, no
proficiency
target to meet.

ACCESS 2025 Results: 9-12

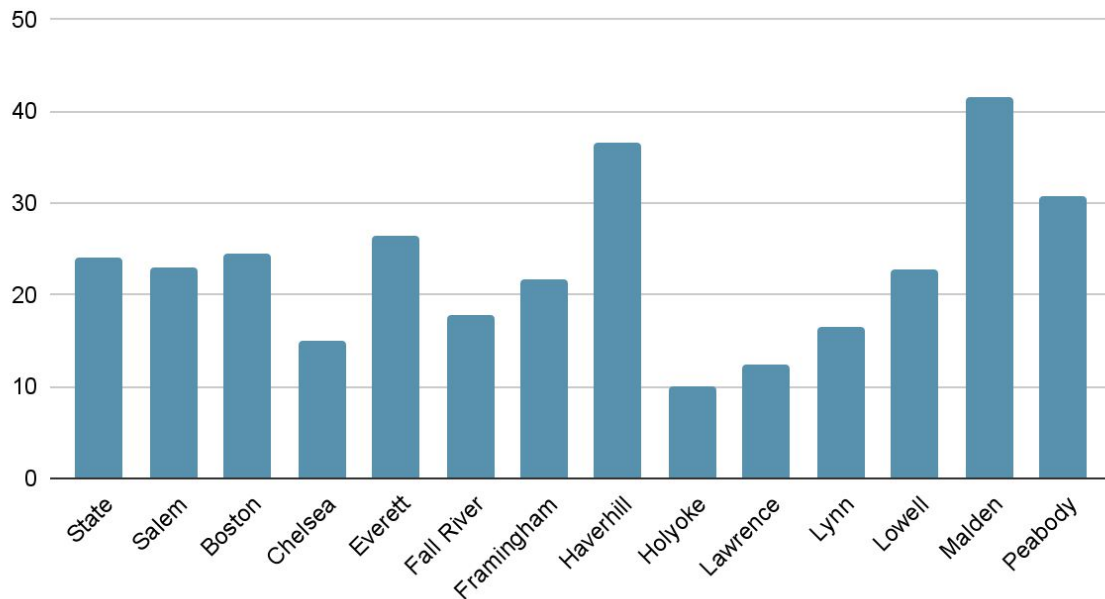
State: 24%
Salem: 23%

Salem performing similar to
State, Boston, and Lowell

Salem outperforms Chelsea,
Fall River, Holyoke,
Lawrence, and Lynn

Salem is outperformed by
Everett, Haverhill, Malden,
and Peabody

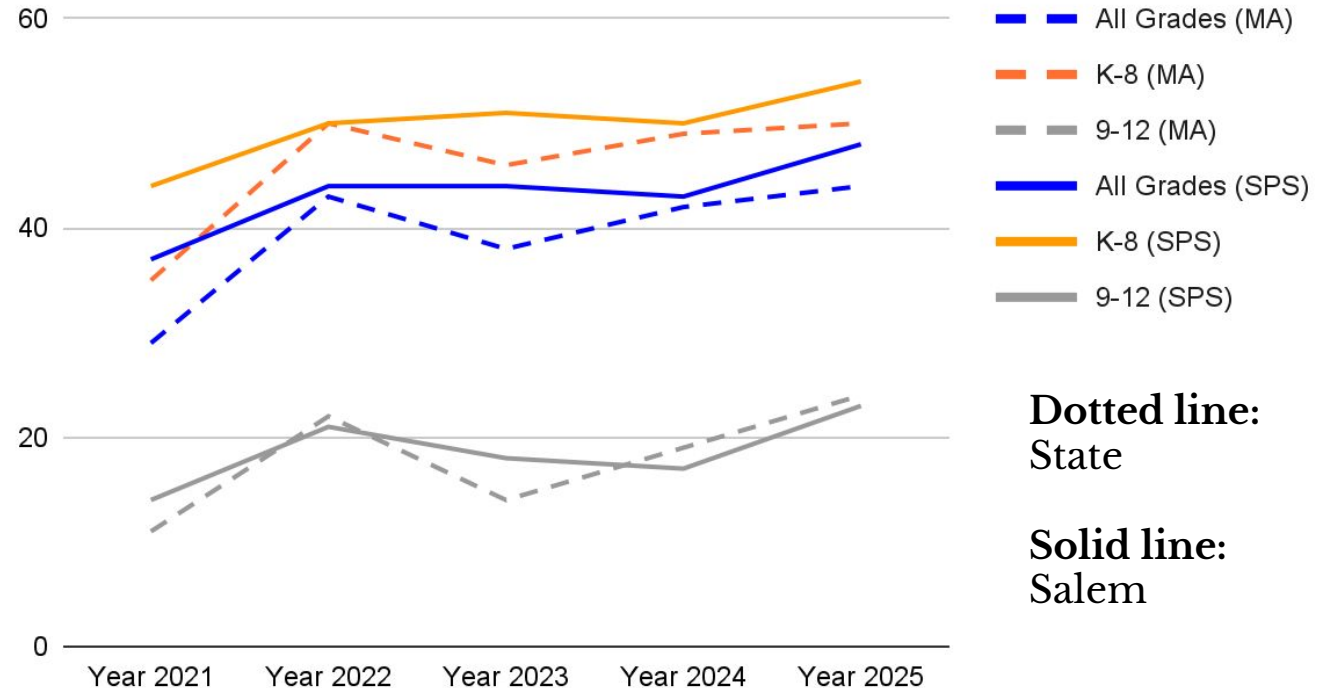
Percentage of Students Meeting Proficiency Targets 9-12



Five Years of Progress

- Salem continues to improve since 2021
- Salem is matching or performing better than the state every year for All Grades and for K-8
- Salem 9-12 is 1% point way from State average 2025

State vs. Salem Students Meeting Proficiency



Dotted line:
State

Solid line:
Salem

Highlights & Opportunities

Highlights:

Horace Mann: Highest performing school (67% of students meeting progress target), 5/7 of MLs in subseparate setting making progress. Their close collaboration with HMLS's special educators in subseparate settings has been ongoing since 2023. Horace Mann continues to improve on ACCESS every year.

Collins: Improving under target, but significant growth: 11% growth from 2024 to 2025.

Opportunities for Growth:

Salem High School: Learn from neighbors like Malden and Peabody

Investigate ELD curriculum upgrade in grades 6-12 (such as LIFT).

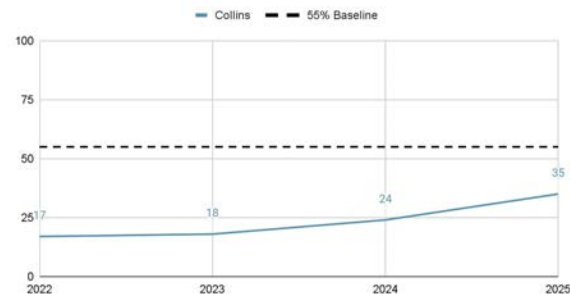
Continued focus on ELD: We are not yet at 55%, ELD instruction should remain steady. No correlation/causation between ACCESS and MCAS.



HMLS - Percent Made Progress



CMS Percent Made Progress



Implications & Opportunities

Data Informed Instruction: Regularly use student work to gauge what students need next.

Lesson Internalization: Zoom in to prioritize the most important tasks/activities.

Academic Monitoring: Actively look at student work in real time and give quick feedback to clear up confusion right away.

Student Writing: Continue a districtwide focus on writing PK-12. We have significantly increased the frequency of writing in classes and are ready to make the next push to raise expectations for student writing and respond with targeted feedback.

Big Rocks

