WAUNAKEE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Spring 2026 State Assessment Results

Three-Year Trend Report, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Forward Exam • PreACT Secure • ACT • DLM

Prepared for the Waunakee Community School District Board of Education

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Updated October 2026 with Dane County, peer group, and statewide comparisons

AI disclaimer: This document was drafted with the assistance of Claude, an AI system developed by Anthropic, working from WISEdash for Districts and DRC student-level data exports, district demographic files, and Wisconsin DPI's public 2025-26 district-level data files. All analyses, figures, and narrative in every release have been reviewed and approved by Tim Schell, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, Waunakee Community School District, prior to distribution.

Environmental impact statement: Producing this set of deliverables (data processing, analysis, and document generation across the original September drafting session and the October 2026 comparison updates) is estimated to have consumed roughly 1.0 kWh of electricity — an order-of-magnitude estimate, since AI providers do not report per-session energy use. That is comparable to about 13 hours of Netflix streaming (≈0.077 kWh per hour, per Netflix/DIMPACT) and, in carbon terms, to driving about 1.3 miles in a car that gets 30 mpg (≈0.39 kg CO_2 using the U.S. average grid intensity of ≈0.39 kg CO_2/kWh and 8.9 kg CO_2 per gallon of gasoline).

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Executive Summary

In Spring 2026, the percentage of Full Academic Year (FAY) Waunakee Community School District students scoring Meeting or Advanced on Wisconsin DPI performance levels rose in all four state-assessed subjects. Social Studies (81.2%) and ELA (75.6%) reached three-year highs; Mathematics (76.9%) and Science (74.4%) recovered from 2024-25 dips to finish above their 2023-24 levels. Participation was 96–98% in every subject. On DPI's public October 1 release, Waunakee ranks first among the 16 Dane County districts in six of seven subject comparisons and above the median of its 25-district statewide peer group in all seven (Section 8).

Subject	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	Change 24→26	Advanced share, 2024 → 2026
ELA	71.7%	73.3%	75.6%	+2.3	+3.9	20% → 27%
Mathematics	75.8%	74.2%	76.9%	+2.6	+1.0	31% → 36%
Science	72.4%	69.3%	74.4%	+5.1	+2.0	35% → 42%
Social Studies	75.8%	79.0%	81.2%	+2.1	+5.4	41% → 50%

Table 1. Percent of FAY district students at Meeting or Advanced, all tested grades combined.

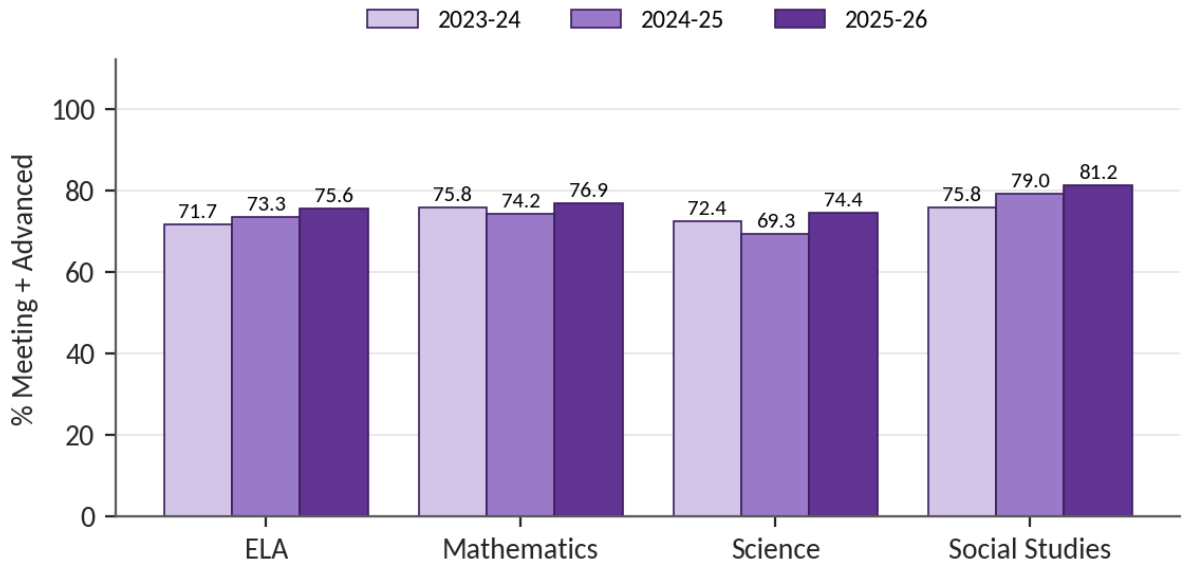

Figure 1. Three-year trend in percent Meeting + Advanced, district total.

Key findings

- **Gains in all four subjects.** Compared with Spring 2025, the share of FAY district students at Meeting or Advanced rose in ELA (+2.3 points to 75.6%), Mathematics (+2.6 to 76.9%), Science (+5.1 to 74.4%), and Social Studies (+2.1 to 81.2%). ELA and Social Studies are at three-year highs; Mathematics and Science recovered from 2024-25 dips to finish above 2023-24.
- **More students reaching Advanced.** Growth is concentrated at the top level. The Advanced share climbed over three years from 20% to 27% in ELA, 31% to 36% in Mathematics, 35% to 42% in Science, and 41% to 50% in Social Studies, while the Developing share held steady at 6–8%.

- **Grade 11 rebound; watch Grade 9 ELA.** Grade 11 ACT proficiency recovered sharply after a low 2024-25 cohort (ELA 54.2% → 75.5%; Math 62.7% → 77.9%). Grade 8 Math reached a three-year high (77.1%, +7.4) and Grade 6 ELA (84.4%) is the district's highest grade-level result. Grade 9 ELA fell 11.6 points to 68.0%, now the lowest ELA grade, and Grade 6 Math slipped 5.0 points.
- **Top of Dane County; competitive with the state's strongest peers.** Waunakee is first in Dane County in all four Forward subjects and in high school Mathematics and Science, and second in high school ELA. Against its 25 comparable districts it ranks 3rd–5th in ELA, Science, Social Studies, and high school Mathematics and Science, 7th in high school ELA, and 12th in grades 3–8 Mathematics — above the peer median everywhere and up from 2024-25 in every subject. Grade 11 Mathematics ranks 2nd of 375 Wisconsin districts.
- **School results moved in different directions.** Arboretum led the K-4 schools in both ELA (80.5%) and Math (76.8%); Intermediate (81.0% ELA) and Middle (77.6% ELA, 78.6% Math) improved in both subjects; the High School rose to 71.5% ELA and 77.7% Math. Prairie (68.9% ELA, 71.2% Math) and Heritage (74.5% ELA) remain below their 2023-24 or 2024-25 marks.
- **Persistent opportunity gaps.** Economically disadvantaged students trail their peers by 33 points in ELA, 35 in Math, 42 in Science, and 30 in Social Studies — gaps that held steady or widened. Black and Hispanic students remain below 60% in every subject, though Math proficiency for Black students rose 10 points. Current English learners score far below peers, while former ELs (ELP 6) match or exceed the district average. Girls lead boys by 10 points in ELA; boys lead in Math (+2) and Science (+5).

1. About This Report

Assessments and grades

Wisconsin's state assessment system spans grades 3–11. This report combines results from all of them into a single view of district performance:

- **Forward Exam:** ELA and Mathematics in grades 3–8; Science in grades 4 and 8; Social Studies in grades 4, 8, and 10.
- **PreACT Secure:** ELA and Mathematics in grades 9 and 10.
- **ACT with Writing:** ELA, Mathematics, and Science in grade 11.
- **Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM):** The alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; DLM results are reported on the same DPI performance levels and are included where the source files report them.

Metric and population

All figures report the percentage of tested students who scored at the two highest DPI performance levels, Meeting or Advanced (the levels DPI counts as proficient on state report cards). The population is Full Academic Year (FAY) district students — those enrolled in the district continuously from the third Friday of September through the test window — which is the same population DPI uses for accountability. Students recorded as No Test are excluded from denominators; participation rates are reported separately.

Results are presented for the district total first, then by grade, then by school, and finally by student group (gender, race/ethnicity, economic status, and English learner status). Groups with fewer than 10 tested students are suppressed and shown as "—".

Data sources

- Population and metric: Full Academic Year (FAY) district students; percent scoring Meeting or Advanced on Wisconsin DPI performance levels; denominators are tested students (No Test excluded). Participation was 96–98% in every subject and year.
- Assessments: Forward Exam (grades 3–8 ELA/Math; 4 & 8 Science; 4, 8 & 10 Social Studies), PreACT Secure (grades 9–10 ELA/Math), ACT (grade 11 ELA/Math/Science), and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment where reported.
- 2025-26 grades 3–8 ELA and Math come from the DRC Grade Results File rather than WISEdash. FAY status was matched from other 2025-26 WISEdash files for grades 4 and 8 (about 1% non-FAY); grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 are assumed FAY. DLM results are not yet included for those grades/subjects. Figures should be refreshed once the WISEdash exports are available.
- Economic status comes from district enrollment demographic files (economically disadvantaged flag), matched to assessment records by WISEid with 100% coverage. English learner = ELP codes 1–5; former EL = ELP 6.
- Groups with fewer than 10 tested students are suppressed (shown as —).
- Dane County and peer group comparisons use Wisconsin DPI's public 2025-26 district-level files (released October 1, 2026). Those files report all students enrolled in each district at testing, not FAY students only,

so Waunakee's comparison figures differ from the FAY figures elsewhere by about one point or less. Percentages use tested students as the denominator, as elsewhere. See Section 8.

Comparability. All three years are reported on the DPI performance-level scale as it appears in the WISEdash and DRC files for that year. Before public release, confirm with DPI that no cut-score changes affect the 2023-24 to 2025-26 comparison.

2. District Overview

Figure 2 shows how students were distributed across the four performance levels in each year. In every subject the Advanced band grew while Approaching and Developing shrank or held steady — the district is not only lifting more students over the proficiency bar but moving a larger share of already-proficient students to the top level.

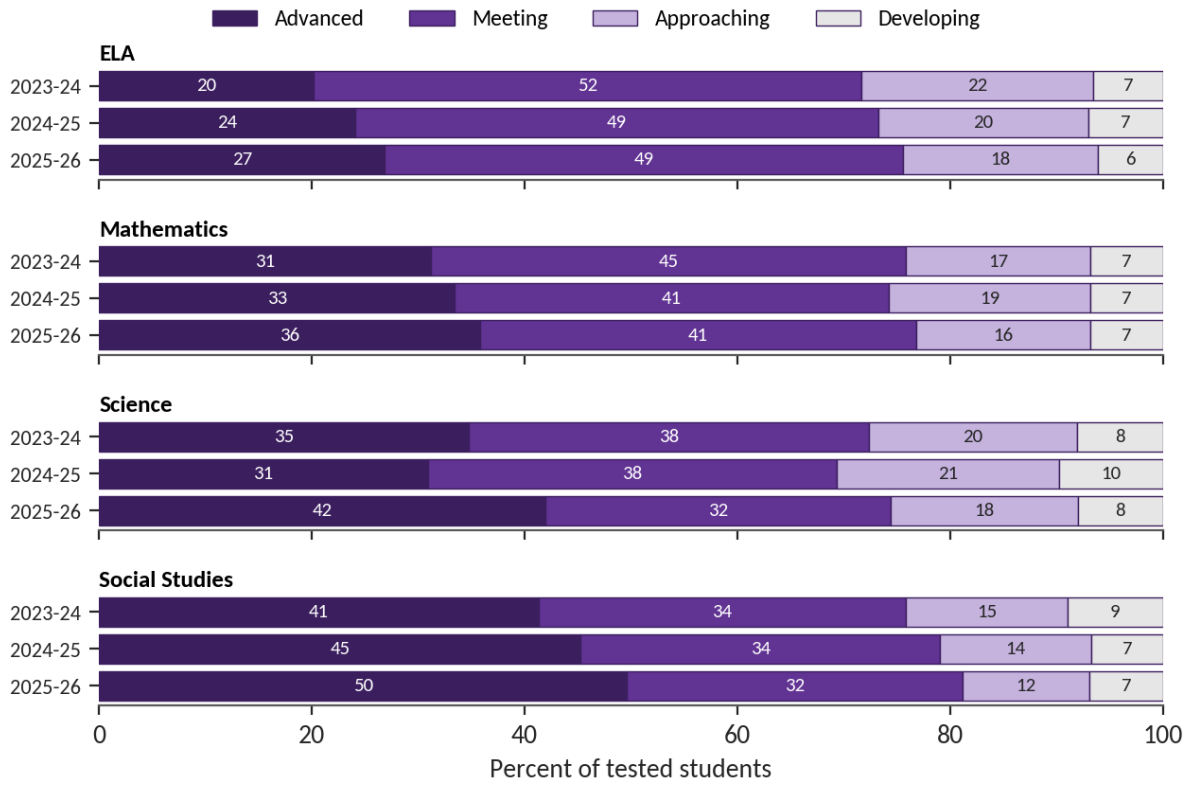

Figure 2. Distribution of tested FAY students across DPI performance levels, by subject and year.

ELA

Year	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Meeting + Advanced	Participation	FAY students / tested
2023-24	20.1%	51.6%	21.8%	6.6%	71.7%	95.7%	2,867 / 2,744
2024-25	24.0%	49.2%	19.7%	7.0%	73.3%	95.9%	2,918 / 2,799
2025-26	26.8%	48.7%	18.4%	6.1%	75.6%	96.1%	2,985 / 2,868

Table 2a. ELA: performance-level distribution, participation, and counts.

Mathematics

Year	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Meeting + Advanced	Participation	FAY students / tested
2023-24	31.2%	44.7%	17.3%	6.8%	75.8%	95.7%	2,867 / 2,745
2024-25	33.4%	40.8%	19.0%	6.8%	74.2%	96.3%	2,918 / 2,811
2025-26	35.8%	41.0%	16.3%	6.9%	76.9%	96.2%	2,985 / 2,873

Table 2b. Mathematics: performance-level distribution, participation, and counts.

Science

Year	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Meeting + Advanced	Participation	FAY students / tested
2023-24	34.7%	37.7%	19.5%	8.1%	72.4%	95.9%	955 / 916
2024-25	30.9%	38.4%	20.9%	9.8%	69.3%	97.0%	961 / 932
2025-26	41.9%	32.5%	17.6%	8.0%	74.4%	96.8%	973 / 942

Table 2c. Science: performance-level distribution, participation, and counts.

Social Studies

Year	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing	Meeting + Advanced	Participation	FAY students / tested
2023-24	41.3%	34.5%	15.2%	9.0%	75.8%	95.6%	934 / 893
2024-25	45.3%	33.8%	14.2%	6.7%	79.0%	96.2%	1,022 / 983
2025-26	49.6%	31.5%	11.9%	6.9%	81.2%	98.3%	945 / 929

Table 2d. Social Studies: performance-level distribution, participation, and counts.

3. ELA

ELA proficiency reached 75.6% of FAY district students in Spring 2026, up 2.3 points from 2024-25 and 3.9 points over three years — the district's highest ELA result in this period. The gain came almost entirely from movement into the Advanced level (26.8% of tested students, versus 20.1% in 2023-24), while the shares at Approaching and Developing edged down.

Population	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
District total	71.7%	73.3%	75.6%	+2.3	2,868

Table 3a. ELA: district total, percent Meeting + Advanced.

ELA by grade

Every Forward Exam grade (3–8) finished at or near its three-year high. Grade 6 (84.4%) posted the strongest result of any grade in any subject, and Grades 7 (76.9%, +5.2) and 8 (78.5%, +2.3) both improved. Grade 4 eased slightly (76.2%, −1.6) after a large 2024-25 gain. In the high school, Grade 11 ACT proficiency rebounded to 75.5% (+21.3) after the unusually low 2024-25 cohort (54.2%), and Grade 10 PreACT rose to 70.8%. The exception is Grade 9 PreACT, which fell 11.6 points to 68.0% — the lowest ELA grade in the district — and warrants a closer look at the Class of 2029 cohort and the 8th-to-9th grade transition.

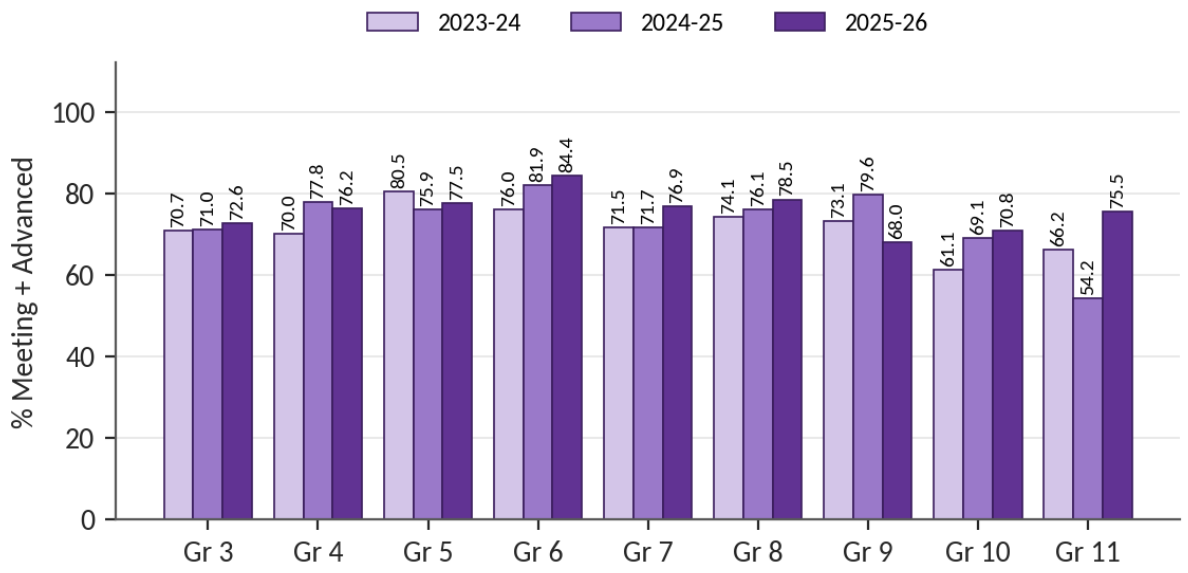

Figure 3a. ELA: percent Meeting + Advanced by grade and year.

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 3	70.7%	71.0%	72.6%	+1.6	314
Grade 4	70.0%	77.8%	76.2%	-1.6	302
Grade 5	80.5%	75.9%	77.5%	+1.6	325
Grade 6	76.0%	81.9%	84.4%	+2.5	321
Grade 7	71.5%	71.7%	76.9%	+5.2	324

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 8	74.1%	76.1%	78.5%	+2.3	297
Grade 9	73.1%	79.6%	68.0%	-11.6	338
Grade 10	61.1%	69.1%	70.8%	+1.7	308
Grade 11	66.2%	54.2%	75.5%	+21.3	339

Table 3b. ELA by grade. Forward Exam (3–8), PreACT Secure (9–10), ACT (11).

ELA by school

Arboretum (80.5%) led the three K-4 schools and improved for a third straight year. Heritage (74.5%) gave back 3.1 points of its 14-point 2024-25 gain but remains well above 2023-24 (63.2%). Prairie (68.9%) improved 1.0 point but is still 5 points below its 2023-24 result. Intermediate (81.0%), Middle (77.6%, +3.6), and the High School (71.5%, +3.4) all improved; the High School figure blends the Grade 9 decline with the Grade 11 rebound.

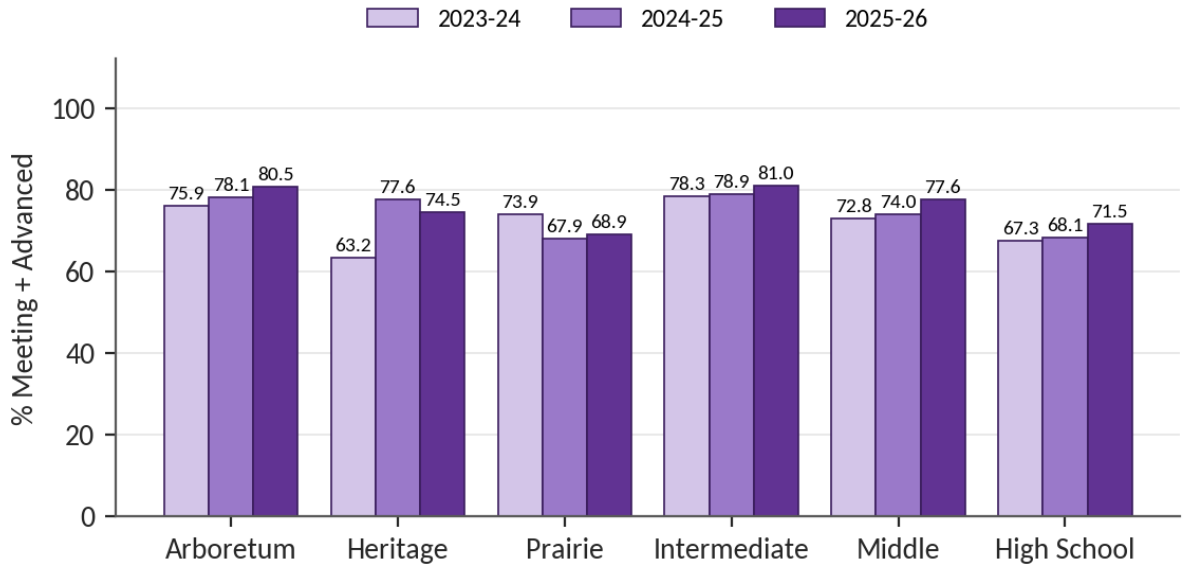

Figure 3b. ELA: percent Meeting + Advanced by school and year.

School	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Arboretum Elem. (3–4)	75.9%	78.1%	80.5%	+2.5	185
Heritage Elem. (3–4)	63.2%	77.6%	74.5%	-3.1	212
Prairie Elem. (3–4)	73.9%	67.9%	68.9%	+1.0	219
Intermediate (5–6)	78.3%	78.9%	81.0%	+2.0	646
Middle (7–8)	72.8%	74.0%	77.6%	+3.6	621
High School (9–11)	67.3%	68.1%	71.5%	+3.4	985

Table 3c. ELA by school. Elementary results reflect grades 3–4 (or grade 4 for Science and Social Studies).

4. Mathematics

Mathematics proficiency rose 2.6 points to 76.9%, recovering from a 2024-25 dip and finishing 1.0 point above 2023-24. As in ELA, growth was concentrated at the Advanced level (35.8%, up from 31.2% in 2023-24), and Mathematics has the district's largest Advanced share outside Social Studies.

Population	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
District total	75.8%	74.2%	76.9%	+2.6	2,873

Table 4a. Mathematics: district total, percent Meeting + Advanced.

Mathematics by grade

Grade 3 (74.2%, +8.4) and Grade 8 (77.1%, +7.4) posted the largest gains; Grade 8, which had been the lowest Forward grade for two years, is now at a three-year high. Grade 7 (79.9%) is the strongest Forward grade. Grade 6 declined 5.0 points to 77.6%, and Grade 4 (72.8%) was flat and remains 5 points below 2023-24. Grade 11 ACT proficiency recovered to 77.9% (+15.3). Grade 9 PreACT slipped 3.6 points to 77.0% and Grade 10 held at 78.3%.

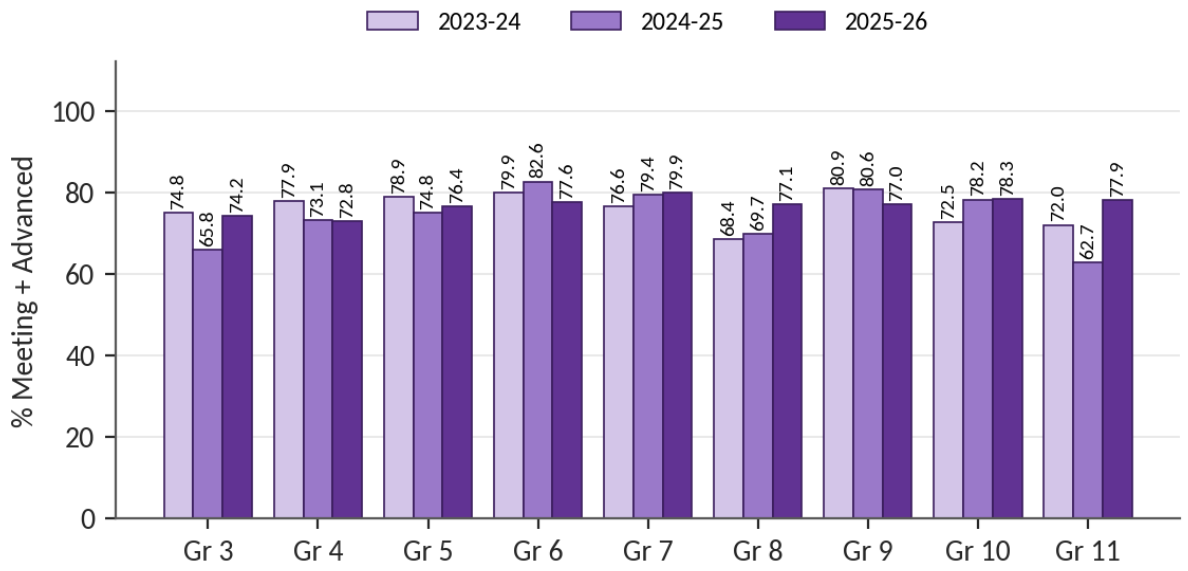

Figure 4a. Mathematics: percent Meeting + Advanced by grade and year.

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 3	74.8%	65.8%	74.2%	+8.4	314
Grade 4	77.9%	73.1%	72.8%	-0.3	302
Grade 5	78.9%	74.8%	76.4%	+1.5	326
Grade 6	79.9%	82.6%	77.6%	-5.0	322
Grade 7	76.6%	79.4%	79.9%	+0.5	324
Grade 8	68.4%	69.7%	77.1%	+7.4	297
Grade 9	80.9%	80.6%	77.0%	-3.6	339

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 10	72.5%	78.2%	78.3%	+0.1	309
Grade 11	72.0%	62.7%	77.9%	+15.3	340

Table 4b. Mathematics by grade. Forward Exam (3–8), PreACT Secure (9–10), ACT (11).

Mathematics by school

Arboretum (76.8%, +8.7) rebounded strongly, Heritage improved to 73.1% (+3.0), and Prairie edged up to 71.2% (+1.1) but remains 9 points below its 2023-24 level (80.4%). Middle School (78.6%, +4.3) and the High School (77.7%, +3.5) improved; Intermediate eased to 77.0% (−1.7).

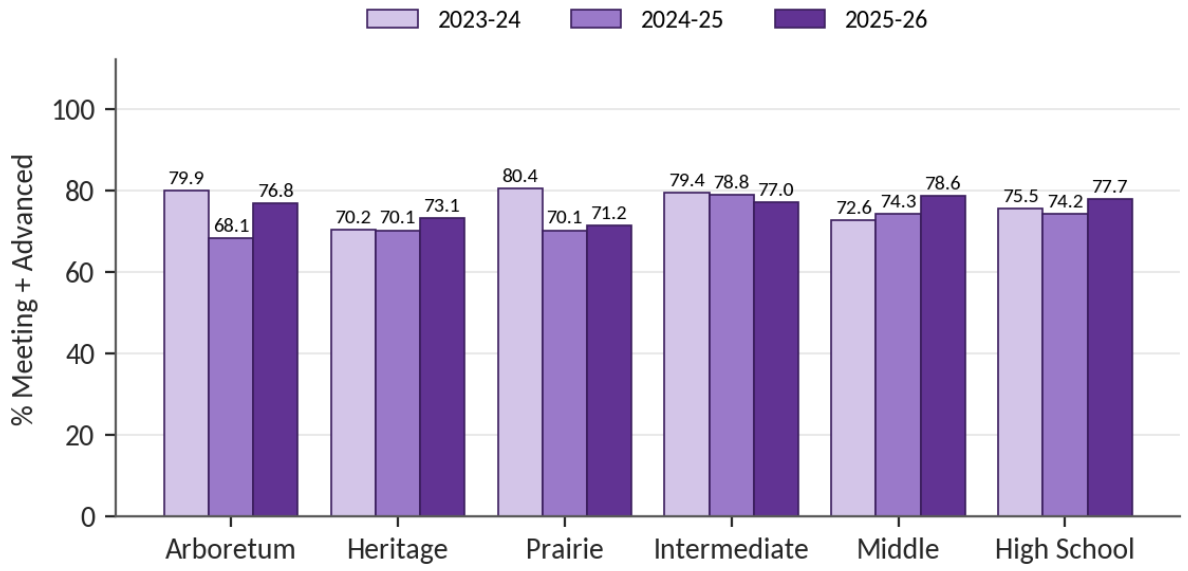

Figure 4b. Mathematics: percent Meeting + Advanced by school and year.

School	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Arboretum Elem. (3–4)	79.9%	68.1%	76.8%	+8.7	185
Heritage Elem. (3–4)	70.2%	70.1%	73.1%	+3.0	212
Prairie Elem. (3–4)	80.4%	70.1%	71.2%	+1.1	219
Intermediate (5–6)	79.4%	78.8%	77.0%	-1.7	648
Middle (7–8)	72.6%	74.3%	78.6%	+4.3	621
High School (9–11)	75.5%	74.2%	77.7%	+3.5	988

Table 4c. Mathematics by school. Elementary results reflect grades 3–4 (or grade 4 for Science and Social Studies).

5. Science

Science, assessed in Grades 4 and 8 (Forward) and Grade 11 (ACT), posted the largest one-year gain of any subject: 74.4%, up 5.1 points from 2024-25 and 2.0 points above 2023-24. The Advanced share climbed to 41.9% (from 34.7% in 2023-24).

Population	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
District total	72.4%	69.3%	74.4%	+5.1	942

Table 5a. Science: district total, percent Meeting + Advanced.

Science by grade

All three tested grades improved: Grade 4 to 73.4% (+3.8), Grade 8 to 77.9% (+6.2, a three-year high), and Grade 11 to 72.3% (+6.1), recovering most of the 2024-25 decline.

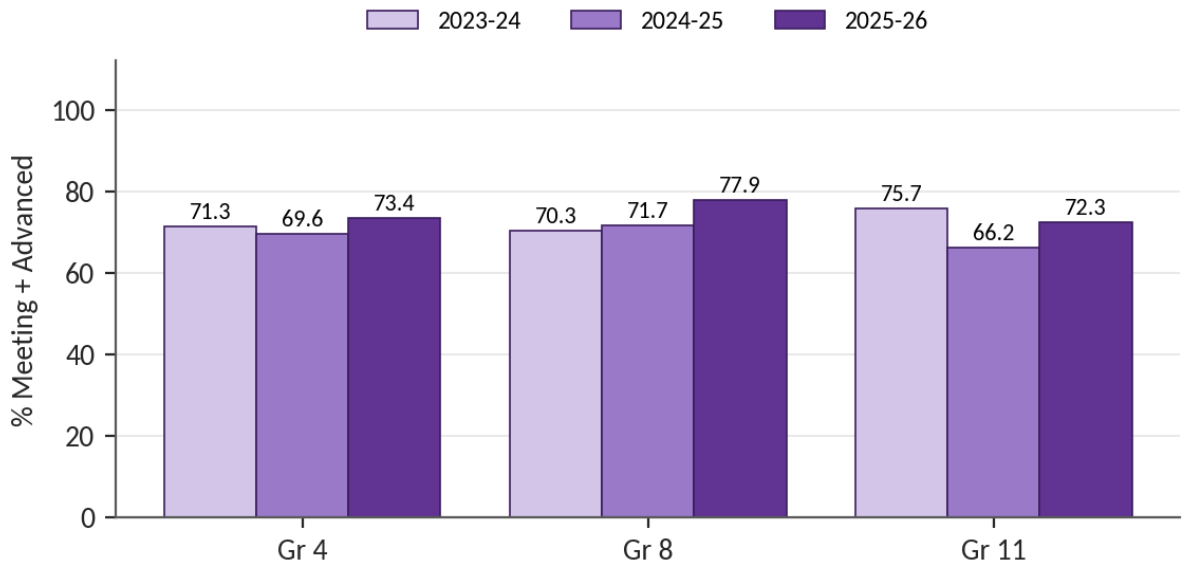

Figure 5a. Science: percent Meeting + Advanced by grade and year.

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 4	71.3%	69.6%	73.4%	+3.8	304
Grade 8	70.3%	71.7%	77.9%	+6.2	299
Grade 11	75.7%	66.2%	72.3%	+6.1	339

Table 5b. Science by grade. Forward Exam (3–8), PreACT Secure (9–10), ACT (11).

Science by school

Arboretum (77.7%) and Heritage (73.6%) each gained 5.3 points; Prairie improved 1.0 point to 69.2%. Middle School (77.9%) and the High School (72.3%, Grade 11 only) both rose about 6 points.

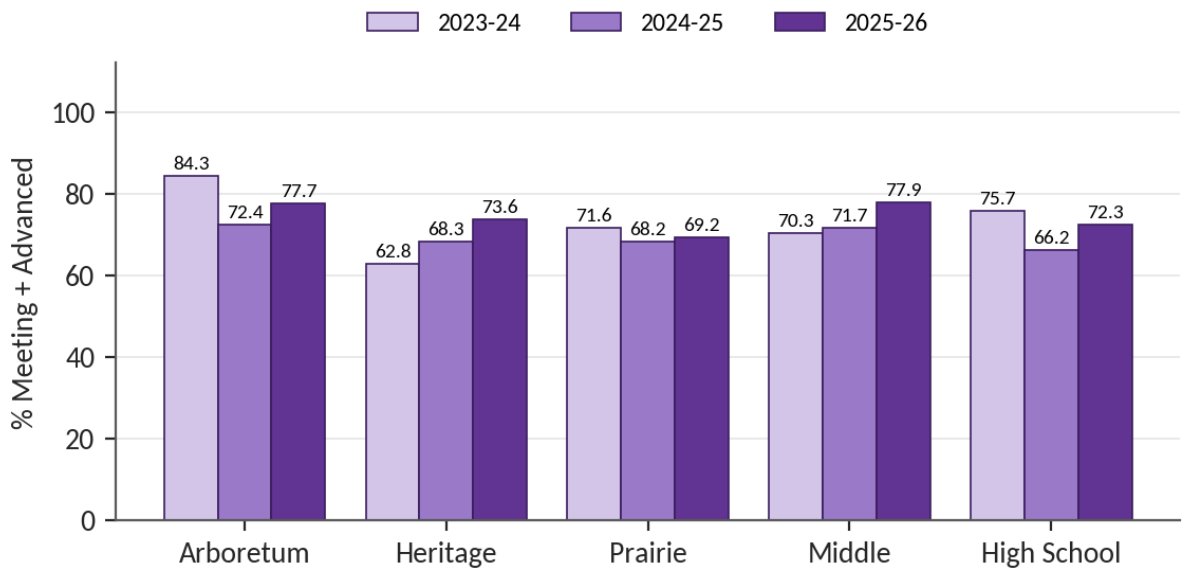

Figure 5b. Science: percent Meeting + Advanced by school and year.

School	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Arboretum Elem. (3–4)	84.3%	72.4%	77.7%	+5.2	94
Heritage Elem. (3–4)	62.8%	68.3%	73.6%	+5.3	106
Prairie Elem. (3–4)	71.6%	68.2%	69.2%	+1.0	104
Middle (7–8)	70.3%	71.7%	77.9%	+6.2	299
High School (9–11)	75.7%	66.2%	72.3%	+6.1	339

Table 5c. Science by school. Elementary results reflect grades 3–4 (or grade 4 for Science and Social Studies).

6. Social Studies

Social Studies, assessed in Grades 4, 8, and 10 (Forward), is the district's highest-performing subject at 81.2%, up 2.1 points from 2024-25 and 5.4 points over three years — the strongest three-year gain of any subject. Half of tested students (49.6%) scored Advanced, up from 41.3% in 2023-24.

Population	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
District total	75.8%	79.0%	81.2%	+2.1	929

Table 6a. Social Studies: district total, percent Meeting + Advanced.

Social Studies by grade

Grade 8 improved to 86.0% (+3.2) and Grade 10 to 76.1% (+4.3), continuing a 13.7-point climb since 2023-24. Grade 4 (81.9%) was essentially flat (−0.9).

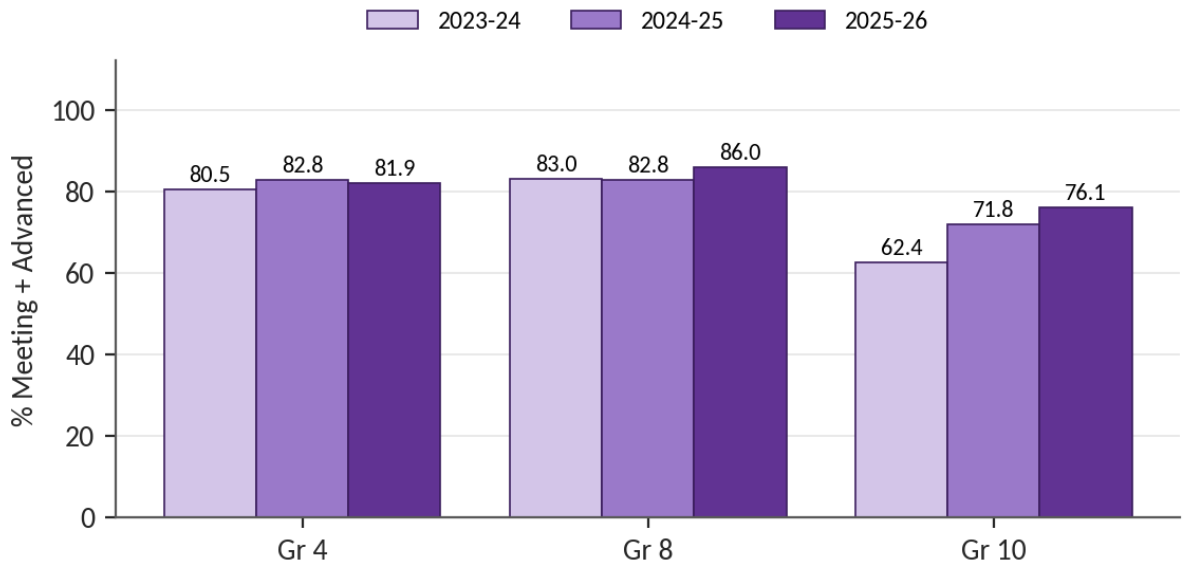

Figure 6a. Social Studies: percent Meeting + Advanced by grade and year.

Grade	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Grade 4	80.5%	82.8%	81.9%	-0.9	304
Grade 8	83.0%	82.8%	86.0%	+3.2	299
Grade 10	62.4%	71.8%	76.1%	+4.3	326

Table 6b. Social Studies by grade. Forward Exam (3–8), PreACT Secure (9–10), ACT (11).

Social Studies by school

Arboretum (90.4%, +7.8) posted the highest school result in any subject. Heritage (82.1%, −6.4) and Prairie (74.0%, −3.5) declined from strong 2024-25 results; both reflect a single Grade 4 cohort of roughly 70–110 students, so year-to-year swings should be read with that in mind. Middle School (86.0%) and the High School (76.1%, Grade 10) improved.

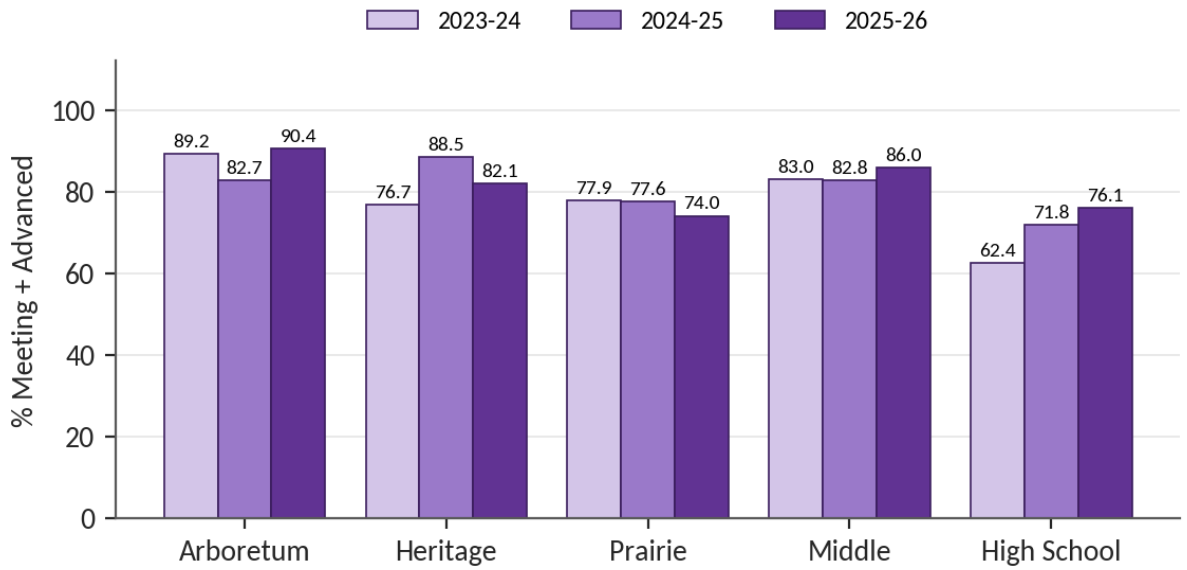

Figure 6b. Social Studies: percent Meeting + Advanced by school and year.

School	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Arboretum Elem. (3–4)	89.2%	82.7%	90.4%	+7.8	94
Heritage Elem. (3–4)	76.7%	88.5%	82.1%	-6.4	106
Prairie Elem. (3–4)	77.9%	77.6%	74.0%	-3.5	104
Middle (7–8)	83.0%	82.8%	86.0%	+3.2	299
High School (9–11)	62.4%	71.8%	76.1%	+4.3	326

Table 6c. Social Studies by school. Elementary results reflect grades 3–4 (or grade 4 for Science and Social Studies).

7. Student Groups

This section disaggregates 2025-26 results and three-year trends by gender, race/ethnicity, economic status, and English learner status. Because several groups are small — particularly in Science and Social Studies, which are tested in only three grades — changes of a few points can reflect a handful of students. Counts are shown in every table.

7.1 Gender

Girls outperform boys in ELA by 10.1 points (80.8% vs. 70.7%), a gap that narrowed to 7.9 points in 2024-25 and re-widened in 2025-26; at grades 9–11 the ELA gap is about 18 points. Boys lead in Mathematics (77.9% vs. 75.7%) and Science (76.8% vs. 71.7%); Social Studies is even. Girls posted the larger one-year gains in ELA (+3.5) and Mathematics (+4.8); boys gained most in Science (+7.3) and Social Studies (+3.8). Two non-binary students are included in district totals but suppressed here.

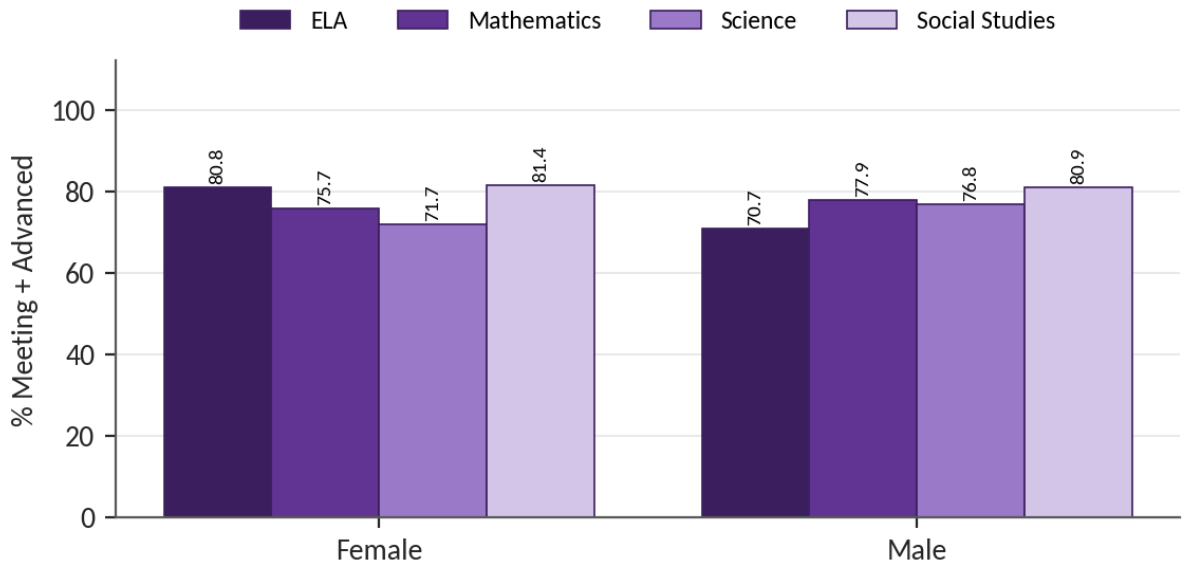

Figure 7.1. 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced by gender and subject.

ELA by gender

Gender	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Female	77.4%	77.3%	80.8%	+3.5	1,370
Male	66.2%	69.4%	70.7%	+1.3	1,496

Mathematics by gender

Gender	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Female	73.8%	70.9%	75.7%	+4.8	1,372
Male	77.9%	77.4%	77.9%	+0.4	1,499

Science by gender

Gender	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Female	71.5%	69.2%	71.7%	+2.6	449
Male	73.3%	69.5%	76.8%	+7.3	491

Social Studies by gender

Gender	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Female	76.6%	81.1%	81.4%	+0.4	447
Male	75.0%	77.1%	80.9%	+3.8	482

7.2 Race / ethnicity

Asian students remain the highest-performing group in every subject (83–89%), followed by White students (78–84%), whose results rose in all four subjects. Students identifying as Two or More races improved in ELA, Mathematics, and Social Studies. Hispanic students (n≈230 in ELA/Math) gained in ELA (+5.0) and Mathematics (+4.4) but remain 20 or more points below the district in every subject. Black students (n=56) posted a 10.4-point Mathematics gain to 46.4% while ELA held near 39%; Science and Social Studies counts for Black students are near the suppression threshold (n≈20), so those figures are volatile. American Indian and Pacific Islander students (n=2 each) are suppressed.

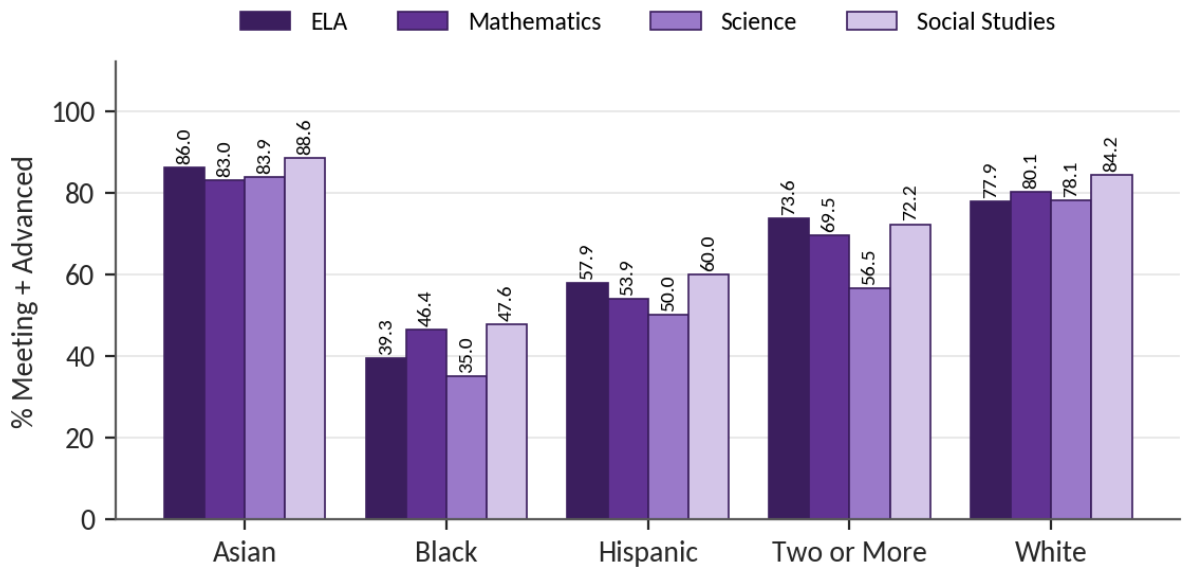

Figure 7.2. 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced by race / ethnicity and subject.

ELA by race / ethnicity

Race / ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Asian	84.9%	86.9%	86.0%	-0.9	100
Black	41.3%	38.0%	39.3%	+1.3	56

Race / ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Hispanic	53.6%	52.9%	57.9%	+5.0	228
Two or More	66.7%	70.6%	73.6%	+3.0	140
White	73.5%	75.5%	77.9%	+2.4	2,340

Mathematics by race / ethnicity

Race / ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Asian	85.8%	85.1%	83.0%	-2.1	100
Black	39.1%	36.0%	46.4%	+10.4	56
Hispanic	51.3%	49.5%	53.9%	+4.4	230
Two or More	64.9%	65.4%	69.5%	+4.1	141
White	78.8%	77.4%	80.1%	+2.6	2,342

Science by race / ethnicity

Race / ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Asian	71.9%	89.3%	83.9%	-5.4	31
Black	41.7%	35.7%	35.0%	-0.7	20
Hispanic	57.1%	56.8%	50.0%	-6.8	64
Two or More	67.6%	65.9%	56.5%	-9.4	46
White	74.5%	70.6%	78.1%	+7.5	781

Social Studies by race / ethnicity

Race / ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Asian	84.4%	90.0%	88.6%	-1.4	35
Black	38.5%	57.9%	47.6%	-10.3	21
Hispanic	56.5%	70.7%	60.0%	-10.7	65
Two or More	75.8%	69.6%	72.2%	+2.7	54
White	77.7%	80.4%	84.2%	+3.8	754

7.3 Economic status

Economically disadvantaged students — about 8% of tested students — score 30 to 42 points below their peers in every subject. In ELA (45.1%) and Mathematics (44.7%) their results have been flat for three years while non-disadvantaged students improved, so the gaps widened slightly (to 33.1 and 34.9 points). Science proficiency for this group fell 11.0 points to 35.2% and Social Studies fell 12.2 points to 53.3%; each of those groups has roughly 70–75 students, so a 10-point change represents about seven students, but the direction is concerning.

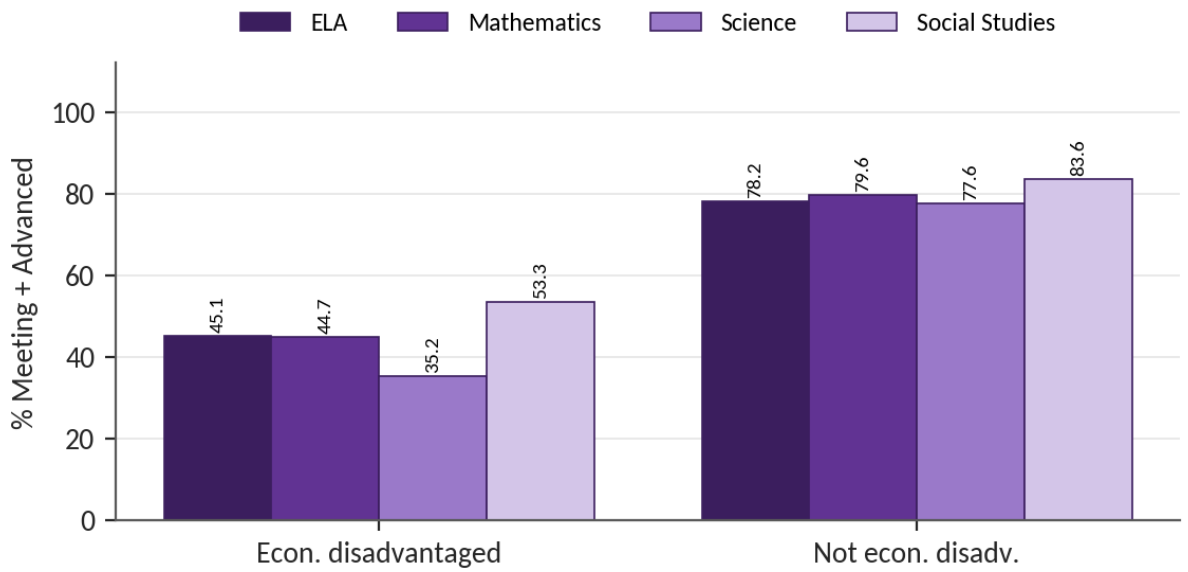

Figure 7.3. 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced by economic status and subject.

ELA by economic status

Economic status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Economically Disadvantaged	42.5%	44.2%	45.1%	+0.9	226
Not Econ. Disadvantaged	74.4%	75.9%	78.2%	+2.2	2,642

Mathematics by economic status

Economic status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Economically Disadvantaged	43.6%	43.3%	44.7%	+1.5	228
Not Econ. Disadvantaged	78.9%	77.1%	79.6%	+2.5	2,645

Science by economic status

Economic status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Economically Disadvantaged	43.8%	46.3%	35.2%	-11.0	71
Not Econ. Disadvantaged	74.5%	71.5%	77.6%	+6.1	871

Social Studies by economic status

Economic status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Economically Disadvantaged	55.7%	65.5%	53.3%	-12.2	75
Not Econ. Disadvantaged	77.5%	80.4%	83.6%	+3.2	854

7.4 English learner status

Current English learners (ELP levels 1–5; n≈90 in ELA/Math) scored 16.7% in ELA and 20.7% in Mathematics, down about 10 points from 2024-25 as the group's composition changed. Former English learners who have reached proficiency (ELP 6; n≈99) meet or exceed the district average in every subject — 83.8% in ELA and 80.8% in Mathematics — a strong indicator that the district's language-development pathway produces durable academic outcomes. Students who were never ELs (ELP 7) track the district total closely.

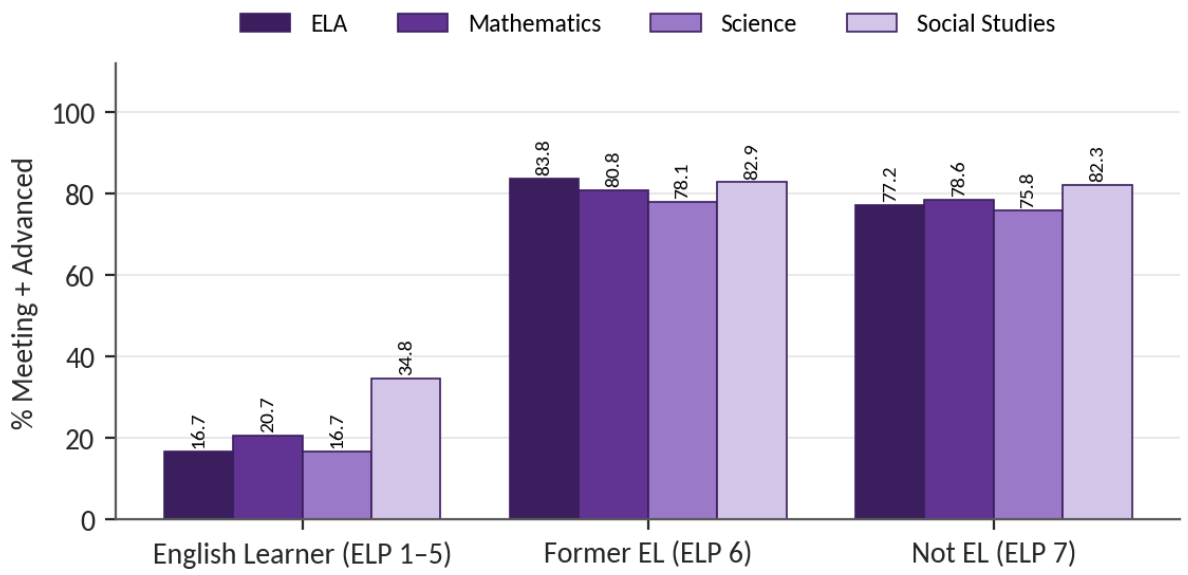

Figure 7.4. 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced by english learner status and subject.

ELA by english learner status

English learner status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
English Learner (ELP 1–5)	18.8%	26.7%	16.7%	-10.1	90
Former EL (ELP 6)	80.7%	79.8%	83.8%	+4.1	99
Not EL (ELP 7)	73.0%	74.6%	77.2%	+2.6	2,679

Mathematics by english learner status

English learner status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
English Learner (ELP 1–5)	28.0%	29.8%	20.7%	-9.1	92
Former EL (ELP 6)	79.5%	80.9%	80.8%	-0.1	99
Not EL (ELP 7)	77.2%	75.6%	78.6%	+3.0	2,682

Science by english learner status

English learner status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
English Learner (ELP 1–5)	36.8%	34.6%	16.7%	-17.9	24
Former EL (ELP 6)	54.5%	69.2%	78.1%	+8.9	32

English learner status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
Not EL (ELP 7)	73.8%	70.3%	75.8%	+5.5	886

Social Studies by english learner status

English learner status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change 25→26	n tested 2025-26
English Learner (ELP 1–5)	33.3%	42.4%	34.8%	-7.6	23
Former EL (ELP 6)	83.3%	86.2%	82.9%	-3.3	35
Not EL (ELP 7)	76.6%	80.1%	82.3%	+2.2	871

8. Dane County, Peer Group, and Statewide Comparisons

Wisconsin DPI publicly released 2025-26 Forward, PreACT Secure, ACT, and DLM results for every district on October 1, 2026. This section compares Waunakee with the 15 other public school districts in Dane County; with its 25-district statewide peer group, the WCSD Comparable District Model (Wisconsin districts of 1,800–10,000 students most similar to Waunakee on economic disadvantage, adult educational attainment, median income, and enrollment); and with Wisconsin as a whole. 2024-25 ranks, computed the same way from DPI's 2024-25 files, are shown for context.

How these figures differ from Sections 2–7. DPI's public district files report all students enrolled in each district at testing, not FAY students only, and include DLM results. To compare districts on the same basis as the rest of this report, percentages use tested students as the denominator. Waunakee's comparison figures therefore differ from the FAY figures elsewhere by about one point or less. Results are pooled into two families: Forward grades 3–8 (Social Studies also includes grade 10) and the high school PreACT Secure and ACT in grades 9–11.

8.1 Summary

Measure	Waunakee	Dane County rank (2024-25)	Dane median	Peer rank (2024-25)	Peer median	Wisconsin	Statewide rank
ELA, grades 3–8 (Forward)	**77.9%**	1 of 16 (1)	63.3%	5 of 26 (6)	72.1%	54.9%	21 of 410
Mathematics, grades 3–8 (Forward)	**76.5%**	1 of 16 (1)	64.6%	12 of 26 (13)	74.5%	54.8%	37 of 410
Science, grades 4 and 8 (Forward)	**75.8%**	1 of 16 (3)	62.2%	4 of 26 (8)	67.7%	53.6%	27 of 408
Social Studies, grades 4, 8, 10 (Forward)	**81.4%**	1 of 16 (3)	69.2%	3 of 26 (8)	75.3%	60.3%	20 of 419
ELA, grades 9–11 (PreACT/ACT)	**72.1%**	2 of 16 (3)	60.0%	7 of 26 (13)	63.8%	48.8%	14 of 377
Mathematics, grades 9–11 (PreACT/ACT)	**78.3%**	1 of 16 (2)	59.9%	3 of 26 (5)	69.2%	50.9%	7 of 377
Science, grade 11 (ACT)	**72.7%**	1 of 16 (2)	53.0%	3 of 26 (8)	59.9%	43.9%	7 of 375
ACT Composite average, grade 11	**22.9**	2 of 16 (4)	20.6	7 of 26 (14)	21.5	19.3	10 of 375

Table 8a. 2025-26 percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced (ACT Composite: average score). Rank 1 = highest; 2024-25 rank in parentheses. Dane County median includes all 16 districts; peer median excludes Waunakee; Wisconsin pools all districts.

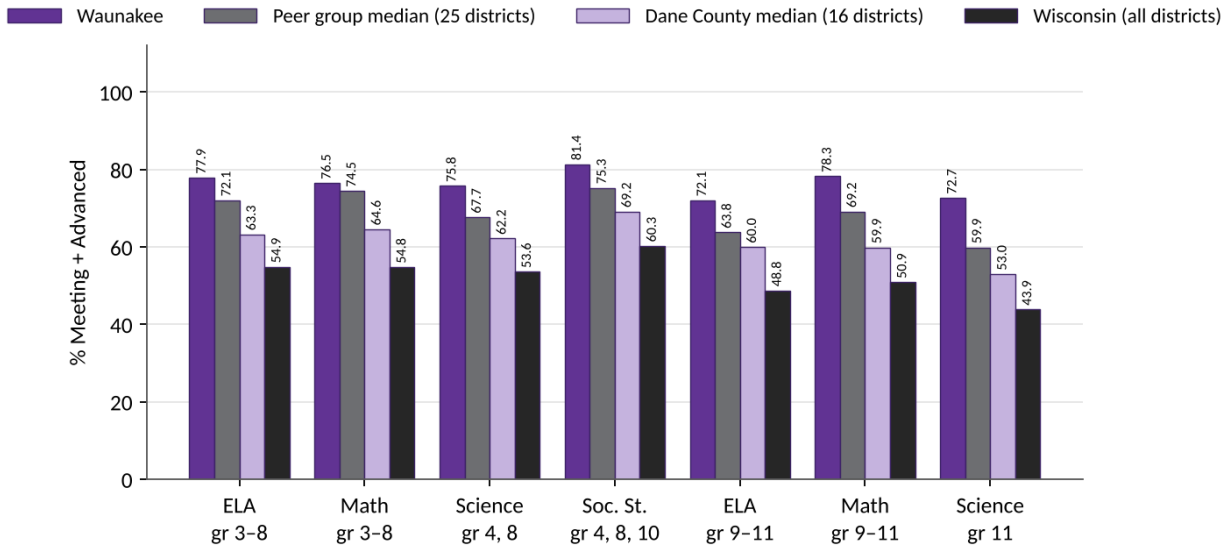

Figure 8.1. 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced: Waunakee compared with the peer group median, the Dane County median, and Wisconsin.

- **First in Dane County in six of seven comparisons.** Waunakee leads the county in all four Forward subjects and in high school Mathematics and Science. High school ELA is second, behind Middleton-Cross Plains Area (74.7% vs. 72.1%). Waunakee's county rank rose from 2024-25 in Science, Social Studies, and all three high school subjects, and its lead is widest in Forward ELA (6.3 points ahead of Middleton-Cross Plains Area) and high school Mathematics (4.6 points).
- **Above the peer median in every comparison, and higher-ranked than last year in all seven.** Among its 26-district peer group, Waunakee is 3rd in Social Studies and in high school Mathematics and Science, 4th in Science, 5th in ELA, 7th in high school ELA, and 12th in grades 3–8 Mathematics. Cedarburg leads six of the seven comparisons; Hamilton leads Social Studies.
- **21 to 29 points above the state.** Waunakee's statewide ranks run from 7th (high school Mathematics and Science) to 37th (grades 3–8 Mathematics) among roughly 375–420 districts. Grade 11 Mathematics, at 78.4% Meeting or Advanced, ranks 2nd of 375 Wisconsin districts, behind only Whitefish Bay (78.9%).
- **ACT Composite.** Waunakee's grade 11 average of 22.9 (up from 21.6) is second in Dane County behind Middleton-Cross Plains Area (23.4), 7th of 26 in the peer group, and 10th of 375 statewide, against a Wisconsin average of 19.3.

8.2 Results by grade

Table 8b shows each tested grade. In Dane County, every Forward subject-grade result is in the top four; where another district leads a single grade, it is usually one of the county's smallest districts (Belleville, Cambridge, or Wisconsin Heights), whose grade cohorts of roughly 50–80 students move more from year to year. McFarland's in-person schools lead grade 5 Mathematics (77.0% vs. 76.4%). Grade 11 leads the county in all three ACT subjects. Grades 9 and 10 ELA, each fourth in the county, are the lowest-ranked high school results.

Against the peer group, the standouts are grade 11 Mathematics (1st of 26), grade 6 ELA (2nd, behind only Cedarburg), grade 8 Science, grade 10 Social Studies, and grade 10 Mathematics (each 3rd), and grade 10 ELA (4th). Mathematics in grades 3–8 ranks between 10th and 15th in every grade. Grade 4 Mathematics (72.8%,

15th) is the only Forward result below the peer median (73.8%), and grade 6 Mathematics fell from 2nd to 12th. Grade 8 Mathematics moved from 17th to 10th — the grade the 2024-25 report card peer analysis flagged as the district's largest relative deficit — and grade 3 Mathematics from 22nd to 11th. Grade 9 ELA fell from 3rd to 12th, consistent with the cohort decline discussed in Section 3. Because each year's figure for a grade is a different group of students, these are comparisons of grade levels rather than measures of growth.

Subject and grade	Waunakee	Change from 2024-25	Dane County rank (2024-25)	Peer rank (2024-25)	Peer median	Statewide rank
ELA, grade 3	73.1%	+1.8	2 (3)	10 (13)	70.5%	56 of 407
ELA, grade 4	76.2%	-1.9	2 (1)	7 (3)	70.5%	45 of 406
ELA, grade 5	77.5%	+1.2	1 (1)	6 (6)	70.8%	26 of 407
ELA, grade 6	84.4%	+1.7	1 (1)	2 (3)	75.6%	17 of 408
ELA, grade 7	77.4%	+5.5	2 (2)	6 (11)	73.8%	37 of 405
ELA, grade 8	78.5%	+2.3	2 (2)	4 (9)	72.1%	29 of 406
ELA, grade 9	69.1%	-11.1	4 (2)	12 (3)	66.9%	31 of 373
ELA, grade 10	71.2%	+1.7	4 (3)	4 (10)	61.0%	14 of 375
ELA, grade 11	76.0%	+21.8	1 (9)	5 (23)	64.8%	10 of 375
Mathematics, grade 3	74.8%	+8.6	4 (10)	11 (22)	74.5%	68 of 407
Mathematics, grade 4	72.8%	-0.5	3 (4)	15 (13)	73.8%	71 of 406
Mathematics, grade 5	76.4%	+0.8	2 (2)	11 (12)	72.1%	44 of 407
Mathematics, grade 6	77.6%	-5.8	1 (1)	12 (2)	77.1%	46 of 408
Mathematics, grade 7	80.3%	+0.6	2 (2)	10 (10)	78.1%	36 of 406
Mathematics, grade 8	77.1%	+7.4	2 (5)	10 (17)	76.2%	52 of 406
Mathematics, grade 9	77.8%	-3.3	2 (2)	10 (8)	76.0%	31 of 373
Mathematics, grade 10	78.8%	+0.1	2 (1)	3 (2)	67.7%	10 of 375
Mathematics, grade 11	78.4%	+14.6	1 (2)	1 (12)	63.7%	2 of 375
Science, grade 4	73.5%	+3.7	3 (3)	11 (10)	69.7%	59 of 406
Science, grade 8	78.2%	+6.5	1 (4)	3 (6)	67.5%	24 of 406
Science, grade 11	72.7%	+5.7	1 (2)	3 (8)	59.9%	7 of 375
Social Studies, grade 4	82.5%	-0.7	2 (4)	13 (12)	81.8%	66 of 406
Social Studies, grade 8	85.9%	+3.1	2 (1)	6 (5)	80.2%	30 of 406
Social Studies, grade 10	76.2%	+4.3	1 (3)	3 (9)	63.4%	7 of 375

Table 8b. 2025-26 percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced by grade, with Dane County rank (of 16) and peer group rank (of 26); 2024-25 ranks in parentheses. Grades 3–8 Forward; grades 9–10 PreACT Secure; grade 11 ACT; grade 10 Social Studies Forward. Change is computed from DPI's all-students figures and may differ slightly from the FAY changes in Sections 3–6.

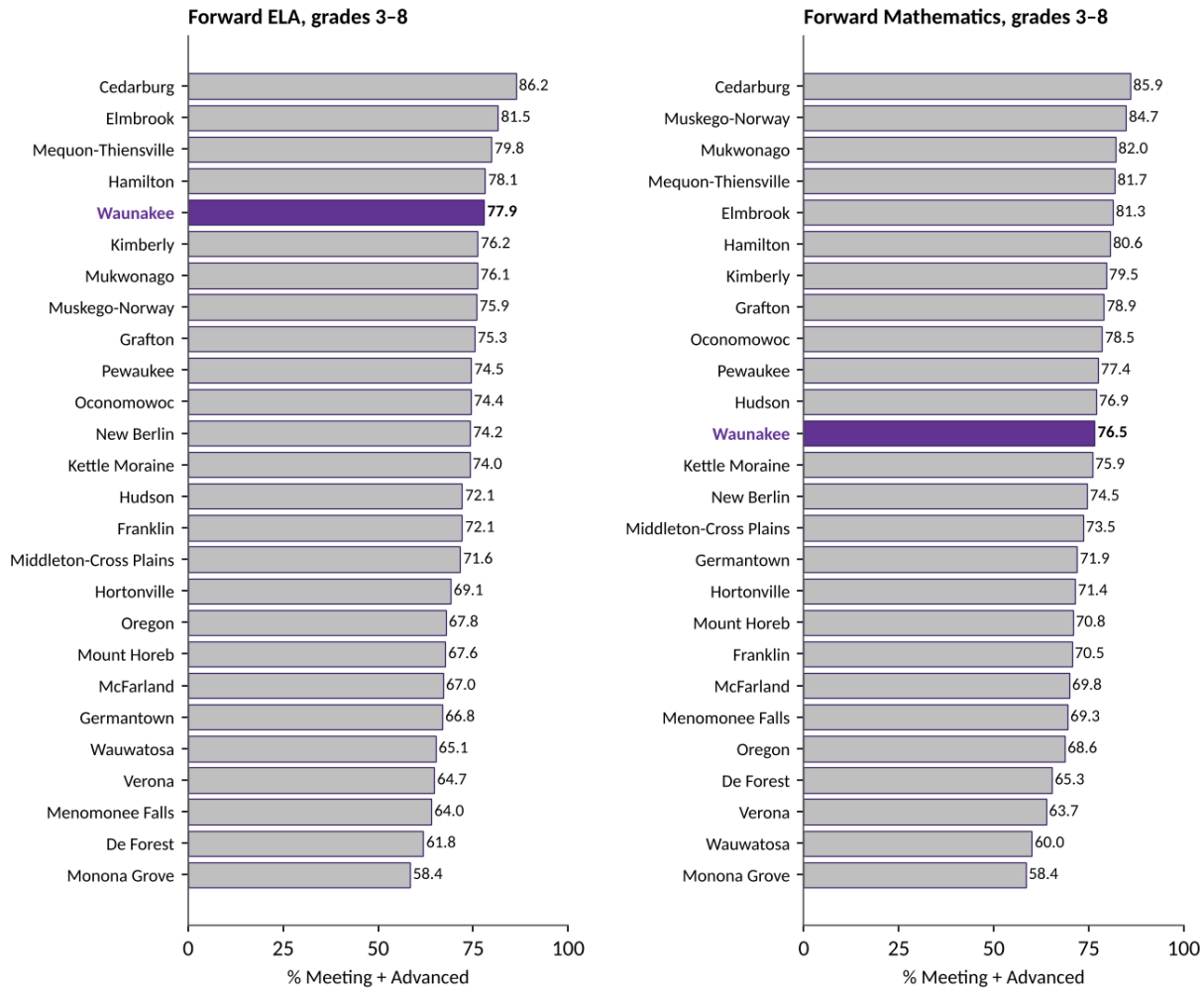

Figure 8.2. Peer group, grades 3–8 Forward ELA and Mathematics, percent Meeting + Advanced (Waunakee highlighted).

8.3 Depth: the Advanced level

Because much of Waunakee's three-year gain came from more students reaching Advanced (Section 2), Table 8c compares the Advanced share alone. In ELA, Science, and Social Studies, Waunakee's Advanced ranks are as high as or higher than its Meeting + Advanced ranks — depth is a relative strength in those subjects. In Dane County, Middleton-Cross Plains Area leads at the Advanced level in grades 3–8 Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies by about one point each, and in high school ELA and Mathematics. Mathematics shows the clearest gap with the strongest peers: Waunakee's grades 3–8 Advanced share (39.4%) is just below the peer median (40.0%), while Cedarburg (57.4%) and Muskego-Norway (52.9%) are well above it.

Measure	Waunakee % Advanced	Dane County rank	Dane median	Peer rank	Peer median	Wisconsin
ELA, grades 3–8 (Forward)	28.6%	1 of 16	17.3%	3 of 26	22.0%	13.6%
Mathematics, grades 3–8 (Forward)	39.4%	2 of 16	29.3%	14 of 26	40.0%	22.8%
Science, grades 4 and 8 (Forward)	46.7%	2 of 16	29.9%	3 of 26	33.1%	23.3%
Social Studies, grades 4, 8, 10 (Forward)	49.9%	2 of 16	35.6%	3 of 26	39.6%	27.9%

Measure	Waunakee % Advanced	Dane County rank	Dane median	Peer rank	Peer median	Wisconsin
ELA, grades 9–11 (PreACT/ACT)	23.9%	3 of 16	15.8%	8 of 26	18.8%	11.8%
Mathematics, grades 9–11 (PreACT/ACT)	29.5%	2 of 16	17.4%	8 of 26	21.2%	13.5%
Science, grade 11 (ACT)	34.1%	1 of 16	18.6%	4 of 26	22.1%	13.9%

Table 8c. 2025-26 percent of tested students at Advanced. Rank 1 = highest.

8.4 Test participation

Comparisons on a tested-student basis are fair only when participation is similar. In grades 3–8 it is: 98.2% of Waunakee's enrolled students in tested grades took the Forward Exam or DLM, against a peer median of 98.8% and 98.0% statewide, and no grades 3–8 rank gets worse on DPI's all-enrolled basis. In grades 9–11, about 94% of Waunakee students tested (93.8% in ELA and Mathematics combined), close to the statewide rate (94.0%) and the Dane County median (95.4%) but 24th of 26 in the peer group, where the median is 97.9%. On DPI's all-enrolled basis, which counts non-tested students as not proficient, Waunakee's high school peer ranks would be 11th in ELA, 7th in Mathematics, and 5th in Science rather than 7th, 3rd, and 3rd; its Dane County ranks would be 3rd, 1st, and 1st. Participation is improving — grade 10 rose from 88.8% in 2024-25 to about 93% — but it remains the high school measure most likely to affect how Waunakee appears in public comparisons.

8.5 What the comparisons suggest

- **Within Dane County, Waunakee is the benchmark.** The county comparison confirms the three-year trend: Waunakee holds first place in every Forward subject and leads or nearly leads every high school subject, with Middleton-Cross Plains Area the closest district across the board.
- **The peer group sets a higher bar, and mathematics is where it matters most.** Waunakee is in or near the top five of an exceptionally strong peer group in every area except grades 3–8 Mathematics, where both its Meeting + Advanced rank (12th) and its Advanced share (just below the peer median) trail its other subjects. This matches the 2024-25 report card peer analysis, which found mathematics achievement only modestly above the peer median. The gains in grades 3 and 8 this year are encouraging.
- **High school results are strong; participation is the remaining lever.** Grade 11 now leads the county in every ACT subject and ranks among the top ten districts statewide in each. Raising grades 9–11 participation toward the peer median would make Waunakee's high school standing clearer in DPI's public reporting.

Comparison notes

- Sources: Wisconsin DPI district-level public data files for Forward/DLM, PreACT Secure/DLM, and ACT/DLM, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (2025-26 released October 1, 2026). Independent charter school authorizer rows are excluded. Suppressed DLM rows (fewer than 10 students) are excluded, as DPI does not report their counts.
- Metric: percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced (No Test excluded from the denominator); ACT Meeting combines DPI's College Ready and Below College Ready rows. The ACT Composite is the student-weighted average of DPI's reported averages.

- McFarland's figures cover its three in-person schools (Waubesa Intermediate, Indian Mound Middle, and McFarland High) and exclude the statewide virtual charter schools it authorizes. Those virtual charter schools account for more than half of McFarland's tested students in several grades and lower its official DPI results by 13 to 44 points. The in-person figures come from DPI's school-level files, which suppress DLM results, so they leave out DLM; this raises them slightly. McFarland's 2024-25 Science and Social Studies results are within half a point of Waunakee's, so the 2024-25 ranks shown for those two subjects are effectively ties. Wisconsin figures and statewide ranks use DPI's official district totals.

9. Considerations for the District

- **Celebrate broad-based growth.** Gains across all four subjects, driven by more students reaching Advanced, reflect sustained instructional work across every level of the district.
- **Monitor Grade 9 ELA.** A drop of 11.6 points in a single cohort is larger than normal year-to-year variation. Staff should examine the Class of 2029's middle-school trajectory, PreACT administration conditions, and the 8th-to-9th grade literacy transition, in conjunction with the high school disciplinary literacy work.
- **Sustain Grade 8 and Grade 11 momentum.** Grade 8 Mathematics and all Grade 11 ACT subjects rebounded strongly; understanding what changed will help make those gains durable rather than cohort-specific.
- **Benchmark mathematics against the peer group.** Waunakee leads Dane County in grades 3–8 Mathematics, but its peer rank (12th of 26) and Advanced share (just below the peer median) trail ELA, Science, and Social Studies. Districts such as Cedarburg, Muskego-Norway, and Mukwonago reach 82–86% in grades 3–8; their practices are a natural point of comparison for the district's mathematics work, building on this year's gains in grades 3 and 8.
- **Raise high school participation.** About 94% of enrolled students in grades 9–11 tested, in line with the state but 24th of 26 in the peer group (median 97.9%). On DPI's all-enrolled basis, the high school peer ranks would be 11th in ELA, 7th in Mathematics, and 5th in Science rather than 7th, 3rd, and 3rd.
- **Address the economic-status gap directly.** A 30–42 point gap that has not narrowed in three years, alongside declines for this group in Science and Social Studies, argues for targeted supports and monitoring at the school level.
- **Build on English learner success.** Former ELs perform at or above the district average. Continued investment in language development, plus academic supports for current ELs, is the district's clearest lever for closing gaps for Hispanic students, who make up most of the EL population.
- **Read small-group results carefully.** Single-grade school results (K-4 Science and Social Studies) and groups under about 30 students can swing 5–10 points from ordinary cohort variation. Multi-year trends are more reliable than any single year.

Appendix A. Methodology and Data Notes

- Population and metric: Full Academic Year (FAY) district students; percent scoring Meeting or Advanced on Wisconsin DPI performance levels; denominators are tested students (No Test excluded). Participation was 96–98% in every subject and year.
- Assessments: Forward Exam (grades 3–8 ELA/Math; 4 & 8 Science; 4, 8 & 10 Social Studies), PreACT Secure (grades 9–10 ELA/Math), ACT (grade 11 ELA/Math/Science), and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment where reported.
- 2025-26 grades 3–8 ELA and Math come from the DRC Grade Results File rather than WISEdash. FAY status was matched from other 2025-26 WISEdash files for grades 4 and 8 (about 1% non-FAY); grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 are assumed FAY. DLM results are not yet included for those grades/subjects.
- Economic status comes from district enrollment demographic files (economically disadvantaged flag), matched to assessment records by WISEid with 100% coverage. English learner = ELP codes 1–5; former EL = ELP 6.
- Groups with fewer than 10 tested students are suppressed (shown as —).
- Dane County and peer group comparisons use Wisconsin DPI's public 2025-26 district-level files (released October 1, 2026). Those files report all students enrolled in each district at testing, not FAY students only, so Waunakee's comparison figures differ from the FAY figures elsewhere by about one point or less. Percentages use tested students as the denominator, as elsewhere. See Section 8.

Definitions

- **FAY (Full Academic Year):** enrolled in the district continuously from the third Friday in September through the assessment window; the accountability population used on DPI report cards.
- **DPI performance levels:** Advanced, Meeting, Approaching, Developing. "Proficient" on state report cards = Meeting + Advanced.
- **Change columns:** difference in percentage points between 2024-25 and 2025-26; positive values are shown in green and negative in red in the tables.
- **Suppression:** groups with fewer than 10 tested students are shown as "—". DPI applies its own suppression rules (typically n<20) to public reports.
- **Dane County comparison:** the 16 public school districts in Dane County, including Waunakee. The Dane County median includes all 16.
- **Peer group:** the 25 districts of the WCSD Comparable District Model — the Wisconsin districts of 1,800–10,000 students most similar to Waunakee on economic disadvantage, adult educational attainment, median income, and enrollment. Peer ranks are among 26 districts (Waunakee plus 25); the peer median excludes Waunakee.
- **Rank:** 1 = highest. Statewide rank is among all Wisconsin school districts with results for that subject and grade.

Appendix B. Dane County Districts, 2025-26

Percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced, all tested grades pooled, for the 16 Dane County public school districts. Rank among the 16 in parentheses. Districts are listed by their average across the four Forward subjects; Waunakee's row is shaded.

District	ELA 3–8	Math 3–8	Science 4, 8	Soc. St. 4, 8, 10	ELA 9–11	Math 9–11	Science 11
Waunakee	**77.9 (1)**	**76.5 (1)**	**75.8 (1)**	**81.4 (1)**	**72.1 (2)**	**78.3 (1)**	**72.7 (1)**
Middleton-Cross Plains	71.6 (2)	73.5 (3)	74.7 (2)	79.7 (2)	74.7 (1)	73.7 (2)	66.7 (2)
Belleville	69.7 (3)	75.1 (2)	73.5 (3)	78.2 (3)	68.1 (4)	68.6 (4)	51.4 (10)
Mount Horeb	67.6 (5)	70.8 (4)	67.4 (4)	77.4 (4)	64.4 (5)	62.0 (7)	61.8 (4)
McFarland	67.0 (6)	69.8 (5)	62.2 (8)	75.3 (5)	60.0 (8)	69.2 (3)	63.7 (3)
Oregon	67.8 (4)	68.6 (6)	63.2 (6)	68.3 (10)	63.8 (6)	62.7 (6)	58.2 (6)
Wisconsin Heights	64.8 (7)	64.5 (9)	61.8 (11)	70.8 (6)	69.4 (3)	66.9 (5)	46.7 (12)
De Forest	61.8 (9)	65.3 (7)	66.2 (5)	68.3 (11)	52.5 (13)	58.8 (9)	49.3 (11)
Verona	64.7 (8)	63.7 (10)	61.2 (12)	68.6 (9)	59.9 (9)	56.3 (10)	55.9 (7)
Cambridge	56.8 (12)	64.8 (8)	62.1 (10)	69.7 (8)	60.2 (7)	61.0 (8)	53.4 (8)
Stoughton	58.9 (10)	63.6 (11)	62.5 (7)	65.7 (12)	47.6 (15)	49.0 (15)	52.5 (9)
Monona Grove	58.4 (11)	58.4 (12)	62.1 (9)	69.9 (7)	54.2 (10)	54.8 (11)	59.9 (5)
Deerfield	52.9 (14)	56.8 (13)	46.4 (16)	58.4 (15)	51.3 (14)	53.2 (12)	36.0 (15)
Sun Prairie	53.3 (13)	51.0 (14)	49.0 (15)	59.8 (13)	53.5 (11)	49.5 (13)	44.9 (13)
Marshall	48.8 (16)	46.7 (15)	54.0 (13)	58.6 (14)	37.1 (16)	33.3 (16)	30.3 (16)
Madison Metropolitan	49.4 (15)	46.1 (16)	49.2 (14)	55.4 (16)	53.3 (12)	49.4 (14)	44.4 (14)

Table B1. Dane County districts, 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced (rank of 16). McFarland: in-person schools only.

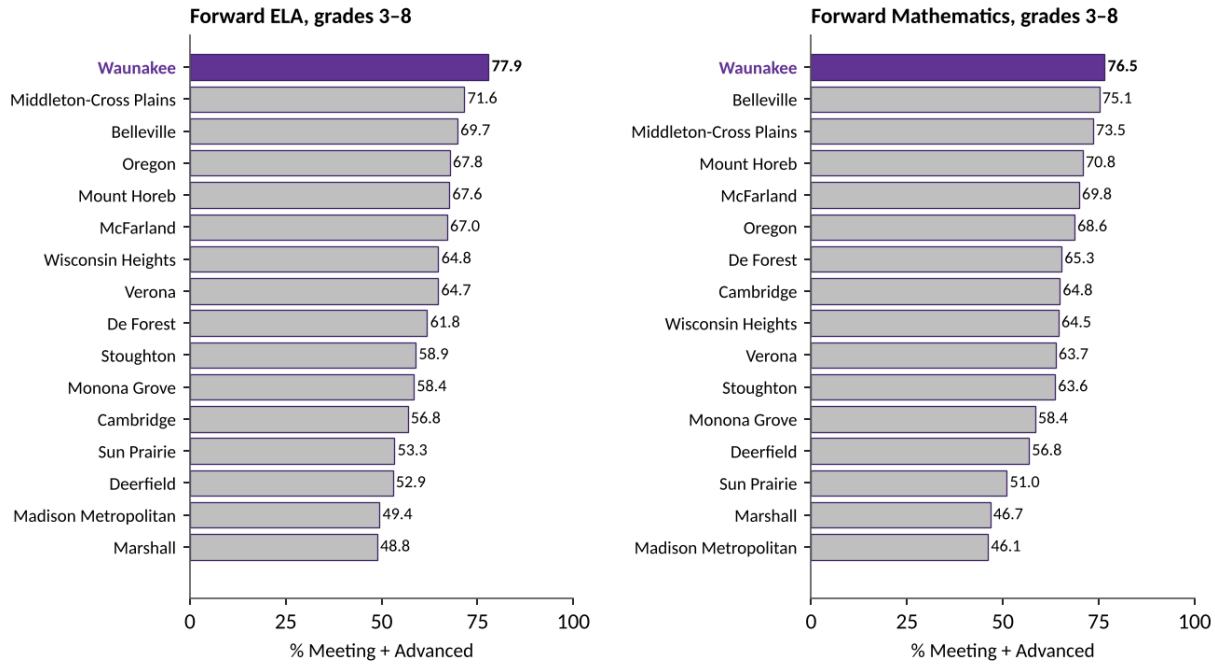

Figure B1. Dane County districts, grades 3–8 Forward ELA and Mathematics, percent Meeting + Advanced (Waunakee highlighted).

Appendix C. Peer Group Districts, 2025-26

Percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced, all tested grades pooled, for Waunakee and its 25 comparable districts. Rank among the 26 in parentheses. Districts are listed by their average across the four Forward subjects; Waunakee's row is shaded.

District	ELA 3–8	Math 3–8	Science 4, 8	Soc. St. 4, 8, 10	ELA 9–11	Math 9–11	Science 11
Cedarburg	86.2 (1)	85.9 (1)	84.4 (1)	83.0 (2)	81.6 (1)	82.0 (1)	76.8 (1)
Elmbrook	81.5 (2)	81.3 (5)	76.9 (3)	80.3 (4)	72.9 (5)	77.8 (5)	69.7 (6)
Mequon-Thiensville	79.8 (3)	81.7 (4)	77.3 (2)	79.1 (8)	70.5 (10)	74.0 (8)	72.1 (4)
Hamilton	78.1 (4)	80.6 (6)	74.2 (8)	84.0 (1)	71.6 (8)	75.9 (7)	71.1 (5)
Mukwonago	76.1 (7)	82.0 (3)	74.9 (6)	79.8 (6)	64.7 (12)	67.3 (15)	58.6 (16)
Waunakee	**77.9 (5)**	**76.5 (12)**	**75.8 (4)**	**81.4 (3)**	**72.1 (7)**	**78.3 (3)**	**72.7 (3)**
Muskego-Norway	75.9 (8)	84.7 (2)	69.4 (13)	78.6 (9)	73.6 (4)	77.9 (4)	61.5 (13)
Grafton	75.3 (9)	78.9 (8)	75.4 (5)	76.2 (12)	68.3 (11)	72.6 (11)	68.5 (7)
Middleton-Cross Plains	71.6 (16)	73.5 (15)	74.7 (7)	79.7 (7)	74.7 (2)	73.7 (9)	66.7 (9)
Kettle Moraine	74.0 (13)	75.9 (13)	71.4 (9)	77.6 (10)	72.9 (6)	73.0 (10)	64.4 (10)
New Berlin	74.2 (12)	74.5 (14)	69.6 (12)	80.2 (5)	71.1 (9)	75.9 (6)	68.5 (8)
Kimberly	76.2 (6)	79.5 (7)	67.0 (16)	73.4 (15)	61.7 (17)	69.4 (13)	59.9 (14)
Oconomowoc	74.4 (11)	78.5 (9)	70.0 (11)	71.6 (16)	60.5 (19)	67.2 (16)	52.9 (23)
Pewaukee	74.5 (10)	77.4 (10)	64.9 (19)	76.1 (13)	73.8 (3)	79.0 (2)	76.5 (2)
Hudson	72.1 (14)	76.9 (11)	71.3 (10)	71.3 (18)	63.6 (15)	65.7 (18)	57.5 (18)
Mount Horeb	67.6 (19)	70.8 (18)	67.4 (15)	77.4 (11)	64.4 (13)	62.0 (21)	61.8 (12)
Hortonville	69.1 (17)	71.4 (17)	67.7 (14)	66.6 (26)	58.8 (22)	59.3 (22)	54.4 (22)
McFarland	67.0 (20)	69.8 (20)	62.2 (21)	75.3 (14)	60.0 (20)	69.2 (14)	63.7 (11)
Franklin	72.1 (15)	70.5 (19)	61.4 (24)	70.4 (20)	58.4 (23)	66.0 (17)	52.2 (25)
Menomonee Falls	64.0 (24)	69.3 (21)	66.7 (17)	71.4 (17)	60.9 (18)	65.2 (19)	55.6 (21)
Germantown	66.8 (21)	71.9 (16)	59.1 (26)	70.1 (21)	62.0 (16)	70.7 (12)	56.2 (19)
Oregon	67.8 (18)	68.6 (22)	63.2 (20)	68.3 (24)	63.8 (14)	62.7 (20)	58.2 (17)
De Forest	61.8 (25)	65.3 (23)	66.2 (18)	68.3 (25)	52.5 (26)	58.8 (23)	49.3 (26)
Verona	64.7 (23)	63.7 (24)	61.2 (25)	68.6 (23)	59.9 (21)	56.3 (25)	55.9 (20)
Wauwatosa	65.1 (22)	60.0 (25)	62.1 (23)	70.7 (19)	57.8 (24)	58.6 (24)	52.5 (24)
Monona Grove	58.4 (26)	58.4 (26)	62.1 (22)	69.9 (22)	54.2 (25)	54.8 (26)	59.9 (15)

Table C1. Peer group districts, 2025-26 percent Meeting + Advanced (rank of 26). McFarland: in-person schools only.

AI Disclosure and Environmental Impact

AI disclaimer: This document was drafted with the assistance of Claude, an AI system developed by Anthropic, working from WISEdash for Districts and DRC student-level data exports, district demographic files, and Wisconsin DPI's public 2025-26 district-level data files. All analyses, figures, and narrative in every release have been reviewed and approved by Tim Schell, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, Waunakee Community School District, prior to distribution.

Environmental impact statement: Producing this set of deliverables (data processing, analysis, and document generation across the original September drafting session and the October 2026 comparison updates) is estimated to have consumed roughly 1.0 kWh of electricity — an order-of-magnitude estimate, since AI providers do not report per-session energy use. That is comparable to about 13 hours of Netflix streaming (≈0.077 kWh per hour, per Netflix/DIMPACT) and, in carbon terms, to driving about 1.3 miles in a car that gets 30 mpg (≈0.39 kg CO_2 using the U.S. average grid intensity of ≈0.39 kg CO_2/kWh and 8.9 kg CO_2 per gallon of gasoline).