

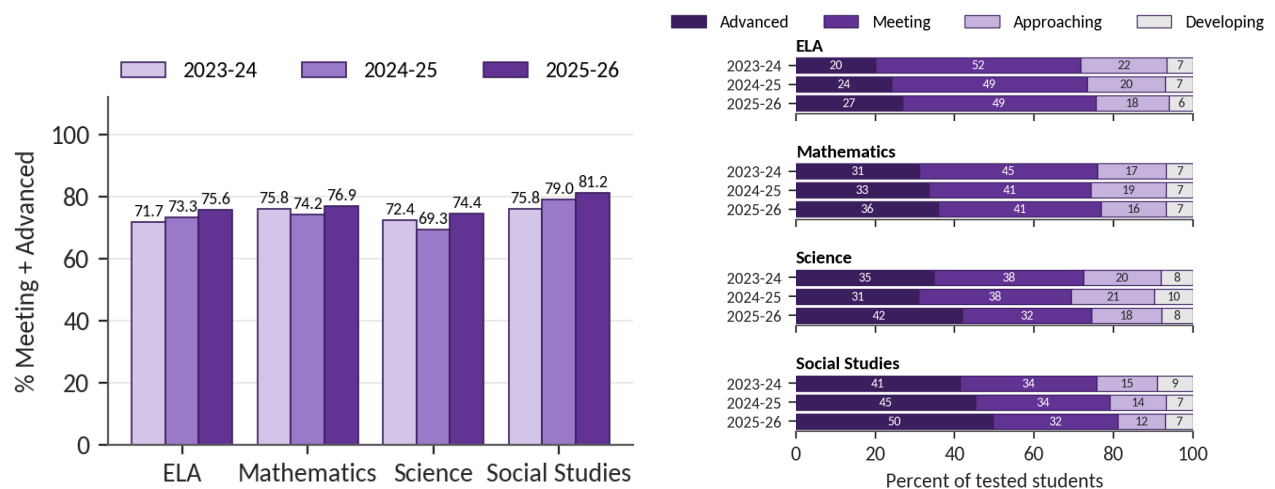
Spring 2026 State Assessment Results

Executive Summary | Three-Year Trend, 2023-24 to 2025-26, with Dane County, peer group, and statewide comparisons
 Percent of FAY district students at Meeting or Advanced (DPI performance levels) • Updated October 2026

District results at a glance

Subject	2025-26	Change vs. 2024-25	Change vs. 2023-24
ELA	75.6%	▲ +2.3	▲ +3.9
Mathematics	76.9%	▲ +2.6	▲ +1.0
Science	74.4%	▲ +5.1	▲ +2.0
Social Studies	81.2%	▲ +2.1	▲ +5.4

All tested grades combined, FAY district students. ▲ ▼ = change of at least 1.0 point.



Left: three-year trend, district total, % Meeting + Advanced. Right: share of tested students at each DPI level (Advanced, Meeting, Approaching, Developing).

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.** 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.** On DPI's October 1 public release, Waunakee ranks first among 16 Dane County districts in all four Forward subjects and in high school Mathematics and Science, and is above the median of its 25 comparable districts statewide in every subject (see "How Waunakee compares").

Results by grade

2025-26 % Meeting + Advanced, with change from 2024-25.

Subject	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11
ELA	72.6 ▲ +1.6	76.2 ▼ - 1.6	77.5 ▲ +1.6	84.4 ▲ +2.5	76.9 ▲ +5.2	78.5 ▲ +2.3	68.0 ▼ - 11.6	70.8 ▲ +1.7	75.5 ▲ +21.3
Mathematics	74.2 ▲ +8.4	72.8 ► - 0.3	76.4 ▲ +1.5	77.6 ▼ - 5.0	79.9 ► +0.5	77.1 ▲ +7.4	77.0 ▼ - 3.6	78.3 ► +0.1	77.9 ▲ +15.3
Science	n/a	73.4 ▲ +3.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	77.9 ▲ +6.2	n/a	n/a	72.3 ▲ +6.1
Social Studies	n/a	81.9 ► - 0.9	n/a	n/a	n/a	86.0 ▲ +3.2	n/a	76.1 ▲ +4.3	n/a

Forward Exam grades 3–8; PreACT Secure grades 9–10; ACT grade 11. Science is tested in grades 4, 8, and 11; Social Studies in grades 4, 8, and 10.

Results by school

2025-26 % Meeting + Advanced, with change from 2024-25.

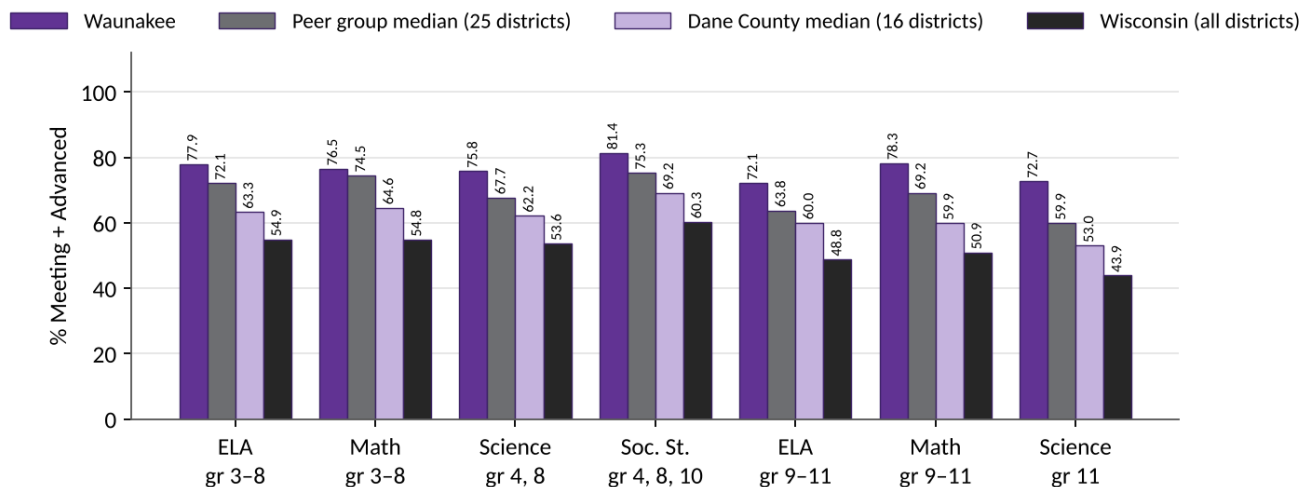
Subject	Arboretum Elem. (3–4)	Heritage Elem. (3–4)	Prairie Elem. (3– 4)	Intermediate (5– 6)	Middle (7–8)	High School (9– 11)
ELA	80.5 ▲ +2.5	74.5 ▼ -3.1	68.9 ▲ +1.0	81.0 ▲ +2.0	77.6 ▲ +3.6	71.5 ▲ +3.4
Mathematics	76.8 ▲ +8.7	73.1 ▲ +3.0	71.2 ▲ +1.1	77.0 ▼ -1.7	78.6 ▲ +4.3	77.7 ▲ +3.5
Science	77.7 ▲ +5.2	73.6 ▲ +5.3	69.2 ▲ +1.0	n/a	77.9 ▲ +6.2	72.3 ▲ +6.1
Social Studies	90.4 ▲ +7.8	82.1 ▼ -6.4	74.0 ▼ -3.5	n/a	86.0 ▲ +3.2	76.1 ▲ +4.3

Elementary results reflect grades 3–4 only. High School Science reflects grade 11 (ACT); High School Social Studies reflects grade 10 (Forward).

How Waunakee compares: Dane County, peer group, and Wisconsin

2025-26 percent of tested students at Meeting or Advanced from DPI's public district files (all enrolled students). Rank 1 = highest; 2024-25 rank in parentheses. The peer group is the district's 25 comparable districts statewide.

Measure	Waunakee	Dane County rank	Dane median	Peer rank	Peer median	Wisconsin
ELA, gr 3–8	77.9%	1st of 16 (1)	63.3%	5th of 26 (6)	72.1%	54.9%
Mathematics, gr 3–8	76.5%	1st of 16 (1)	64.6%	12th of 26 (13)	74.5%	54.8%
Science, gr 4 & 8	75.8%	1st of 16 (3)	62.2%	4th of 26 (8)	67.7%	53.6%
Social Studies, gr 4, 8, 10	81.4%	1st of 16 (3)	69.2%	3rd of 26 (8)	75.3%	60.3%
ELA, gr 9–11	72.1%	2nd of 16 (3)	60.0%	7th of 26 (13)	63.8%	48.8%
Mathematics, gr 9–11	78.3%	1st of 16 (2)	59.9%	3rd of 26 (5)	69.2%	50.9%
Science, gr 11 (ACT)	72.7%	1st of 16 (2)	53.0%	3rd of 26 (8)	59.9%	43.9%
ACT Composite, gr 11 (avg.)	22.9	2nd of 16 (4)	20.6	7th of 26 (14)	21.5	19.3



Waunakee (purple) compared with the peer group median, Dane County median, and Wisconsin, % Meeting + Advanced.

- **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. Grade 11 leads the county in all three ACT subjects, and the ACT Composite (22.9) is second.
- **Above the peer median everywhere, with ranks up in every subject.** Waunakee is in the top five of 26 in ELA, Science, Social Studies, and high school Mathematics and Science, and 7th in high school ELA. Grades 3–8 Mathematics (12th) is a gap with stronger peers; grades 3 and 8 Mathematics gained the most ground this year.
- **21 to 29 points above Wisconsin.** Grade 11 Mathematics ranks 2nd of 375 districts statewide. High school participation (about 94%) matches the state but is 24th of 26 in the peer group; counting non-tested students, the high school peer ranks would be 11th, 7th, and 5th rather than 7th, 3rd, and 3rd.

Student groups

2025-26 % Meeting + Advanced, change from 2024-25, and number tested (ELA).

Group	ELA	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
All FAY students n=2,868	75.6% ▲ +2.3	76.9% ▲ +2.6	74.4% ▲ +5.1	81.2% ▲ +2.1
Gender				
Female n=1,370	80.8% ▲ +3.5	75.7% ▲ +4.8	71.7% ▲ +2.6	81.4% ► +0.4
Male n=1,496	70.7% ▲ +1.3	77.9% ► +0.4	76.8% ▲ +7.3	80.9% ▲ +3.8
Economic status				
Econ. disadvantaged n=226	45.1% ► +0.9	44.7% ▲ +1.5	35.2% ▼ -11.0	53.3% ▼ -12.2
Not econ. disadvantaged n=2,642	78.2% ▲ +2.2	79.6% ▲ +2.5	77.6% ▲ +6.1	83.6% ▲ +3.2
Race / ethnicity				
Asian n=100	86.0% ► -0.9	83.0% ▼ -2.1	83.9% ▼ -5.4	88.6% ▼ -1.4
Black n=56	39.3% ▲ +1.3	46.4% ▲ +10.4	35.0% ► -0.7	47.6% ▼ -10.3
Hispanic n=228	57.9% ▲ +5.0	53.9% ▲ +4.4	50.0% ▼ -6.8	60.0% ▼ -10.7
Two or More n=140	73.6% ▲ +3.0	69.5% ▲ +4.1	56.5% ▼ -9.4	72.2% ▲ +2.7
White n=2,340	77.9% ▲ +2.4	80.1% ▲ +2.6	78.1% ▲ +7.5	84.2% ▲ +3.8
English learner status				
English Learner (ELP 1–5) n=90	16.7% ▼ -10.1	20.7% ▼ -9.1	16.7% ▼ -17.9	34.8% ▼ -7.6
Former EL (ELP 6) n=99	83.8% ▲ +4.1	80.8% ► -0.1	78.1% ▲ +8.9	82.9% ▼ -3.3
Not EL (ELP 7) n=2,679	77.2% ▲ +2.6	78.6% ▲ +3.0	75.8% ▲ +5.5	82.3% ▲ +2.2

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).

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. 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 —). Apply DPI suppression rules before any public release.
- 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. Dane County ranks are among 16 districts; peer ranks are among 26 (Waunakee plus 25); the peer median excludes Waunakee. McFarland's figures cover its in-person schools only, excluding the statewide virtual charter schools it authorizes.

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 CO₂ using the U.S. average grid intensity of ≈ 0.39 kg CO₂/kWh and 8.9 kg CO₂ per gallon of gasoline).