



*The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.*

## Board of Trustees Teaching and Learning Committee

Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 12:00 PM

This meeting will occur at the Lincoln Center (1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601) and via Microsoft Teams.

To participate remotely, please use this link on Microsoft Teams:

[Join the meeting now](#)

### AGENDA

**I. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS**

**II. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

**III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues, or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.

**IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Review of 2.5.25 Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting Minutes

**V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION**

- A. Review Action Plan
- B. Winter Benchmark Data Review

**VI. BOARD COMMENTS**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**



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## Board of Trustees Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

12:00pm

Lincoln Center & TEAMS

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### MINUTES

#### ATTENDANCE

<i>Trustees:</i>	<i>Others:</i>
Jennifer McKee, Board Vice Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Rachel Robison, Trustee	Jane Shawn, HEA President
Siobhan Hathorn, Board Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Justine Alberts, Curriculum Director
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs Director
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Tia Wilkins, Bryant Elementary Principal
	Brett Zanto, Capital High School Principal
	Cal Boyle, Helena Middle School, Principal
	Kayla Dunn, Bryant Title Specialist
	Bridget Butler, Bryant Title Specialist

#### I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Board Vice Chair Jennifer McKee.

## II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

## III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

## IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the 1.8.25 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

## V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

### A. Winter Benchmark Data Lead In

Ms. Justine Alberts, Curriculum Director for Helena Public Schools, informed the group that the Teaching and Learning Committee will be reviewing winter benchmark data at their upcoming meeting next month. Additionally, this data will be presented at the full Board of Trustees meeting next month. Today, the committee will hear presentations from principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, who will provide insights into their data use and analysis.

### B. Data Use & Analysis from Building Leaders (Elementary, Middle School, and High School)

Ms. Tia Wilkins, Principal of Bryant Elementary, along with Ms. Kayla Dunn and Ms. Bridget Butler, Title Specialists at Bryant, presented on the use and analysis of data at the elementary level for Bryant Elementary School. Principal Wilkins began by emphasizing the value of having Facilitator Diane Groves conduct consensus training with the Bryant staff. This training helped the team set goals and engage in discussions about their collective mission and objectives. Ms. Wilkins emphasized the importance of ensuring that all members of the Bryant community—parents, students, grandparents, and other stakeholders—feel welcomed and involved in the school. Several strategies to enhance communication with families were highlighted, including weekly newsletters from teachers, and the use of ClassDojo. Next, they reviewed the progress of the school's intervention process, which is designed to support students who are struggling or not making adequate progress. This process has been strengthened to ensure timely interventions. Three School Leadership Teams (SLTs) are in place to focus on various areas: Family and Student Engagement, Math and Science, and Reading and Writing. These teams have been instrumental in aligning efforts to improve student outcomes. Another important area of focus was refining school routines and structures. Ms. Wilkins discussed the importance of clarity in how students are greeted upon arrival, how behavior is managed, and how these practices contribute to a positive school environment. This consistency in approach is integral to fostering a welcoming atmosphere for both students and parents. Ms. Butler acknowledged that all of

these foundational efforts were essential before diving into data analysis. The data collected thus far has shown promising results, with significant progress in both math and reading. For the first time, all grade levels are implementing a dedicated "WIN" (What I Need) time for both math and reading, ensuring that every staff member is involved and committed to addressing student needs. For math, the focus for the first trimester was on developing students' number sense, with tailored groups across all grade levels. For reading, the primary focus was on phonics for younger grades, while older grades worked on book applications when phonics were no longer necessary. Ms. Dunn provided an overview of the school's data tracking system, which organizes student groups, "I Can" statements, goals, and supporting files in a way that allows staff to easily update and review student progress. Weekly meetings with grade-level teams provide time for teachers to reflect on and analyze data, including winter assessments from tools like iReady and Acadience, to determine whether instructional adjustments are needed. Teachers also use data forms during PLC meetings to assess individual student performance and consider changes to tier one instruction when necessary. At the school-wide level, academic scores for reading and math are compiled to track student growth, and those not meeting expectations are identified for Tier 2 or Tier 3 support. Principal Wilkins discussed the approach to analyzing data by focusing on the whole child rather than just academics. The goal is to align student data with the building-wide objectives established by the SLT team, addressing both social-emotional engagement and academic performance. Recognizing that a student's ability to access learning can be impacted by their overall well-being, the school aims to identify students who are not making growth and flag them for additional support. If a student is not progressing, a conversation is initiated to determine what further interventions or support are necessary, ensuring that no student falls through the cracks and all students receive the support they need to succeed. Principal Wilkins and her team addressed questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the information presented.

Ms. Alberts shared information on behalf of Principal Burton for Jefferson Elementary School, as he was unable to attend the meeting today. The team at Jefferson Elementary reviewed their winter benchmark data, focusing on comparing last year's progress to this year's, particularly in reading. They were pleased to see that 52% of students had already achieved their expected annual growth, which is a significant achievement, especially as this is the second year of the new reading curriculum. Ms. Alberts emphasized the importance of tracking typical growth trends to predict future proficiency levels. While there wasn't a major change in data from last year, they noted the high quality of instructional materials and recognized that if these trends persist, further reflection on tier-one practices will be needed to increase student achievement. Ms. Alberts also pointed out that the new curriculum has reduced time spent on MyPath within iReady, which could impact scores, though they continued to focus on reading WIN time as a key success factor. Moving forward, grade-level PLCs will focus on SMART goals and identify specific students to target for growth, with action steps to be developed based on their analysis of the data. Ms. Alberts addressed questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the information presented.

Next, the Teaching and Learning Committee heard from Mr. Cal Boyle, Principal of Helena Middle School. Principal Cal Boyle discussed the challenges of balancing academic achievement and

student engagement in a middle school environment. Principal Boyle highlighted the importance of maintaining student engagement, especially for those who are significantly below grade level. He noted that middle school is a critical period where keeping students connected to school is

key to their long-term success. To address this, the school is focusing on targeted interventions for students in the "yellow zone"—those approaching proficiency but needing additional support, particularly in vocabulary for reading and math skills. The school plans to pilot an intervention program using iReady to provide focused support for these students. At the same time, they will continue to offer rigorous opportunities for high-achieving students, ensuring that all students, regardless of their current academic level, are supported and challenged appropriately. Principal Boyle discussed the challenges associated with the MAST testing, particularly the frequency and timing of assessments. The testing schedule has resulted in significant instructional time being lost, as students are repeatedly assessed without clear results that can guide intervention efforts. Principal Boyle discussed the importance of using multiple data sources, including iReady and teacher PLC feedback, to make informed decisions about student interventions. He emphasized that the key to effective support is tailoring interventions to meet the individual needs of each student. As a Title school, Principal Boyle highlighted the challenges posed by socio-economic factors, noting that basic needs must be addressed before academic interventions can be effective. Principal Boyle addressed questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the information presented.

Next, the Teaching and Learning Committee heard from Mr. Brett Zanto, Principal of Capital High School. Principal Brett Zanto began discussing two main topics during his presentation: intervention time and MAP data. He explained that intervention time is designed to provide students with dedicated support to catch up on missed work, make up tests, or receive help with assignments. To help students stay organized, the school implemented universal late work deadlines, set for the first Tuesday of each month, which aligns with the first Monday of intervention time. This initiative aims to prevent late submissions at the end of the quarter and help students stay on top of their work. Principal Zanto also discussed how the school has been using data to refine its intervention efforts. Initially, the school relied on grades as the primary data source, particularly focusing on freshmen and sophomores. Freshmen who were failing classes were assigned to the teacher of the class they were struggling with, while sophomores with fewer than five credits were assigned to teachers for the classes they were failing. These interventions began in the first quarter, and students continued with their assigned teachers into the second semester. Looking ahead, Principal Zanto mentioned the possibility of incorporating more data-driven strategies. He expressed interest in using standardized data, such as performance percentiles and specific areas where students are lagging, to make more informed intervention decisions. By working with PLC teams, the school hopes to identify key areas where students need additional support. Although the current intervention model is still relatively new and primarily based on grades, Principal Zanto emphasized the goal of refining the process in the future to ensure more targeted and effective interventions.

Principal Zanto discussed how Capital High School used MAP data to guide student placement. On the first day of freshman year, students took the MAP assessment in math and reading, allowing for immediate adjustments to their schedules. Significant growth was observed in algebra scores, with the percentage of freshmen scoring below the 60th percentile dropping

from 54% in the fall to 42% in the winter. However, reading scores showed less improvement. Principal Zanto noted that high-achieving students showed more growth than struggling learners, highlighting the need for more targeted interventions. Principal Zanto addressed questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the information presented.

**C. Revisit of Action Plan & Priorities**

Due to time constraints, the informational item titled *Revisit of Action Plan & Priorities* was not reviewed. As a result, the Teaching and Learning Committee has decided to defer its discussion to a future meeting.

**VI. BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no further board comments.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m. by Board Vice Chair Jennifer McKee.

# Helena Public Schools

## DISTRICT ACTION PLAN



COMPILED BY: KAITLYN HESS & JUSTINE ALBERTS  
DATA, ASSESSMENT & FED. PROGRAMMING CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

2024-2025

## Student Achievement Goals

*Helena Public Schools is committed to the success of every student. These action plan goals are built around critical benchmarks in each stage of a student's education, tracking progress and growth to ensure students are on a trajectory for success.*

**Goal 1:** By spring 2026, 80% of Helena Public Schools' first graders will be proficient in foundational reading skills as evidenced by district Acadience scores.

**Goal 2:** By spring 2025, an average of 70% of Helena Public Schools third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Math assessment.

**Subgoal:** By spring 2026, 70% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will meet their *annual typical growth* in math as evidenced by district iReady data.

**Goal 3:** By spring 2025, an average of 80% of Helena Public Schools third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Reading assessment.

**Subgoal:** By spring 2026, 70% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will meet their *annual typical growth* in reading, as evidenced by spring iReady data.

**Goal 4:** By spring 2025, an average of 50% of Helena Public Schools seventh-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Math assessment.

**Goal 5:** By spring 2025, an average of 65% of Helena Public Schools seventh-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Reading assessment.

**Goal 6:** By spring 2025, 35% of Helena Public Schools 11th graders will meet all four ACT benchmarks.

**Goal 7:** By spring 2025, reduce suicidality from 10% to 5% in K-12 students.

**Subgoal:** Reduce K-12 student-reported depression/anxiety from 30% to 20% as measured by the BASC-3 BESS and RBHI screeners.

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## Action Plan Steps

Each goal includes a reference to effect sizes from John Hattie's Visible Learning: The Sequel (2022). We have aligned influential instructional and systematic strategies to emphasize the importance of each goal and outline the research that supports this plan.

## Standards and Curriculum

### Instructional Systems

**Goal 1:** Increase the effectiveness of instructional systems (SLT, PLCs, WIN, Walkthroughs) in all schools to ensure quality instruction as evidenced by self-assessment data.

**Effect Size, Hattie (2022):** Teacher Clarity (.85); Teacher expectations (.58)

Action Steps	Who	When
<input type="checkbox"/> Review self-assessment data from the last update.	District and Building Administrators	September 2024
<input type="checkbox"/> Take self-assessment for the upcoming school year and set new building goals for action plans.	District and Building Administrators	September 2024
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Principals lead SLTs through the upcoming year's action planning for their building.</del>	Building Administrators and SLTs	August & September 2024
<input type="checkbox"/> As a collective, building principals and district administration will meet monthly to review the quality performance indicators of each system and share ideas.	District and Building Administrators, Title Coaches, and TOSAs.	Ongoing Monthly
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Title coaches meet monthly with district administrators to share ideas and discuss where they are with each system and their action plans in their schools.</del>	Title Coaches, Curriculum & Assessment Administrators, TOSAs	Ongoing Monthly
<input type="checkbox"/> District-level administrators and TOSAs will support new administrators and SLTs in regular meetings, monitoring walkthroughs and goal-setting processes.	Curriculum and Assessment Administrators, TOSAs	Ongoing Monthly



**Goal 2:** By spring 2026, 60% of Helena Public Schools students in grades K-8 will demonstrate proficiency in math, as evidenced by spring iReady Math scores.

**Effect Size, Hattie (2022):** Direct and Guided Math instruction (.48), coaching (.26); Whole group Math instruction (1.60); Number Sense instruction (.88).

Action Steps	Who	When
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Continued collaboration with Math TOSA and a K-12 math consultant to target math instruction and professional development.</del>	Math TOSA, Curriculum and Assessment Administrators.	Ongoing-trimester progress (present T&L 11/6)
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor implementation of Eureka2 in K-5; it should include an emphasis on manipulatives and math discourse and will be monitored with walkthrough data.	Building Administrators, TOSAs, SLTs	Ongoing-trimester progress check
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Each elementary school will require 70 minutes of core math instruction per day, which includes 10 minutes of number sense instruction.</del>	Building Administrators	September 2024
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin math standards work and curriculum review for middle school, starting with grades six and possibly seven.	Curriculum Administrator, Building Administrators, Teacher Curriculum Teams	Ongoing

## Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making

### Teacher Teams and Instructional Planning

**Goal 1:** Reestablish the PLC process for grades K-12 rooted in the four-question cycle as evidenced by the self-assessment rubric.

*Effect Size, Hattie (2022): Planning and prediction (.83); Success Criteria (.64); Explicit Teaching Strategies (1.22).*

Action Steps	Who	When
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Build a universal PLC protocol for K-12 teams to use consistently.</del>	Building Administrators, Curriculum and Assessment Administrators	August 2024
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Build a commonly accepted document to promote collaboration and consistent communication between PLC teams, other departments/grades, and administration.</del>	Building Administrators, Curriculum and Assessment Administrators, TOSAs	Ongoing
<input type="checkbox"/> Support PLC teams in buildings and with teacher teams.	Building Administrators, Curriculum and Assessment Administrators	Weekly throughout the 2024 school year

**Goal 2:** 100% of K-5 schools will have a WIN model for reading and math based on student data and needs, as evidenced by the self-assessment rubric.

*Effect Size, Hattie (2022): Whole class instruction (1.70); Small group (.70); Tier 1 Interventions (1.32); Tier 2 Interventions (.67).*

<input type="checkbox"/> Principals will complete a self-assessment of their current WIN model, evaluate it, and make adjustments as necessary.	Building Administrators	August 2024
<input type="checkbox"/> As a collective, Principals will meet monthly with district administrators to review WIN models and discuss effectiveness.	District Administrators, Building Administrators	Monthly for 2024 school year
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>District level administrators and TOSAs will support new administrators and SLTs in evaluating, implementing, or maintaining the WIN model in their building.</del>	District Administrators, TOSAs	Monthly for 2024 school year (present T&L 11/6)

## Community and Family Engagement

### Support Inclusive Instruction and Inclusion of Caregivers

**Goal 1:** Increase family engagement in schools through various monthly opportunities at each building and level. *Engagement is measured by attendance at each opportunity.*

**Effect Size, Hattie (2022):** Parent programs (.39); Parental Expectations (.49); Communication Home (.38).

Action Steps	Who	When
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Each school will have a calendar of engagement opportunities.</del>	Title coaches, Building Administration, SLTs	August 2024
<input type="checkbox"/> As a collective, Principals will meet monthly to share and collaborate on ideas.	District Administrators, Building Principals	Ongoing
<input type="checkbox"/> All schools will track data on family engagement attendance.	Principals, Title Coaches	Ongoing

## Student Well-Being

### Student Belonging and Safety

**Goal 1:** Reduce suicidality in K-12 students from 10% to 5%, as measured by BASC-3 BESS and RBHI.

**Goal 2:** Reduce depression/anxiety from 30% to 20% in K-12 students as measured by BASC-3 BESS and RBHI.

Action Steps	Who	When
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Each school will provide the RBHI screening at every level once a semester to assess students' mental health needs.</del>	District Administrators, Building Administrators	Fall 2024 & Spring 2025
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade-level students will receive best-practice instruction and resources for addressing mental health issues.	District Administrators, Building Administrators, Counselors, Mental Health Partners	Once per year at each school.
<input type="checkbox"/> With support from the Stronger Together grant, each school will train teachers to utilize MTSS-B Tier 1 and Tier 2 strategies to support all students' mental health needs.	District Administrators, Building Administrators, Counselors, Mental Health Partners	August 2024 and throughout the school year
<input type="checkbox"/> Each school will develop an SEL action goal in its Action Plan.	Building Principals, Building SLTs, RTI Teams, Counselors	August 2024

#### References

Hattie, J. (2023). *Visible learning, the sequel: A synthesis of over 2,100 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.

## Index of Acronyms Used

Title	Acronym	Definition
School Leadership Team	<b>SLT</b>	The SLT is comprised of building-level staff. Members consist of different grade levels, departments, and/or specialist areas. Teams meet monthly to review their building-level action plan, evaluate progress of their action plan goals and determine next steps.
What I Need	<b>WIN</b>	WIN groups are Tier 1 and Tier 2 intervention groups. Teachers build flexible groups based on data and then target instructional strategies to build skills students need to meet the criteria of standards, such as remediation, repetition, or extension.
Teacher on Special Assignment	<b>TOSA</b>	These positions support professional development for teachers and staff on high-priority projects for the district that directly impact student achievement.
Professional Learning Community	<b>PLC</b>	PLCs are groups of teachers that meet weekly to review student data and make instructional decisions based on that data.



# Helena Public Schools

*A great place to learn*

2025

# WINTER BENCHMARK GRADES PREK-5



Prepared for Helena Public Schools by Kaitlyn Hess,  
Data and Federal Programs Director

# Winter Benchmark Data Overview

The winter benchmark serves as a growth checkpoint for academic achievement. The purpose is to measure student's growth from fall to winter to assess if they are on track for the end of the year. It is a time to pause, investigate, reflect, and adjust instructional decision making for students.

**% meeting typical growth**

% of students meeting 100% of typical Growth. Students are given a growth score based on the average student growth. Teachers should set goals with student to exceed 100% of their typical growth.

**% Proficient**

% of students that are on or above grade level performance standards.

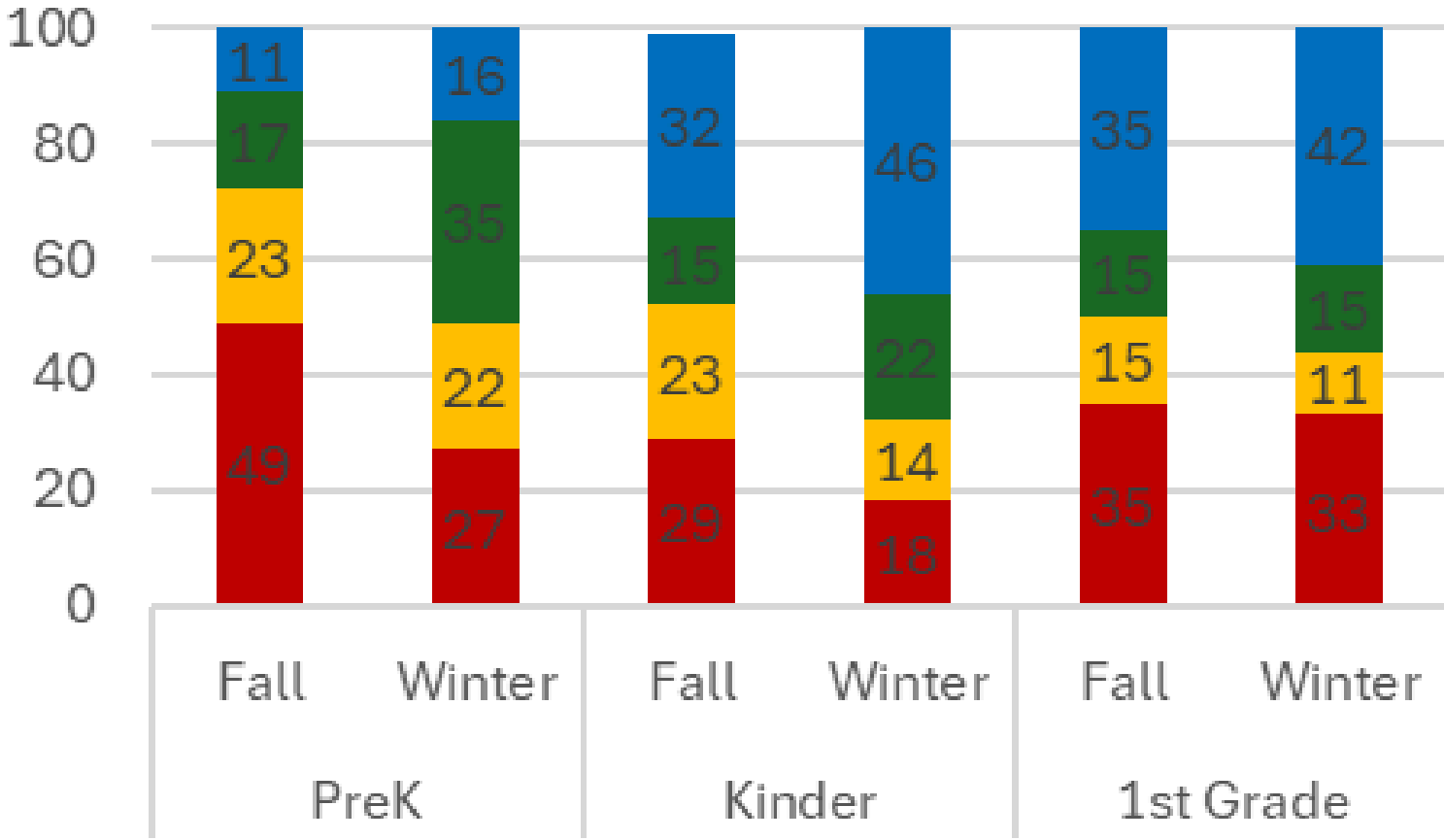
**Grade Level (Math & Reading)**

This measurement evaluates the progress of students in each grade level. The body of students changes from year to year in the grade level. This helps to evaluate the program of instruction within the grade level, regardless of the students.

**Cohort (Math & Reading)**

Student cohorts track the progress of the same group of students as they progress through grade levels.

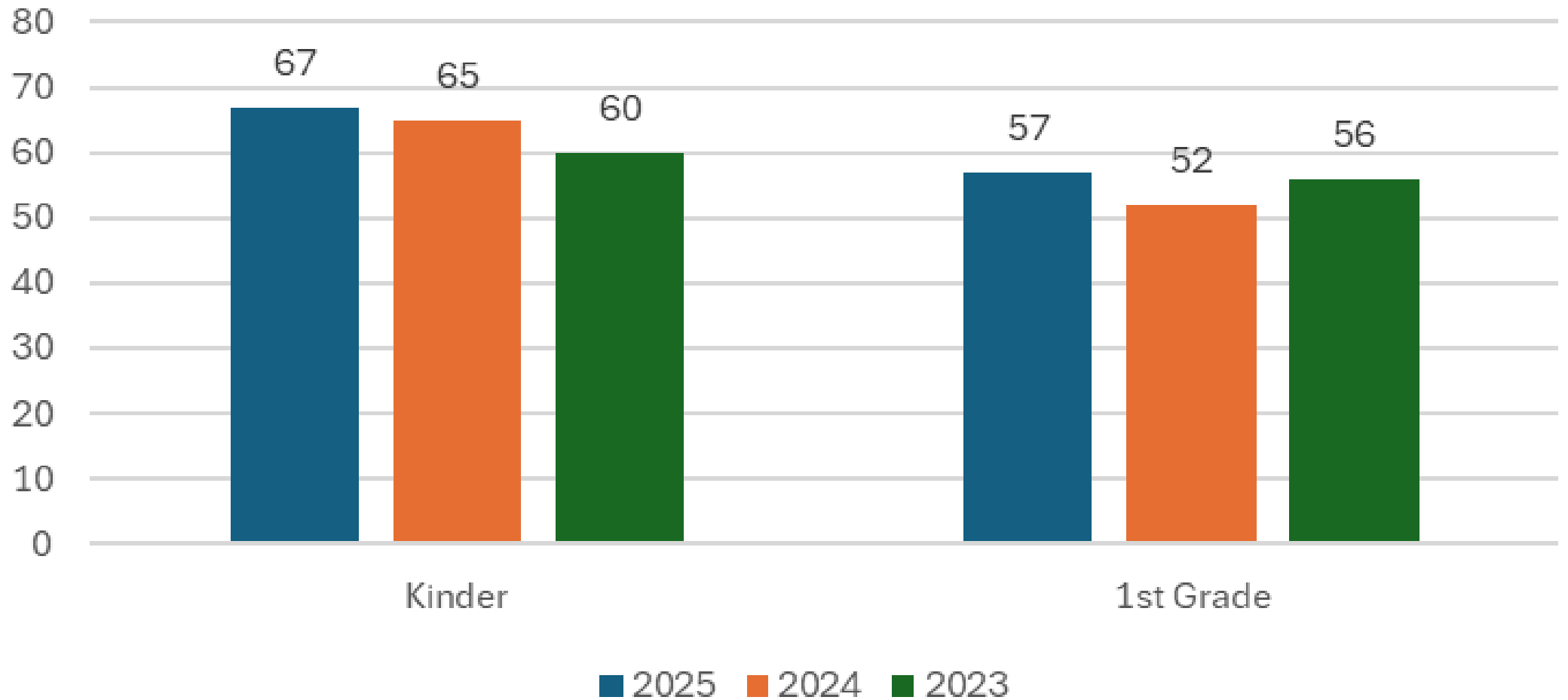
# Acadiance Reading Fall to Winter Growth 2024-25



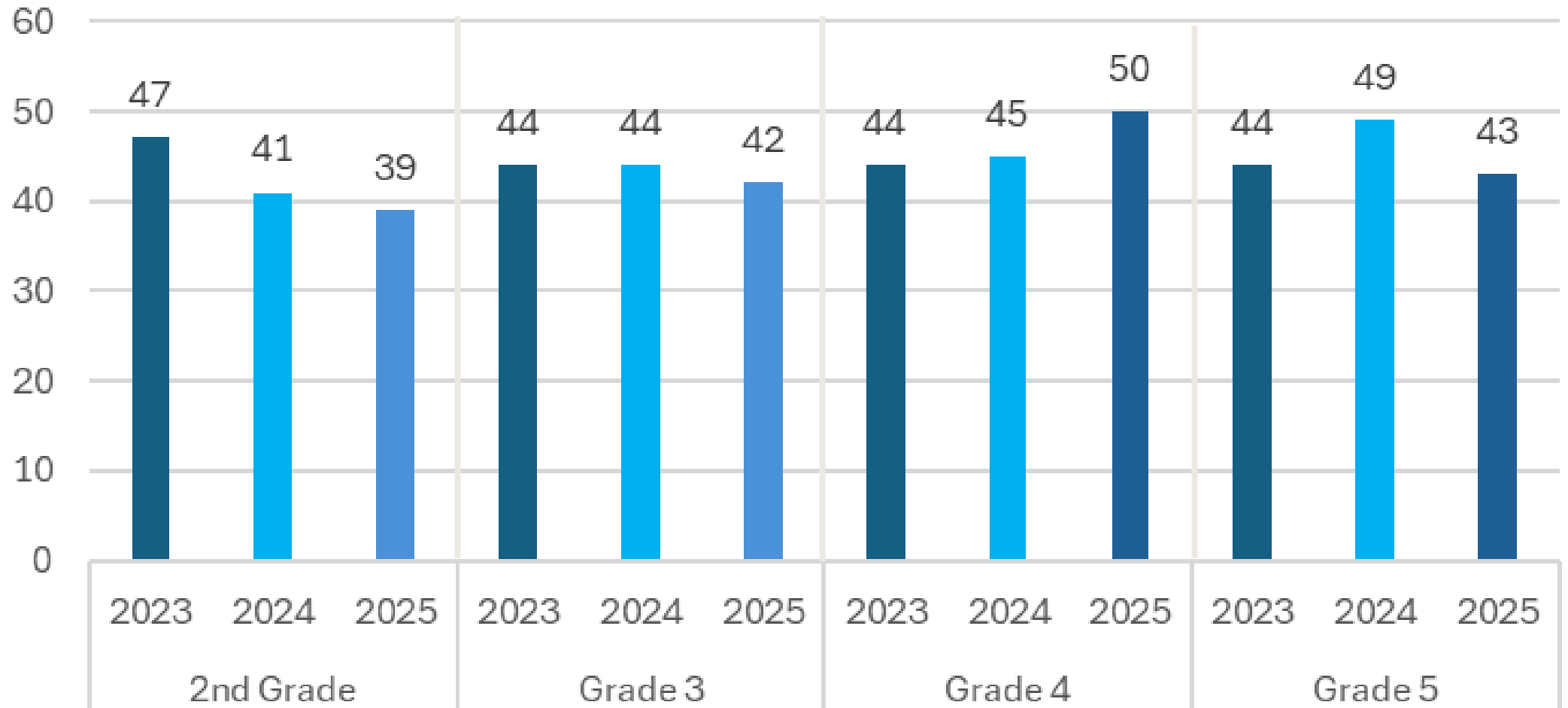
- Well Below
- Below
- On Benchmark
- Above Benchmark



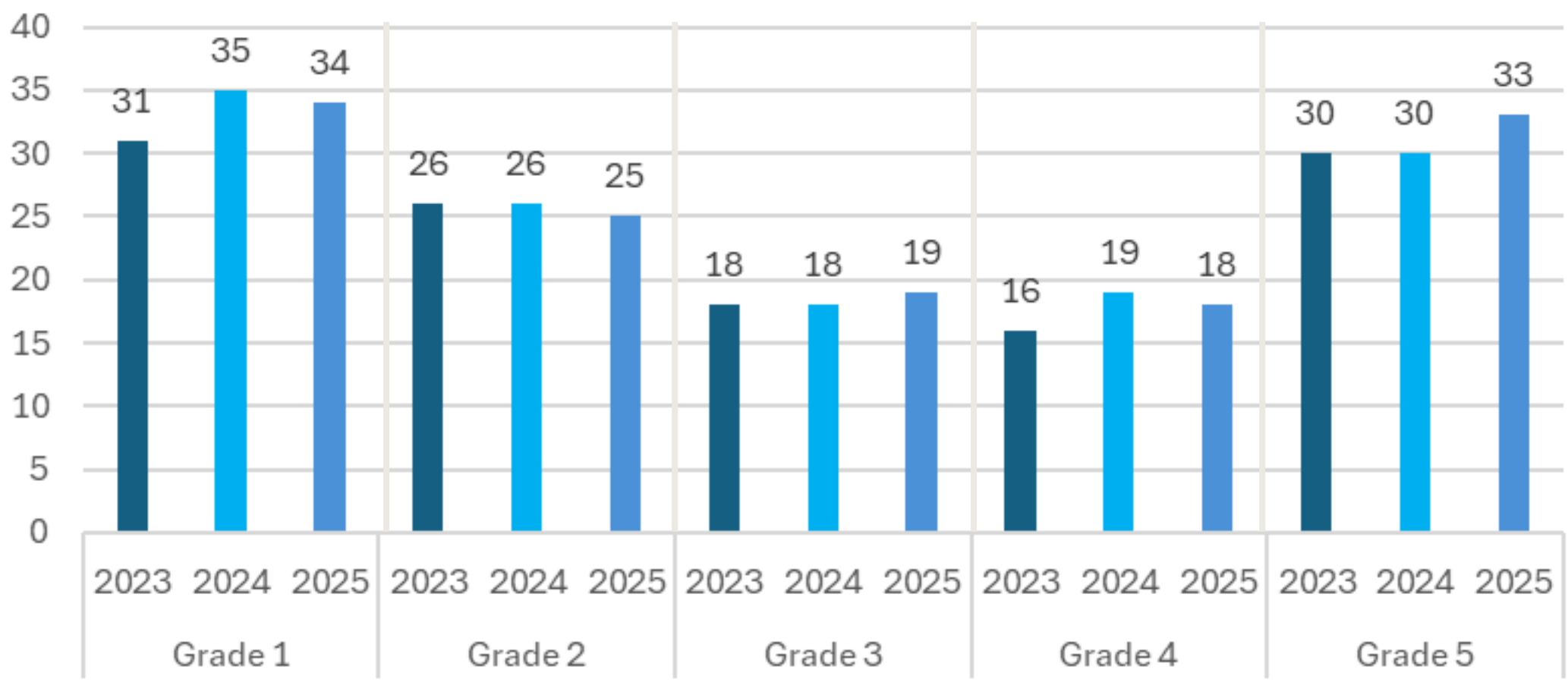
## % On or Above Benchmark Trends-Acadience Reading



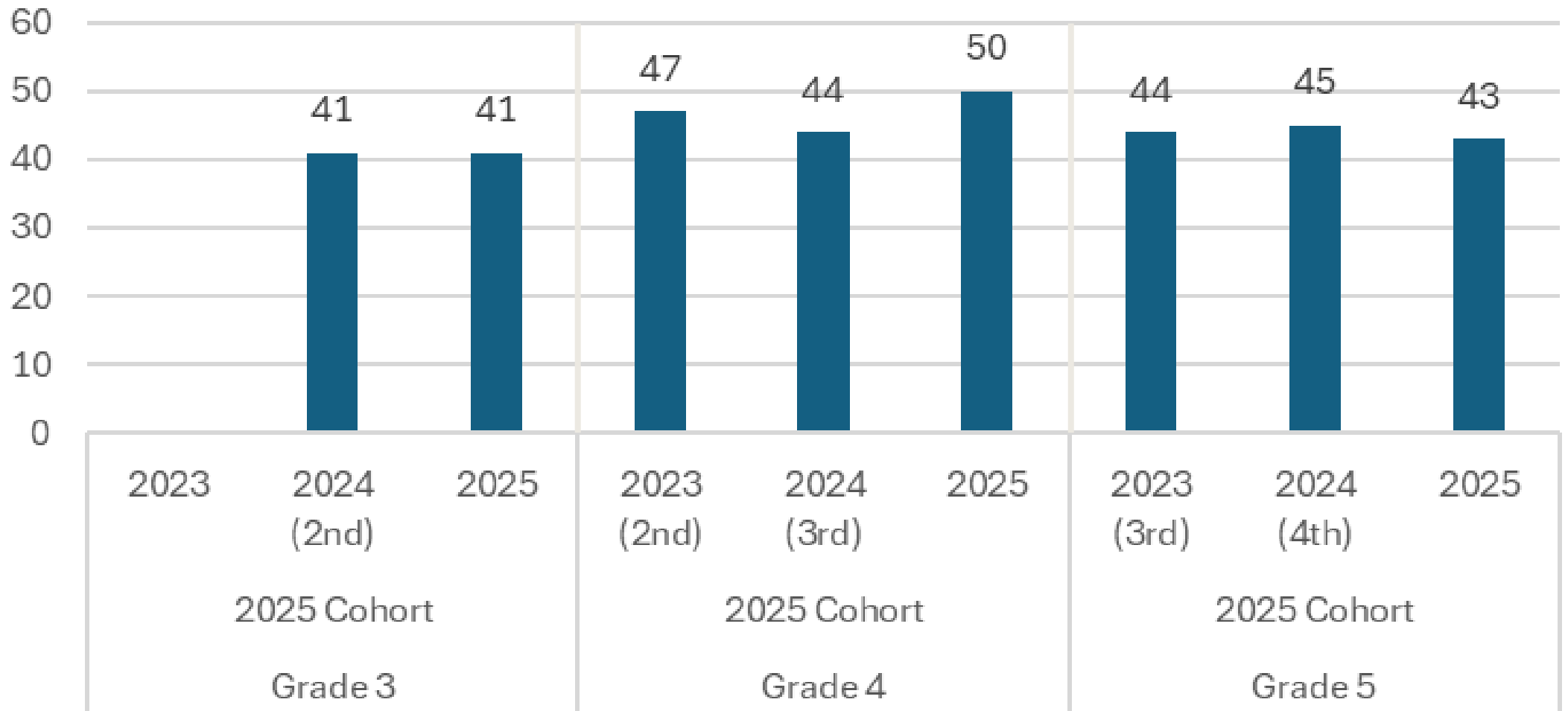
# iReady Winter % Meeting Typical Growth Reading Trends by Grade Level



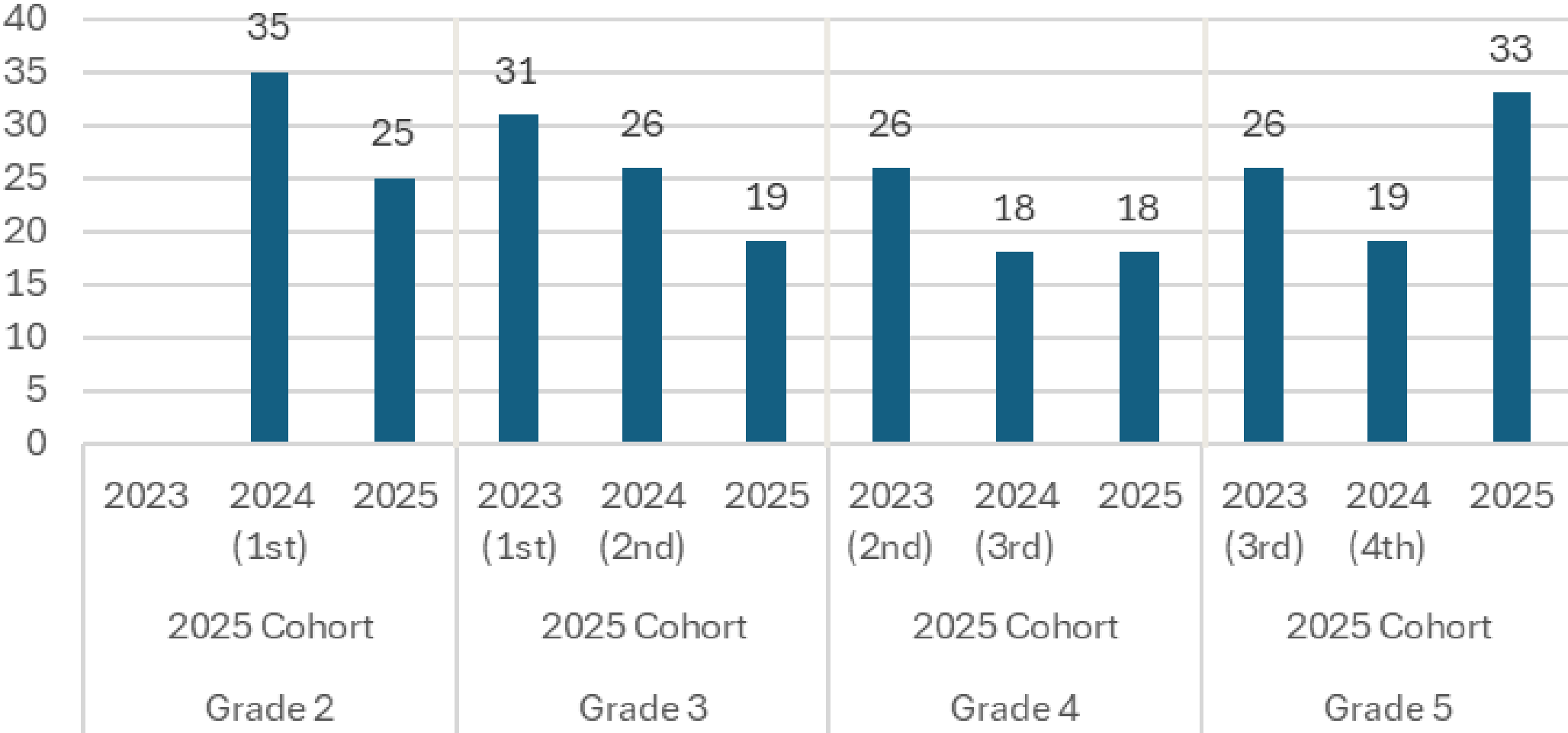
## iReady Winter % Meeting Typical Growth Math Trends by Grade Level



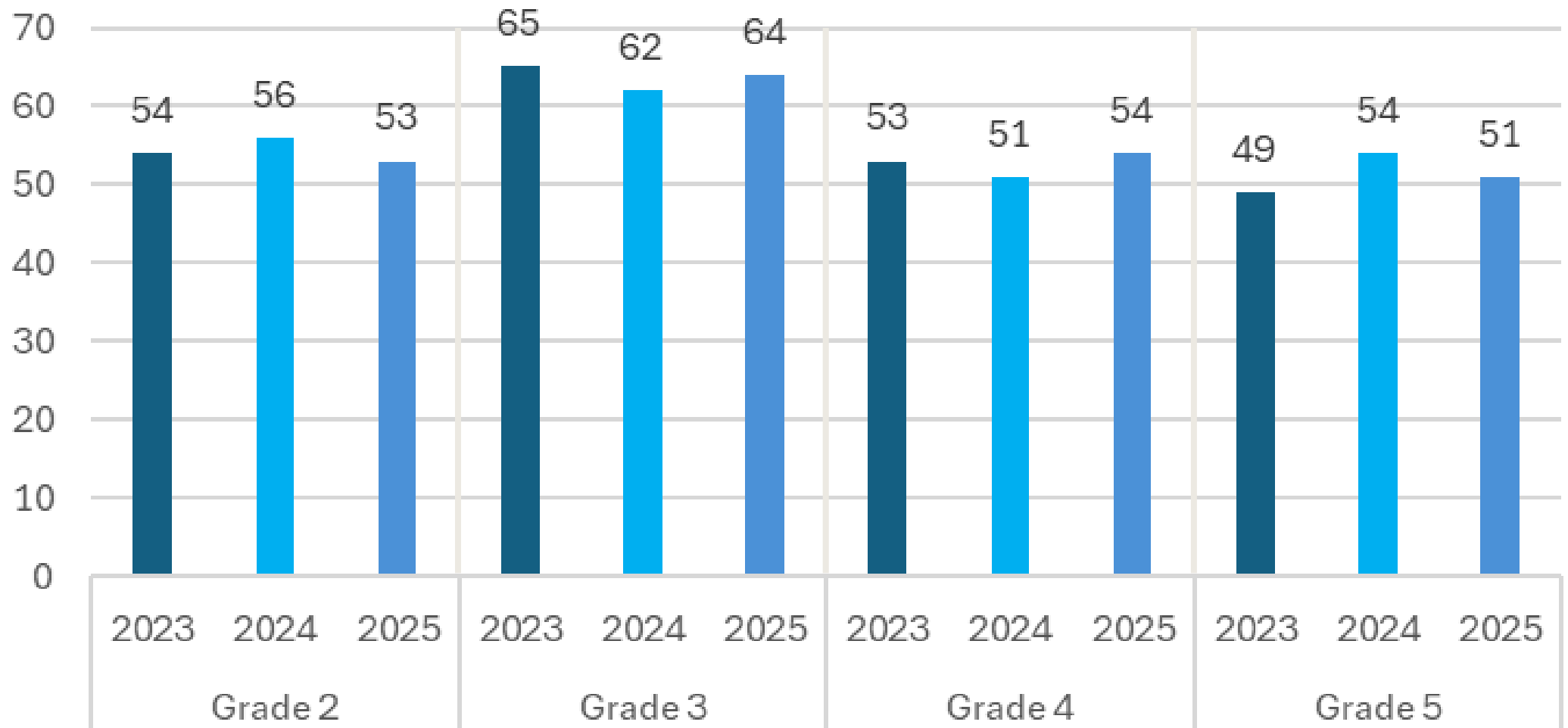
# iReady % Meeting Typical Growth Trends by Cohort-Reading



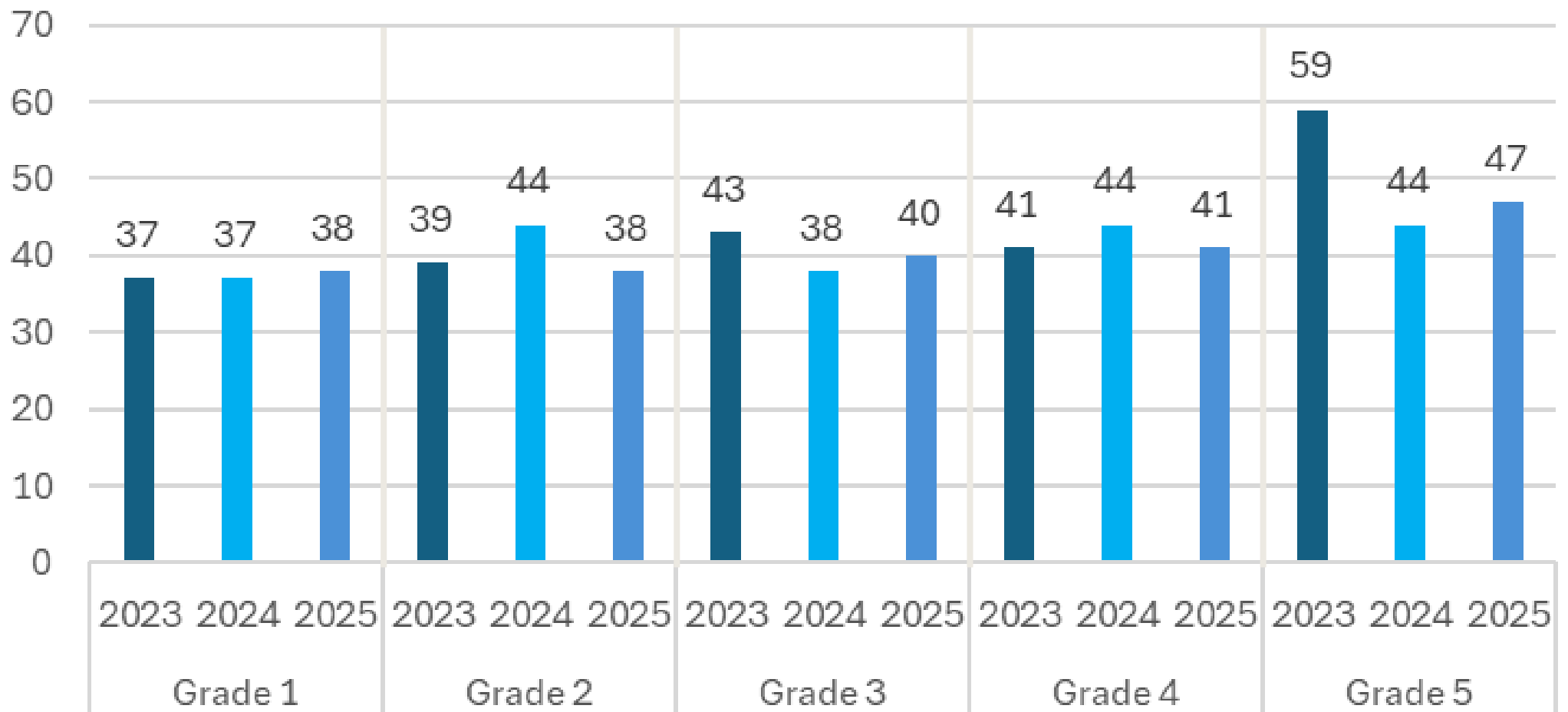
# iReady Winter % Meeting Typical Growth Trends by Cohort-Math



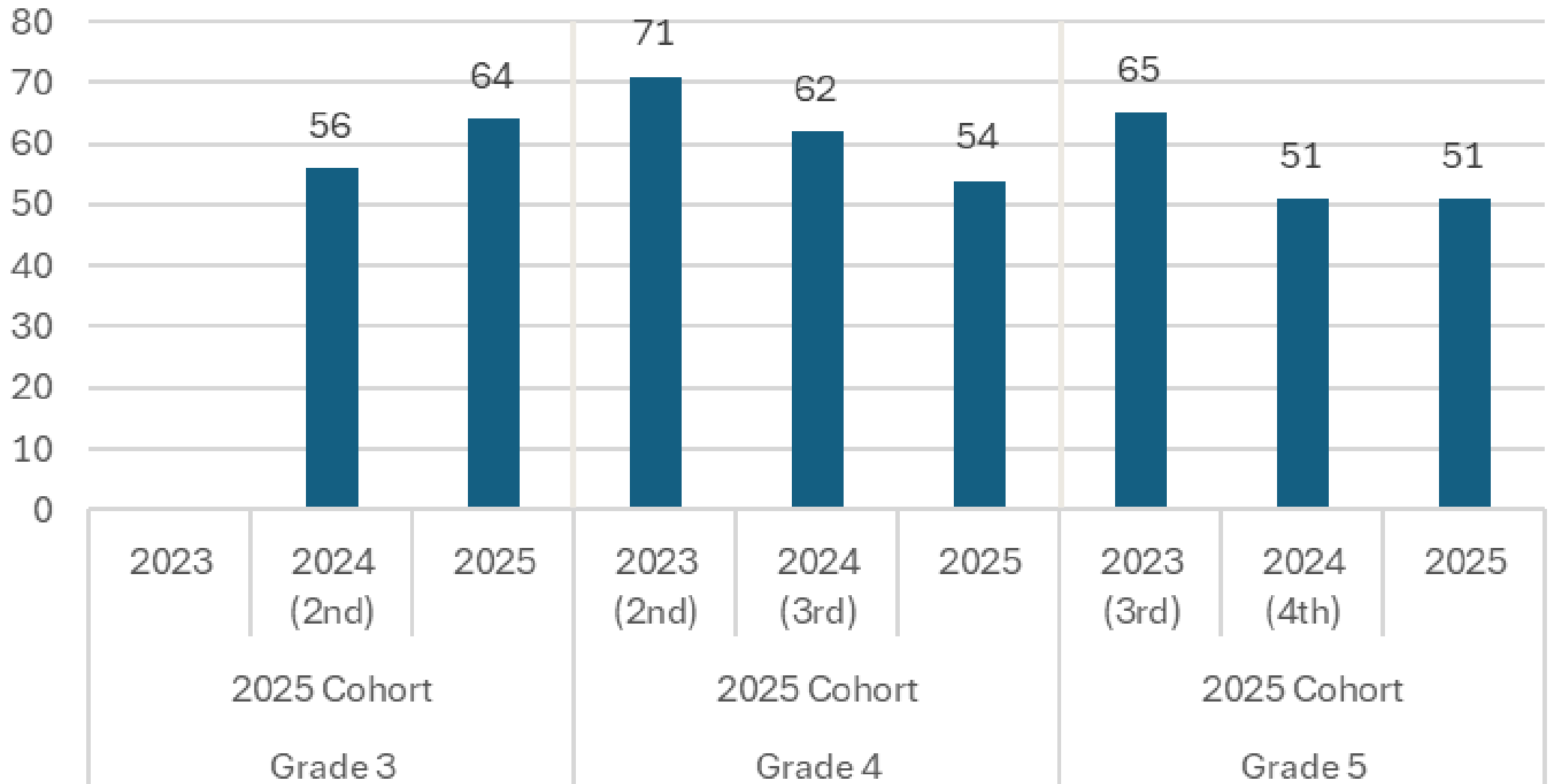
# iReady Winter % Proficient by Grade Level Trends- Reading



# iReady Winter % Proficient by Grade Level Trends- Math

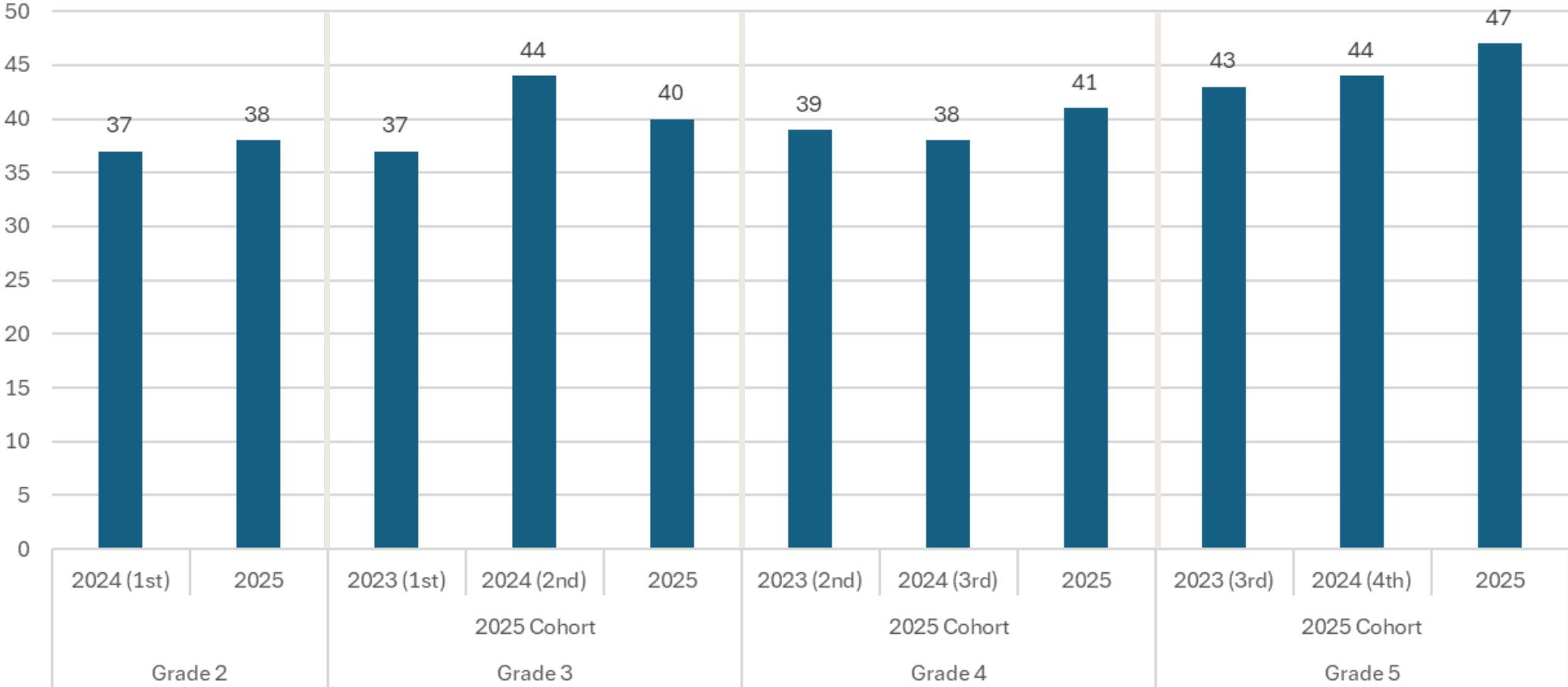


# iReady % Proficient by Cohort Trends-Reading





### iReady Winter % Proficient Trends by Cohort-Math



# CURRICULUM UPDATES

Level	ELA	Math	Social Studies	Others
Standards	Will go before BoPE late spring	Revisions adopted-work years ahead	Final district-released work day in March	
K-5	All teachers received initial training on supplement, UFLI, and mini PD on comprehension. Working on writing moving forward.	Principal PLC, support backfill (TOSA), Intervention resources, collaboration	Integration and IEFA alignment-resources and connections	Grade level meetings saw almost all K-5 educators.
6-8	SIMs Round II, work day today and district work moving into next year.	March 3rd afternoon-work into next year.	Meetings in October, January, February and again in April- updating unit plans, revisiting pacing and goals	
9-12	District work into next year-review updated standards and work on unit plans and novel rationales.	March 4th afternoon-	American Studies I and II - working on transition/alignment, finalize World Studies early summer	Intervention time and collaboration.