



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 Meeting

June 16, 2026 – 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:

<https://teams.microsoft.com>

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 4/22/26 Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting Minutes

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

- A. Advanced Report Responses
- B. End of Year Academic Data

VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT



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 Meeting

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

11:30 a.m.

Lincoln Center and TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Trustees: *Others:*

Jenny Murnane Butcher, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Siobhan Hathhorn, Trustee	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
	Dr. Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5
	Dr. Kaitlyn Hess, Data and Federal Programs Director
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Jeremy Slead, PEAK Educator
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Christina Sieminski, PEAK Educator
	Allie Keleti, CTE Specialist/Career Counselor
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Several members of the public

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 11:31 a.m. by Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher.

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 March 11, 2026, Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Plucker Report on Gifted Education

Dr. Justine Alberts provided an update on the Plucker Report regarding the District's advanced services/gifted education programming. She noted that the external review conducted by Dr. Plucker was submitted in April and includes an overview of program strengths, areas for continued development, and recommendations. Dr. Alberts summarized that the report reflects overall positive findings regarding instructional rigor and program impact, while also identifying areas for further exploration, including service delivery structures, equity considerations, and potential enhancements to identification practices. The Board was informed that the report will be presented in greater detail at a future meeting, along with additional discussion of findings and recommendations. Dr. Alberts addressed questions from the Teaching and Learning Committee regarding the information presented.

B. Career and Technical Education Updates

Dr. Kaitlyn Hess, Data and Federal Programs Director, and Allie Keleti, CTE Specialist and Career Counselor, provided Career and Technical Education Updates. The update included information on ongoing work related to a gap analysis and needs assessment of current CTE offerings, as well as alignment with emerging state-level changes, including future ready funding structures, expanded work-based learning opportunities, and the transition from career pathways to career clusters. Staff highlighted efforts to strengthen alignment between secondary coursework and postsecondary and industry opportunities, including increased collaboration with Helena College and development of prerequisites and dual enrollment options. The Board engaged in discussion regarding program capacity, student interest in career and technical fields, and the importance of expanding pathways for students pursuing options beyond traditional four-year college routes.

VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

There were no further board or superintendent comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m. by Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher.



HELENA ADVANCED SERVICES

Recommendations and Responses

The below outlines Dr. Plucker's findings and HPS's actions or responses to each.

RECOMMENDATION

1.1 - 1.3, 3.3 - Emphasize the 3 services model, look at differentiation, and focus support.

2.1- 2.2 - Acceleration audit and automatic enrollment in advance coursework.

3.1 - Focus on PEAK in the elementary and middle school; high school low enrollment.

3.2 - Increase training and PBL for differentiation- up and acceleration

4.1 - 4.2 - Inclusivity, teachers as safety nets

4.3 - Universal screening expansion

4.4 - National and Local Norms

5.1 - 5.3- Communication

RESPONSE & ACTION

1. Differentiation audit partnered with job-embedded training. Training and information from last year helped us see that elementary teachers are differentiating down.
 - a. UDL training this summer and continued PD next school year.
2. Plan to split building PLCs on Mondays and engage in coaching with 3-5 educators first; lower grades later.
3. PEAK specialists already plan each unit, so integration of a more focused approach will be a simple shift.

Standard practice is parent and student meeting with placements and schools recommending students are challenged. This practice partners with a review of our data and teacher comments/recommendations.

High school structure is going to be responsive to student need and participation. The team will replace weekly contact hours with quarterly experiences so staff can focus on the K-8 grade levels and professional development while still meeting the social-emotional needs of high school students.

We will evaluate this new shift for effectiveness at the high school level to determine continuation or replacement.

See recommendation 1 for scheduling and training plan. 3.3 is focus on program goals.

Updated process, presented to school principals and psychs in January of 2026. Updated process now includes teacher referral/checklist as a mandatory portion of the referral in addition to discussion at the ASEB/ATEAM meetings. Prior practice was just parent request.

In the school year 2026, we will be moving to the Naglieri assessment. After the pilot, we were able to find students who qualified similarly and a group of students who were different. Additionally, the Naglieri offers an opportunity to include local norming features that we will explore.

With the updates and a new district website, we are excited to begin "rebranding" and communicating the purpose of PEAK (providing enrichment activities for kids) and the purpose of the services offered - acceleration, differentiation, and direct services.

2026



END OF YEAR STUDENT DATA

OUR VISION

Helena Public Schools foster dynamic educational experiences that prepare all students for life.

OUR MISSION

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. This mission will be supported through the wise use of resources to meet students' needs, regardless of interests and talents. Students, families, educators and the community are committed to sharing the responsibility for creating a student-centered educational community that acknowledges learning as a life-long process

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

01. Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
02. Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults
03. Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
04. Each student has access to personalized learning and to qualified, caring adults.
05. Each graduate is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment.

HPS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The Helena Public Schools Comprehensive Assessment System is designed to ensure that all students receive a high-quality education that meets rigorous academic standards. Our mission is to provide accurate, meaningful assessments that support student learning, inform instructional practices, and guide decision-making at every level of our school district.

DISTRICT BENCHMARKS



Early Literacy



Grades K-1 Reading



1st-8th Grade Math
2nd-8th Grade Reading



9th & 10th Grade Reading and Math

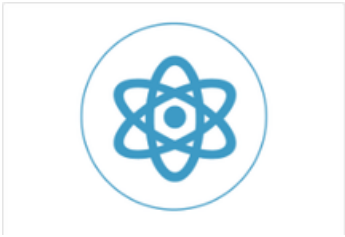


10th Grade

STATE ASSESSMENTS



Grades 3-8 Reading and Math



Montana Science Assessment Grades 5 & 8

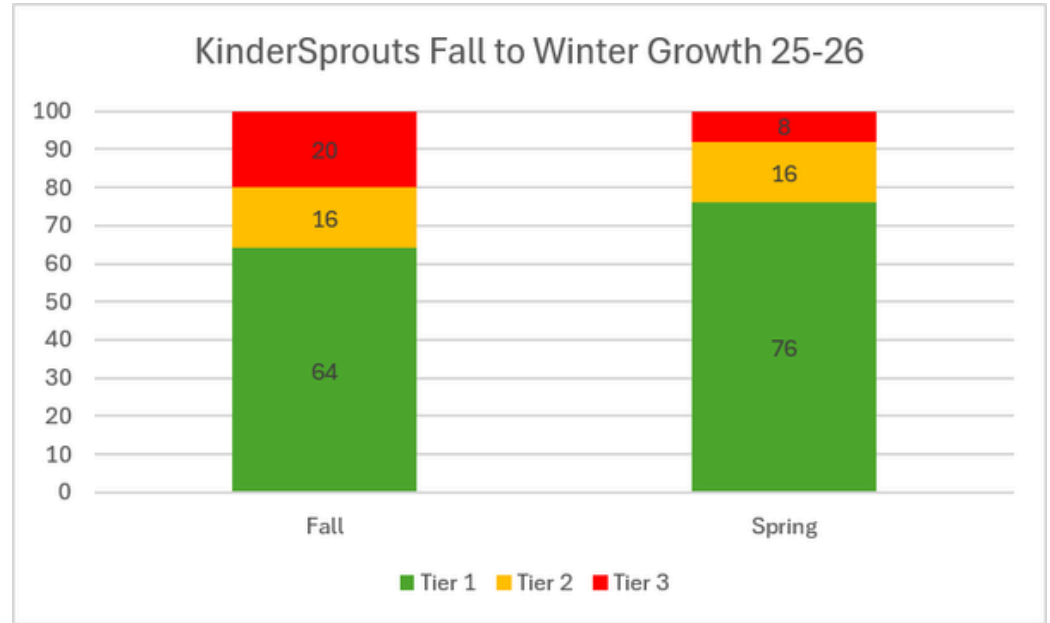


11th Grade

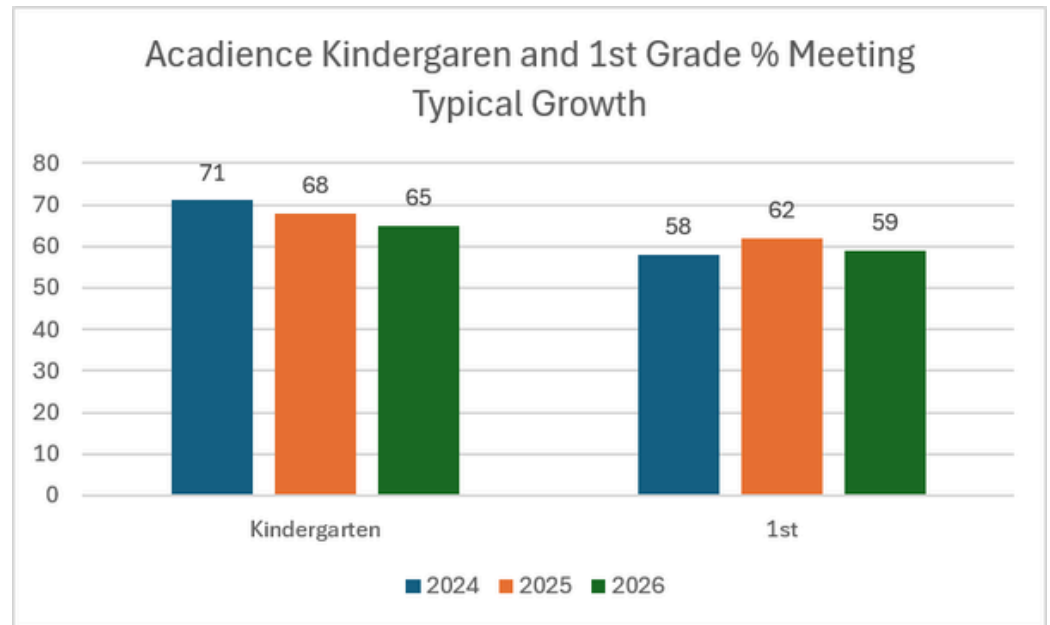


acadience™

SPRING BENCHMARKS ACADIENCE



- 76% of KinderSprouts students no longer qualify for the Early Targeted Intervention (ETI) program.



“My child has absolutely flourished in his learning this year. The whole experience has truly surpassed all expectations. My son is now a confident and enthusiastic learner, which is so important as a foundation to his education for years to come”. -KinderSprout Parent

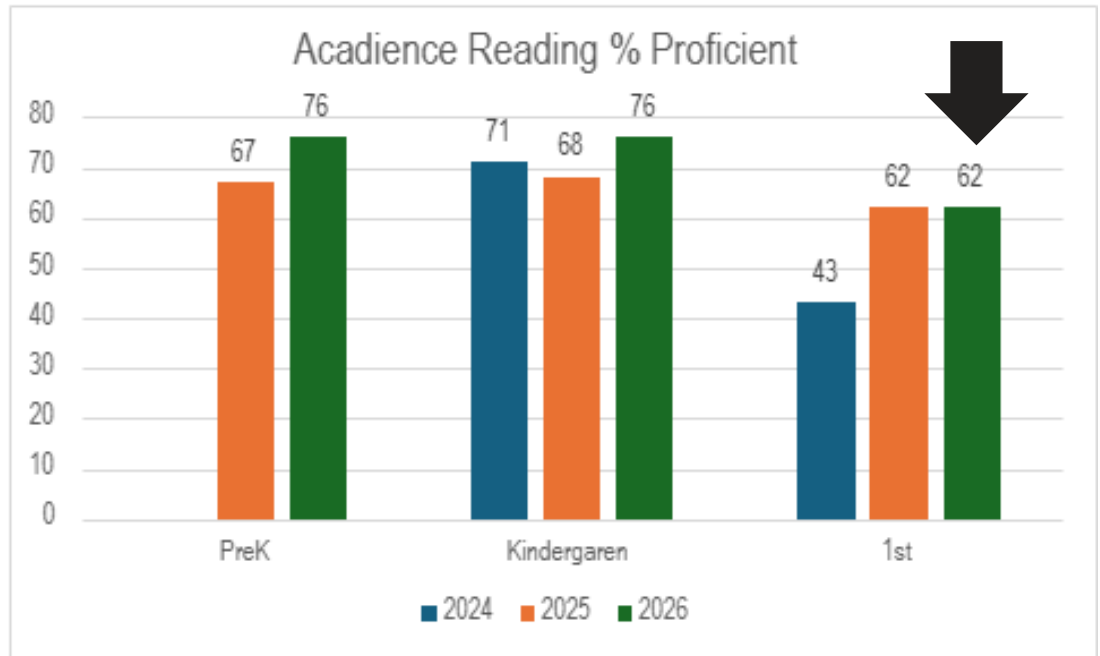
“I am just really grateful he got the extra year at a young age to get slowly introduced into the school routine to be prepared for kindergarten. Watching his progress with all of the fundamentals he learned throughout the year was amazing and made it so worth it” . -KinderSprout Parent



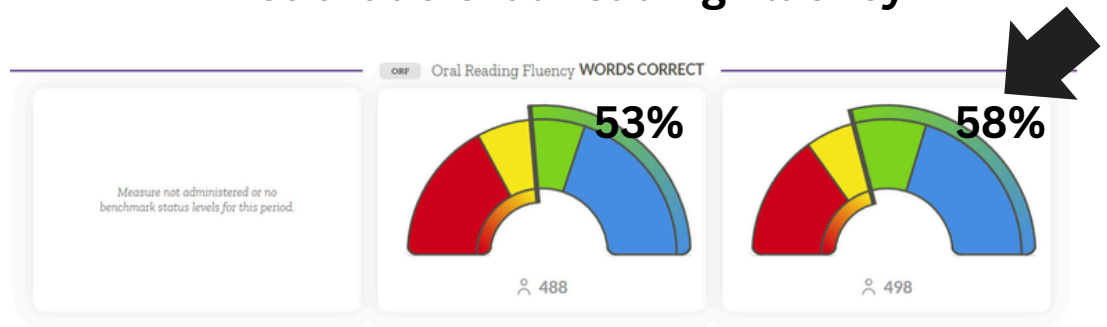
HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goal

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 1: By spring 2026, 70% of Helena Public Schools' first-grade students will score proficient on the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) subtest as evidenced by the Acadience assessment.

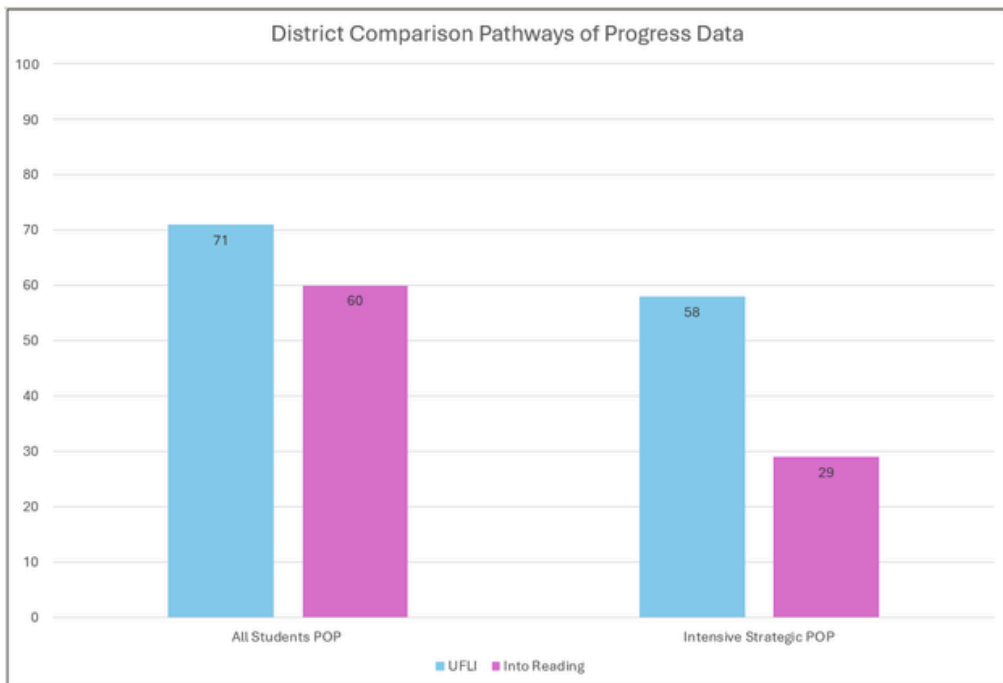
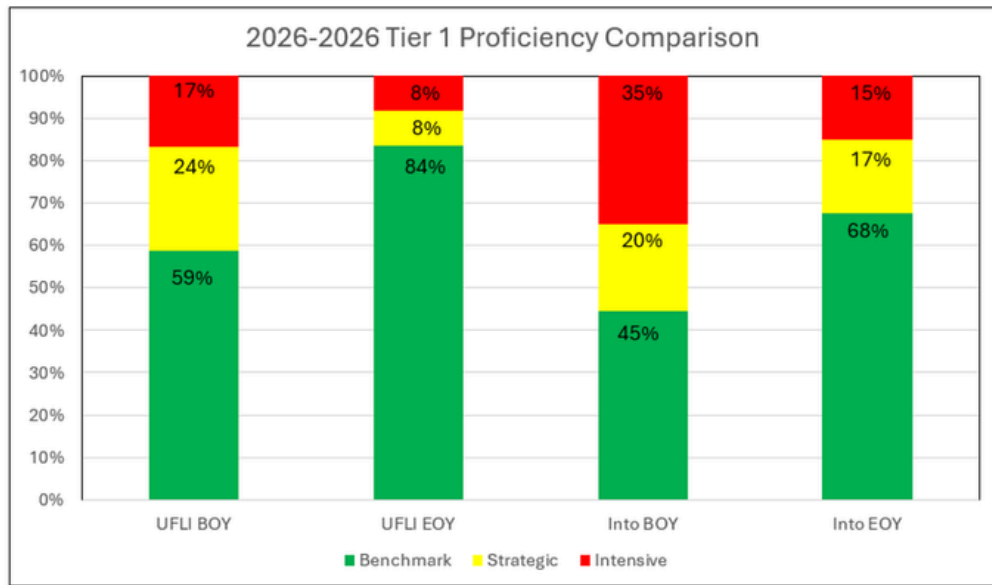


1st Grade Oral Reading Fluency



KINDERGARTEN

Five schools implemented UFLI Tier 1, while four schools used Into Reading Tier 1. One school, transitioned from Into Reading to UFLI mid-year. Not in the chart, this school experienced a 15% increase, with the most significant change occurring after the mid-year switch.



Understanding POP: Pathways of Progress

- POP measures growth within Acadience.
- This shows the percentage of students in the whole school who met average, above average, or well above average progress.
- On the Intensive/strategic side, we only looked at students in both groups who were intensive and strategic at the BOY. They have to make above or well above average progress. This shows the percentage of strategic and intensive kids who made above and well above average progress.

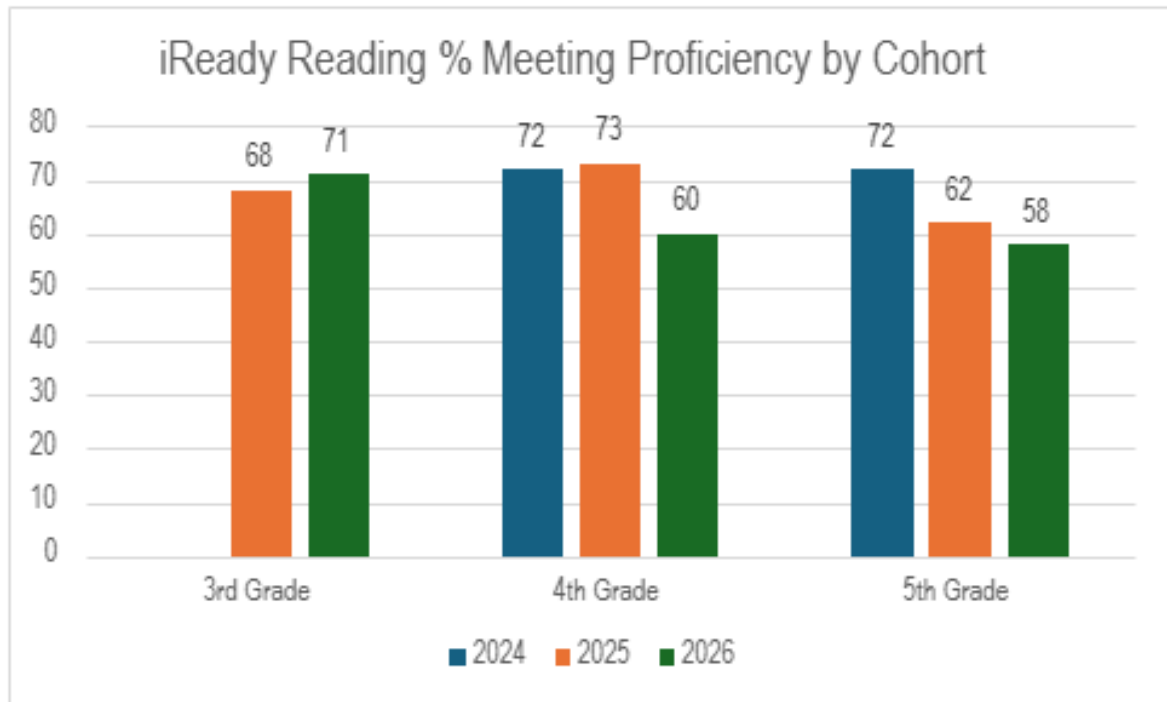
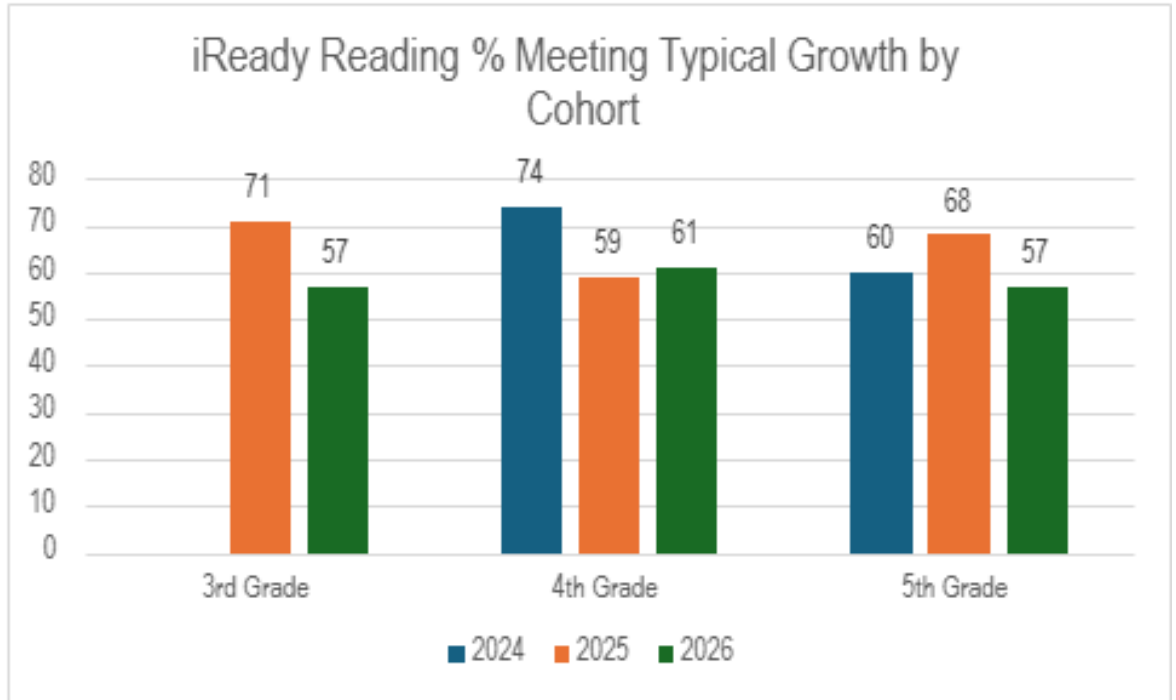
SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 2-5 BY COHORT



HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goal

Goal 2: By spring 2026, an average of 72% of Helena Public Schools third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the i-Ready 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 i-Ready data.



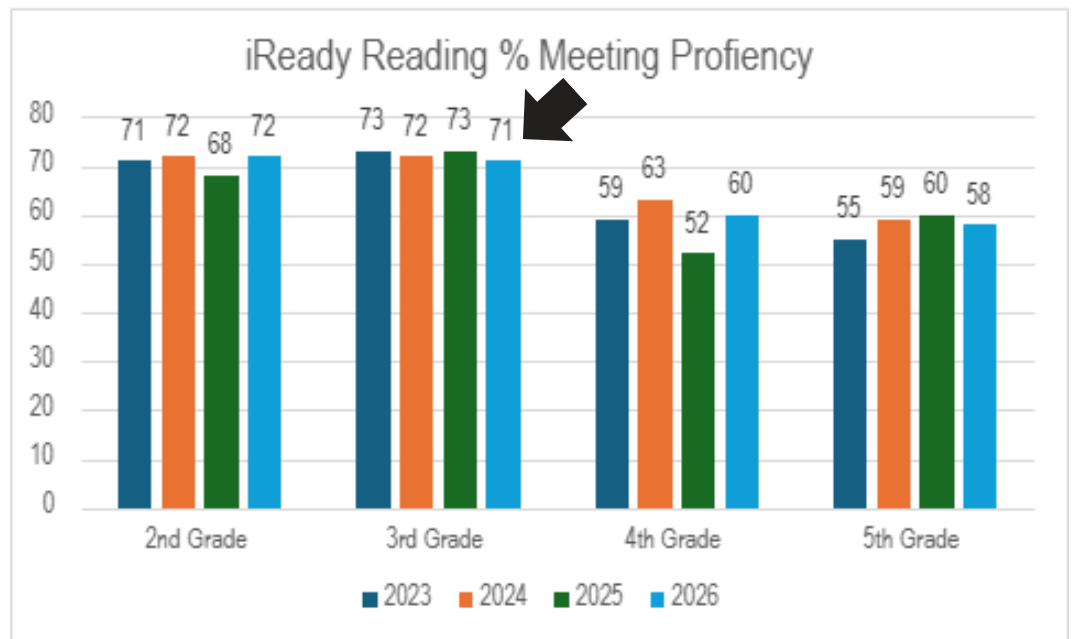
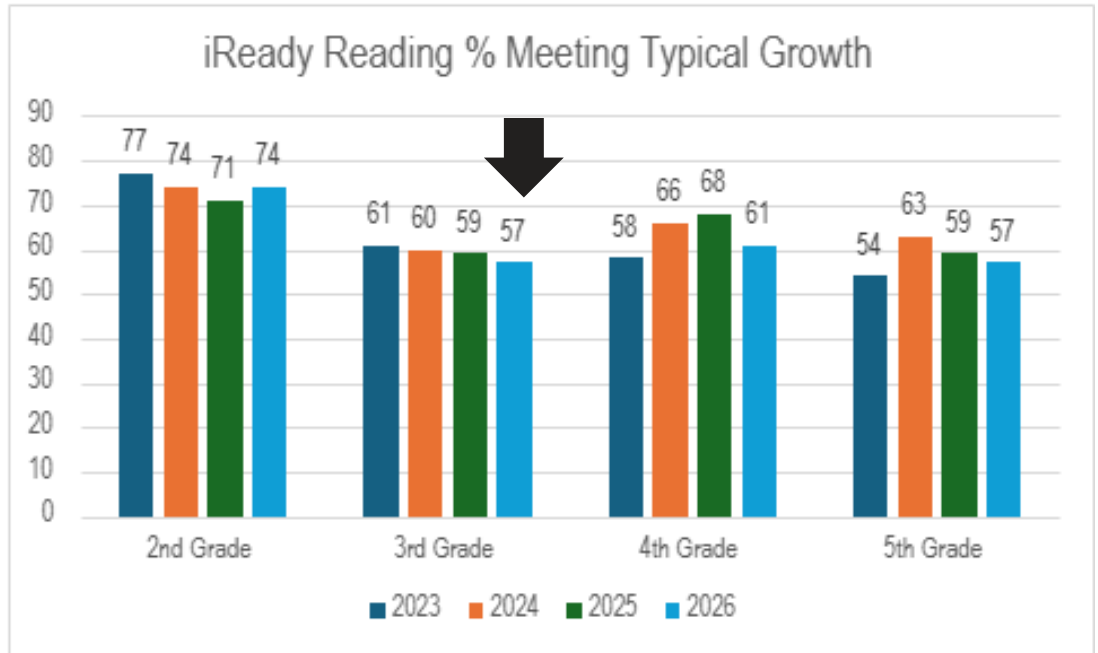
SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 2-5 BY GRADE LEVEL



HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goals

Goal 2: By spring 2026, an average of 72% of Helena Public Schools third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the i-Ready 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 i-Ready data.



Considerations:

- This year, teachers participated in writing training during grade-level meetings.
- The continued implementation of UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute) will be pivotal, as it will transition to Tier 1 for Kindergarten and 1st grade next year.
- A pilot program for Word Origins (UFLI for upper grades) will be introduced for grades 3-5, next year.
- Next year, a Comprehension Task Force will research best practices in comprehension and look into refining instruction and common assessments.

SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 1-5 BY COHORT

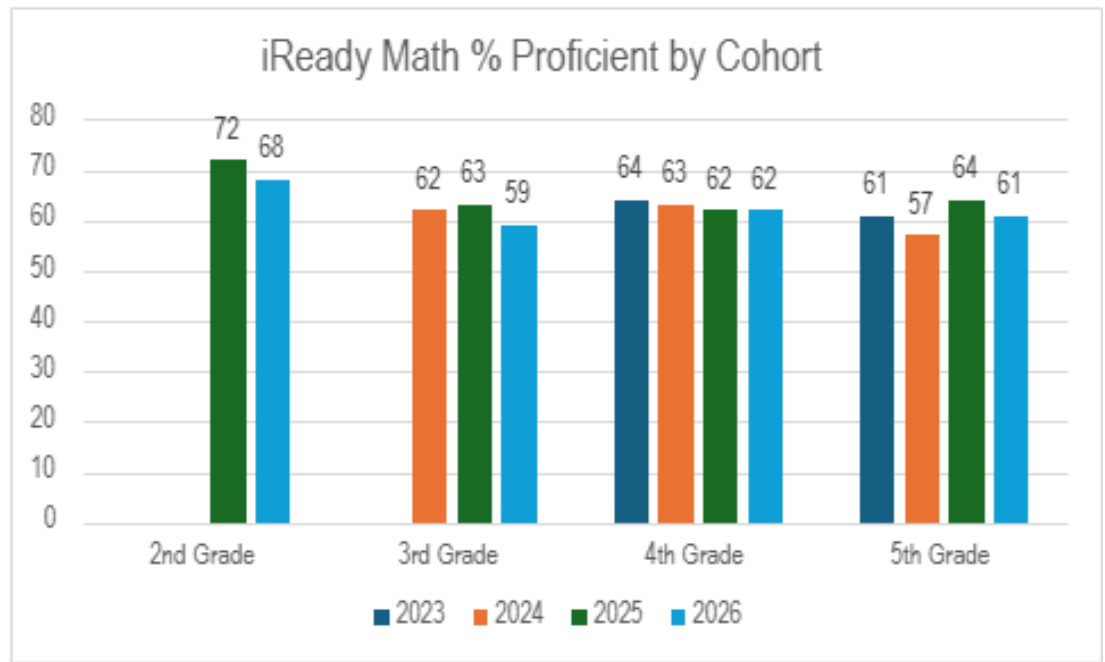
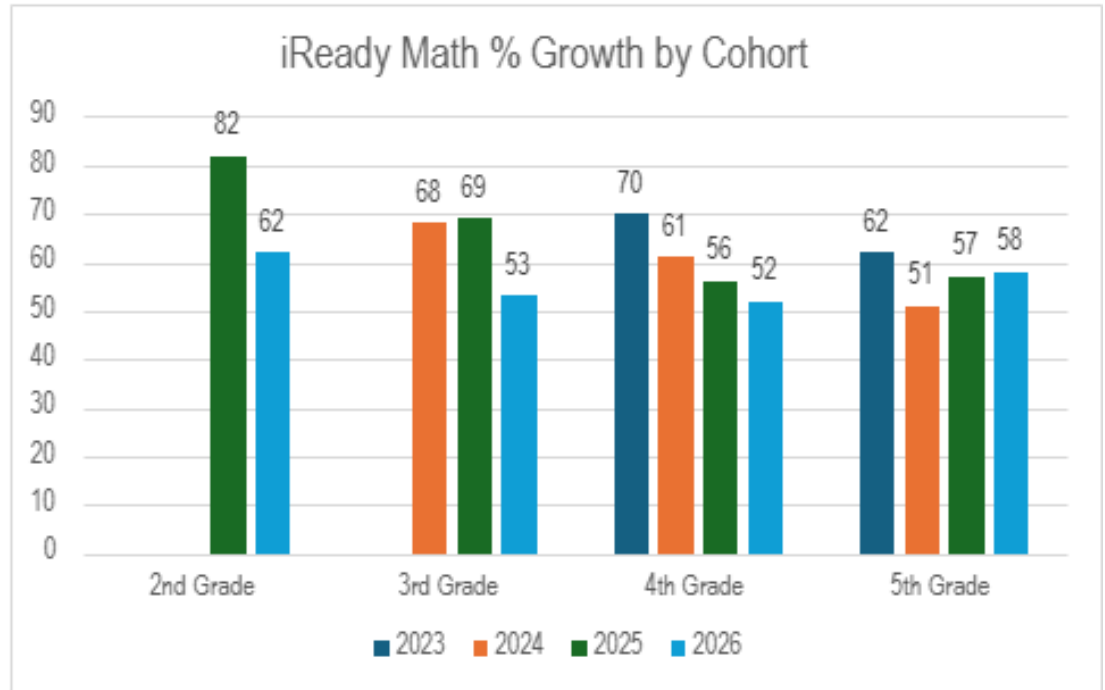
Mathematics



HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goals

Goal 3: By spring 2026, an average of 65% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency in grade-level standards, as evidenced by the i-Ready Math assessment.

Subgoal: By spring 2026, 65% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will meet their *annual typical growth* in math as evidenced by district i-Ready data.



SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 1-5 BY GRADE LEVEL

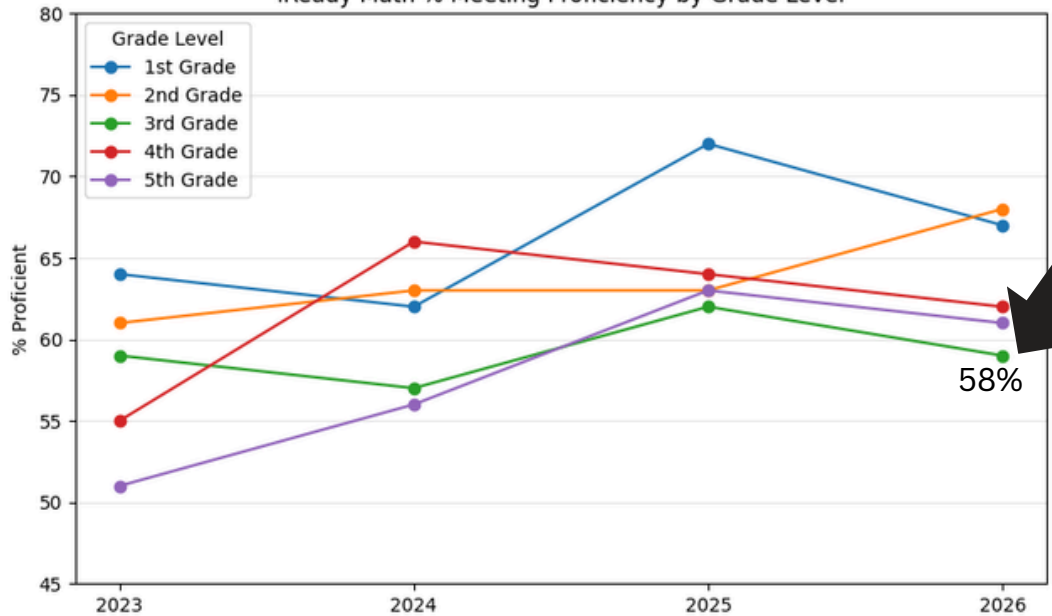


HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goals

Goal 3: By spring 2026, an average of 65% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency in grade-level standards, as evidenced by the i-Ready Math assessment.

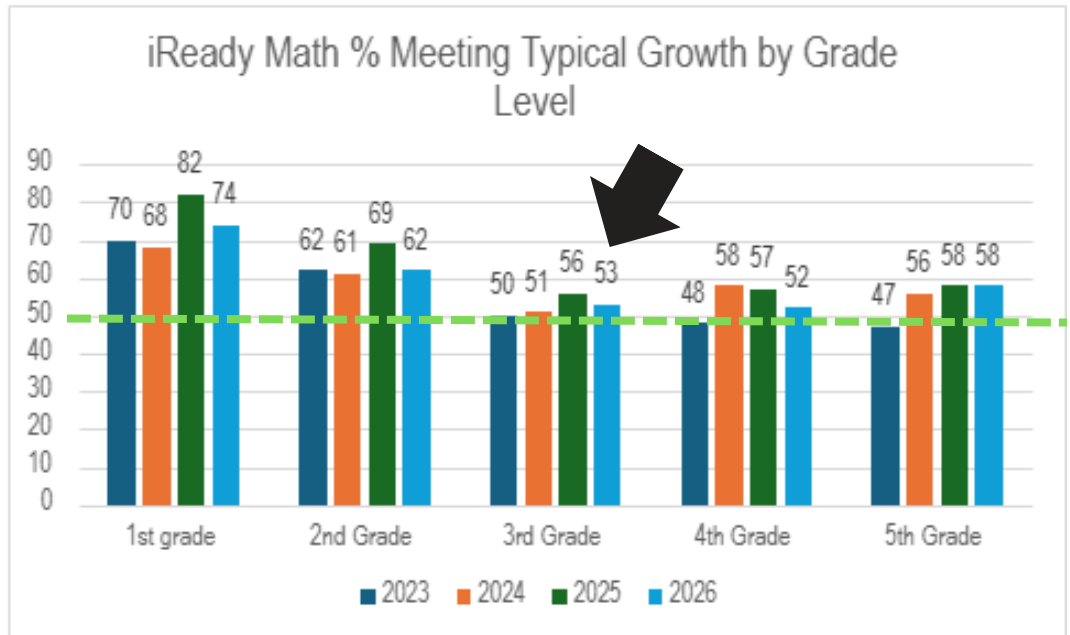
Subgoal: By spring 2026, 65% of Helena Public Schools' third-grade students will meet their *annual typical growth* in math as evidenced by district i-Ready data.

iReady Math % Meeting Proficiency by Grade Level



iReady indicates that a typical growth rate of 50% or more is regarded as the standard for one year's progress within a single year.

iReady Math % Meeting Typical Growth by Grade Level

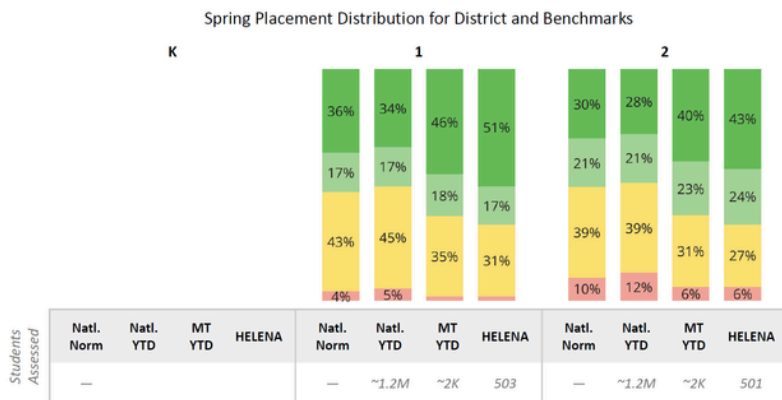


NATIONAL NORMS GRADES 1-5



Mathematics

How Do the District's Placements Compare to the Benchmarks?



Mid or Above Grade Level Early On Grade Level 1 Grade Level Below 2 Grade Levels Below 3+ Grade Levels Below

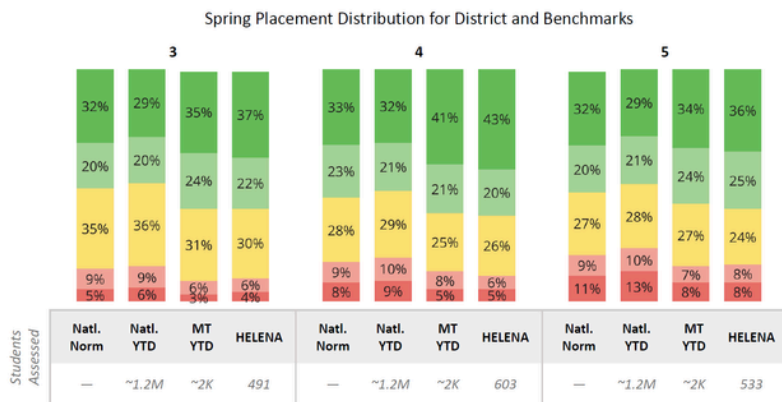
Natl. Norm: i-Ready National Norms Spring 22-23

Natl. YTD: National Year-to-Date Spring 25-26

MT YTD: MT Year-to-Date Spring 25-26

Mathematics

How Do the District's Placements Compare to the Benchmarks?



Mid or Above Grade Level Early On Grade Level 1 Grade Level Below 2 Grade Levels Below 3+ Grade Levels Below

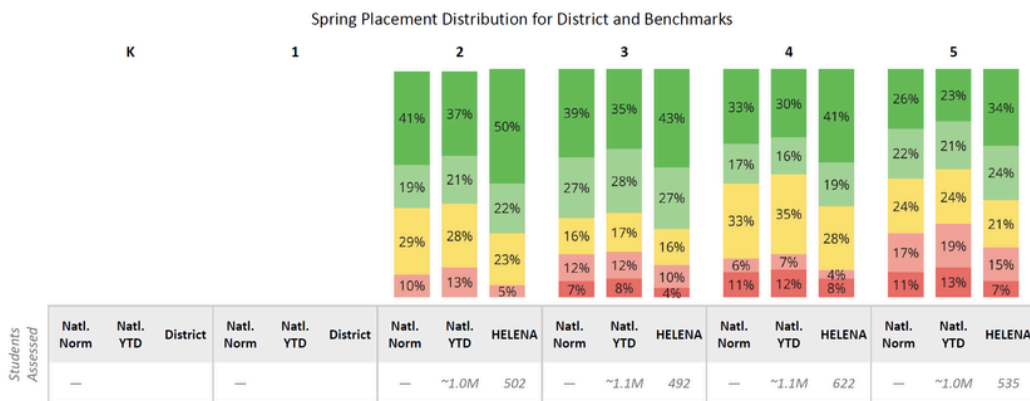
Natl. Norm: i-Ready National Norms Spring 22-23

Natl. YTD: National Year-to-Date Spring 25-26

MT YTD: MT Year-to-Date Spring 25-26

Reading

How Do the District's Placements Compare to the Benchmarks?



Mid or Above Grade Level Early On Grade Level 1 Grade Level Below 2 Grade Levels Below 3+ Grade Levels Below

Natl. Norm: i-Ready National Norms Spring 22-23

Natl. YTD: National Year-to-Date Spring 25-26

All grade levels are above the state and national norms in both mathematics and reading.

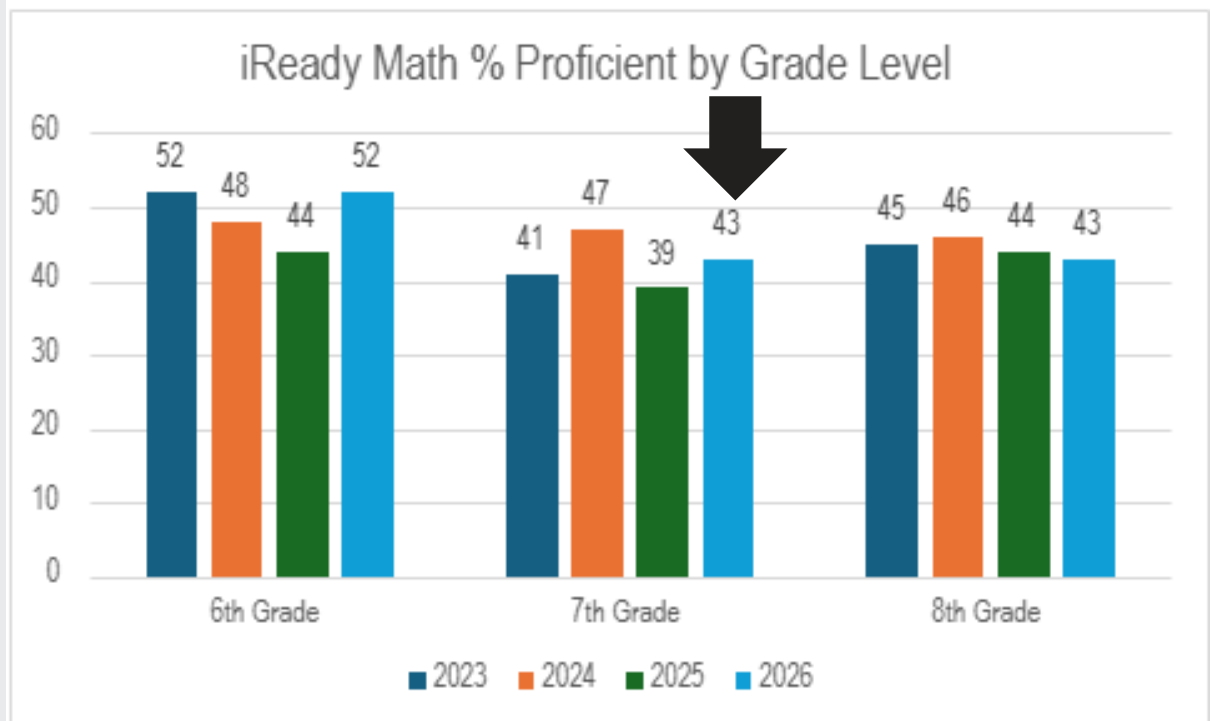
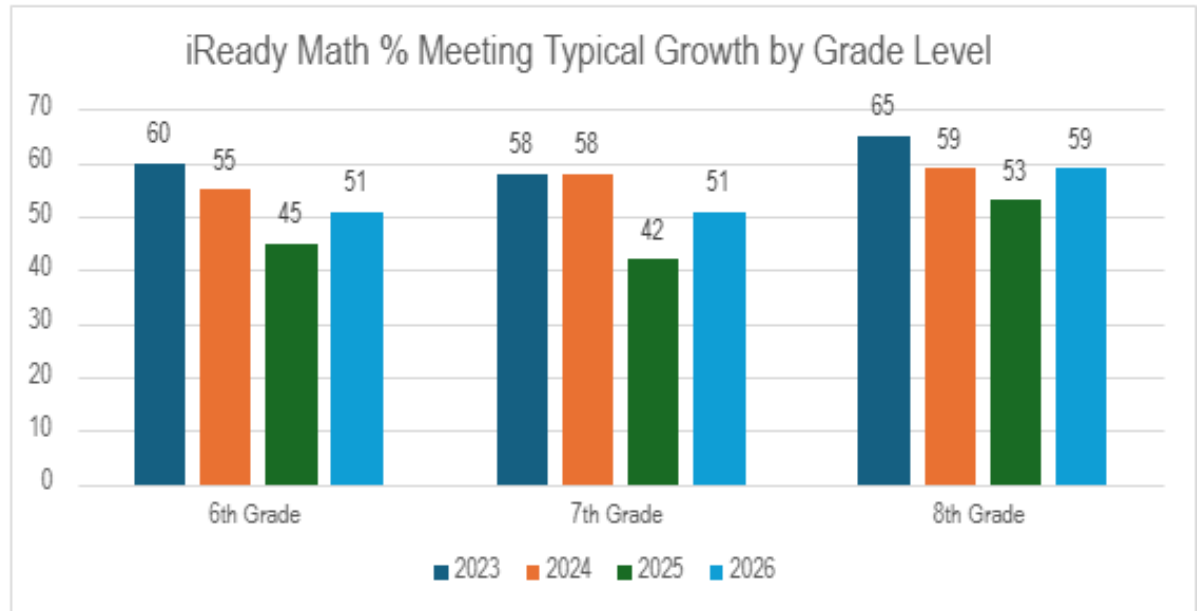
SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 6-8 BY GRADE LEVEL

11
Mathematics
Middle



HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goals

Goal 5: 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 i-Ready Math assessment.



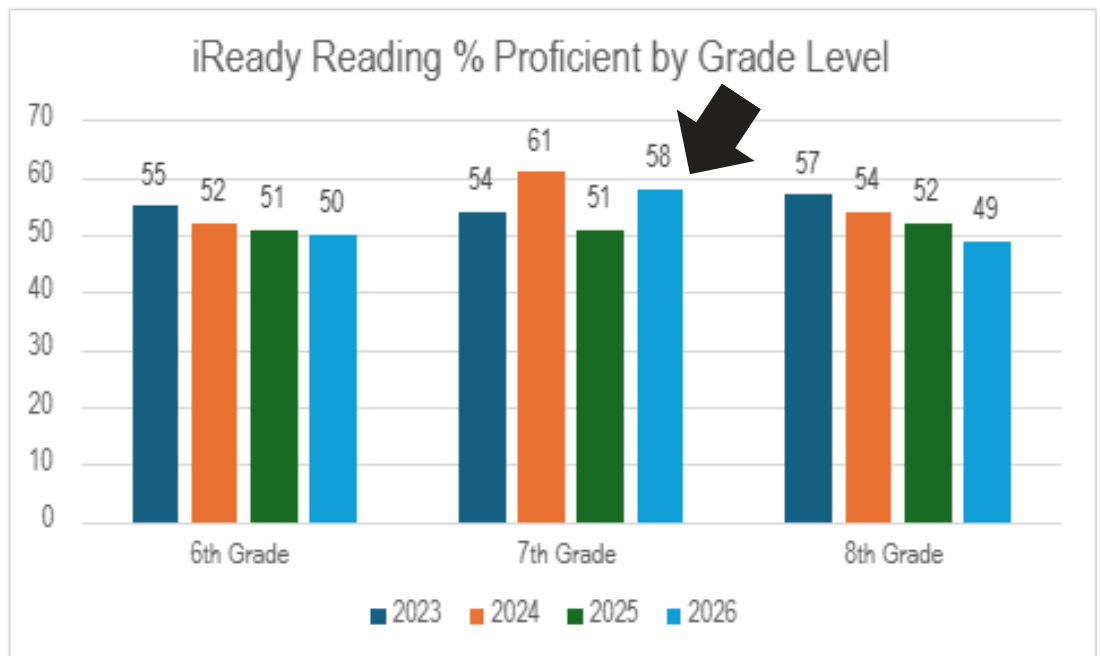
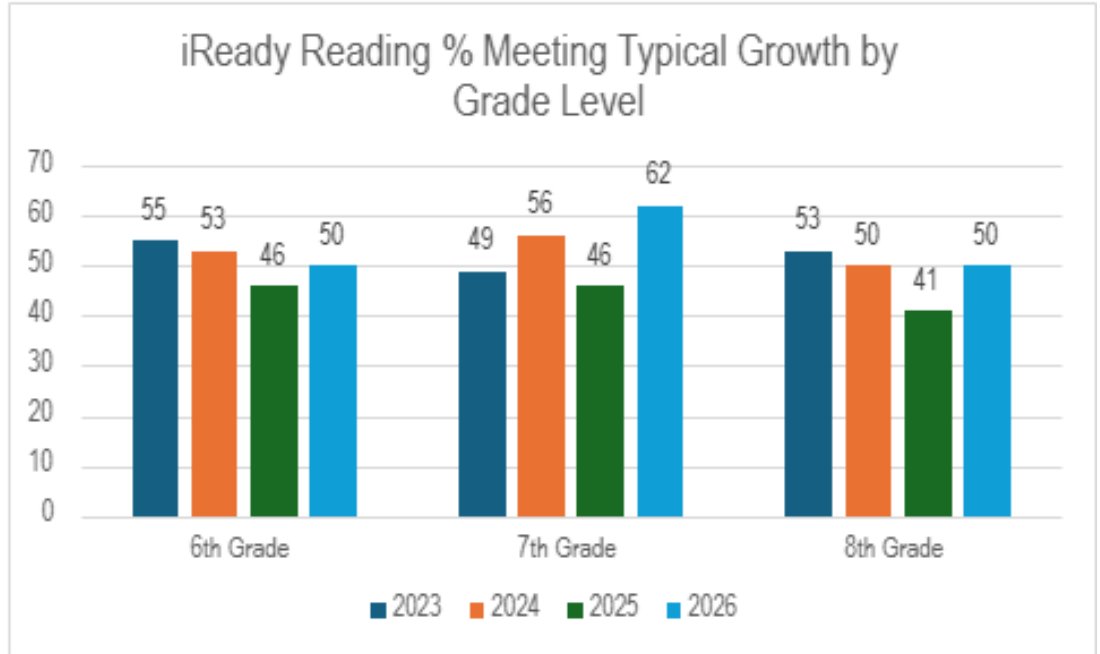
Pilot Program for 2026-2027: HQIM Math with Integrated Professional Development.

SPRING EOY BENCHMARKS GRADES 6-8 BY BY GRADE LEVEL



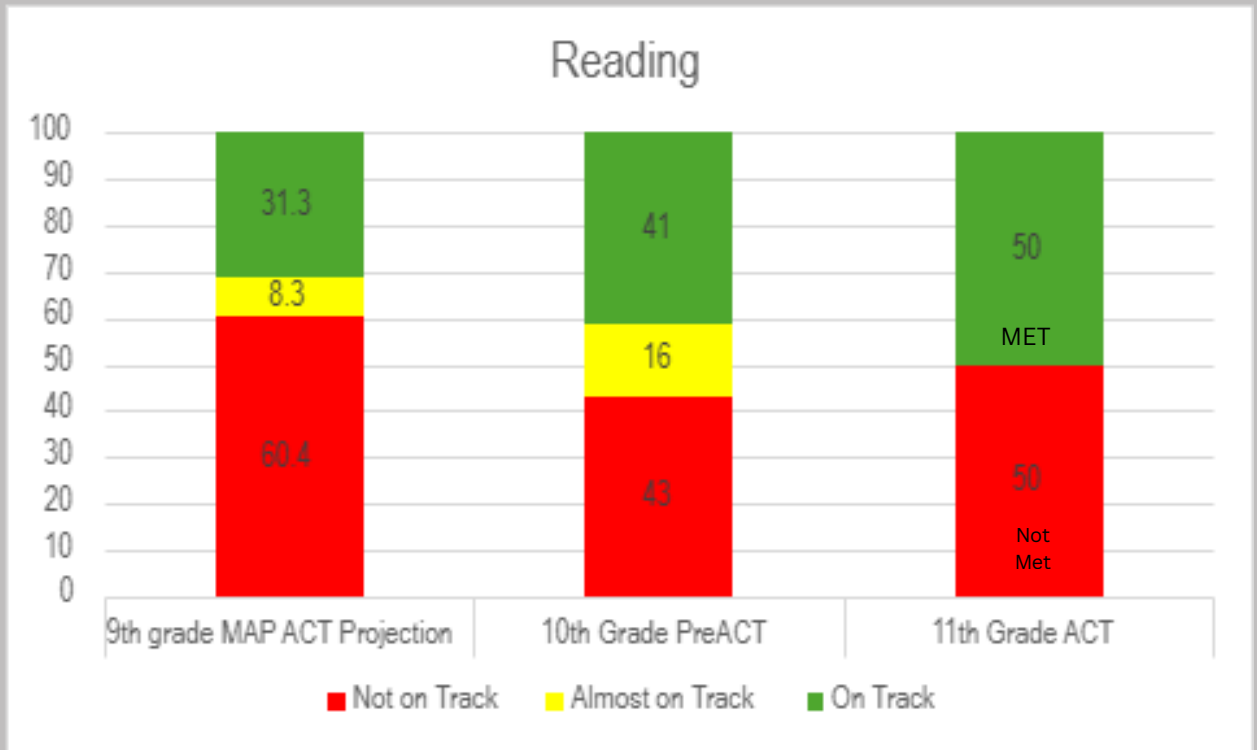
HPS 2025-2026 Academic Goals

Goal 4: By spring 2026, an average of 65% of Helena Public Schools seventh-grade students will score on or above grade level in reading, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the i-Ready Reading assessment.



9TH GRADE MAP-->10TH GRADE PRACT-->11TH GRADE ACT

SPRING 2026 BY GRADE LEVEL

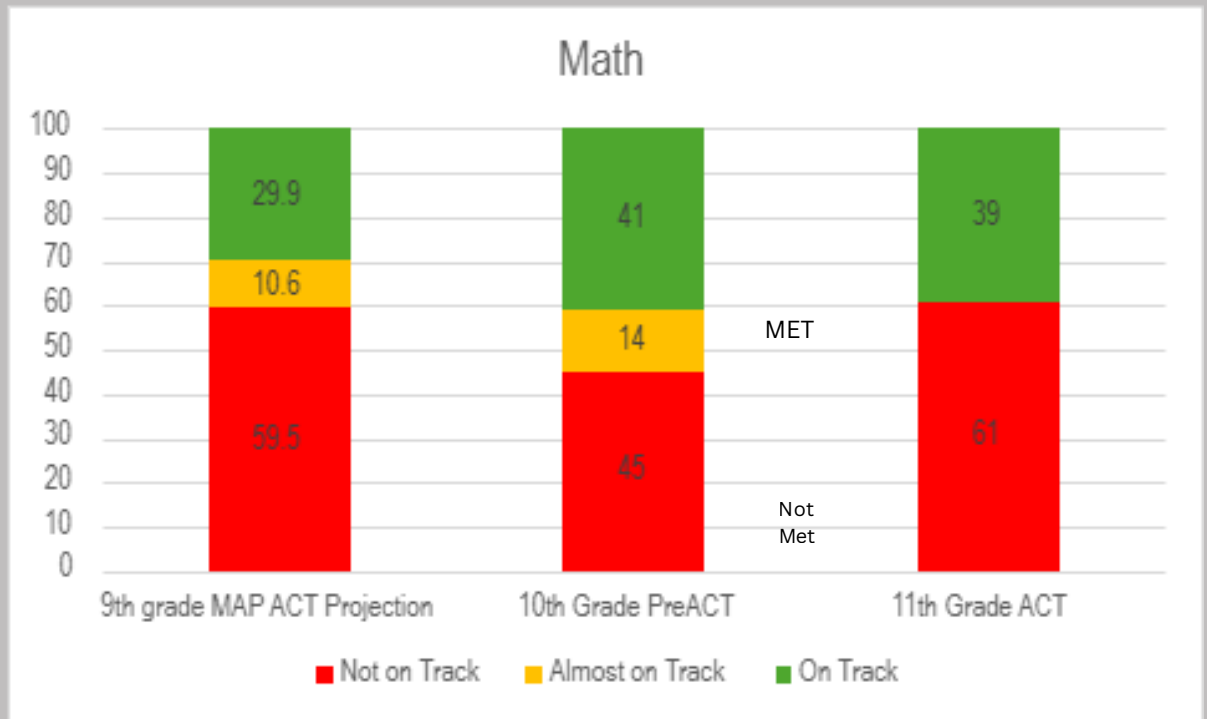


- NWEA MAP, the new benchmark for 9th graders correlates their RIT score to their ACT Score. While most linking studies correlate a RIT score to another test that the student will take later in the same year, this linking study correlates the student’s RIT score to the ACT test when they take it later in high school.
 - Not On Track: Based on the student’s current RIT score, they are likely to score lower than a 22 when they take the ACT later in high school. This student may not be on track for college readiness.
 - On Track 22: Based on the student’s current RIT score, they are likely to score between 22 and 24 when they take the ACT later in high school. This student may be on track for college readiness.
 - On Track 24: Based on the student’s current RIT score, they are likely to score a 24 for higher when they take the ACT later in high school. This student is likely to be on track for college readiness.

THIS DATA HAS BEEN SOURCED FROM ACT SUCCESS, WHICH DELIVERS RAW SCORES DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM ACT. THESE FIGURES REFLECT THE SCORES THAT STUDENTS VIEW IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL REPORTS, RATHER THAN THE STATE DATA THAT INCORPORATES ZEROS FROM STUDENTS WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ASSESSMENT.

10TH GRADE PRACT-->11TH GRADE ACT

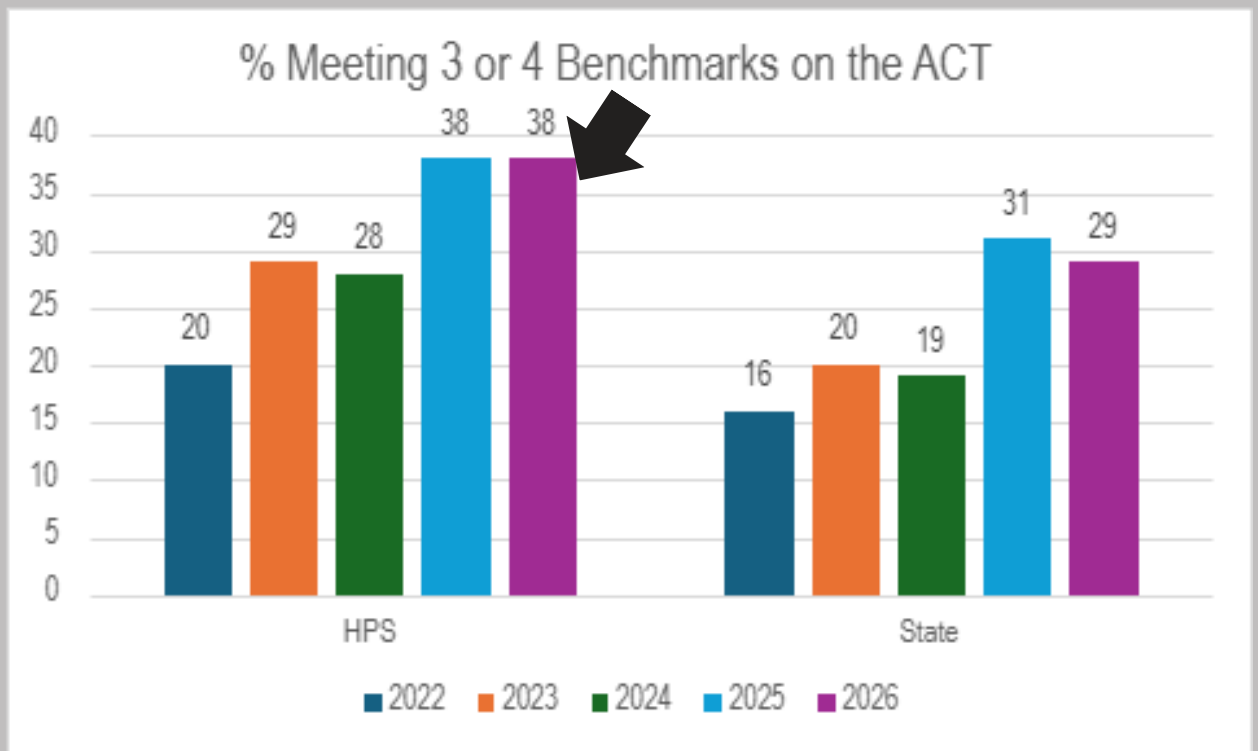
SPRING 2026 BY GRADE LEVEL



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ACT-COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

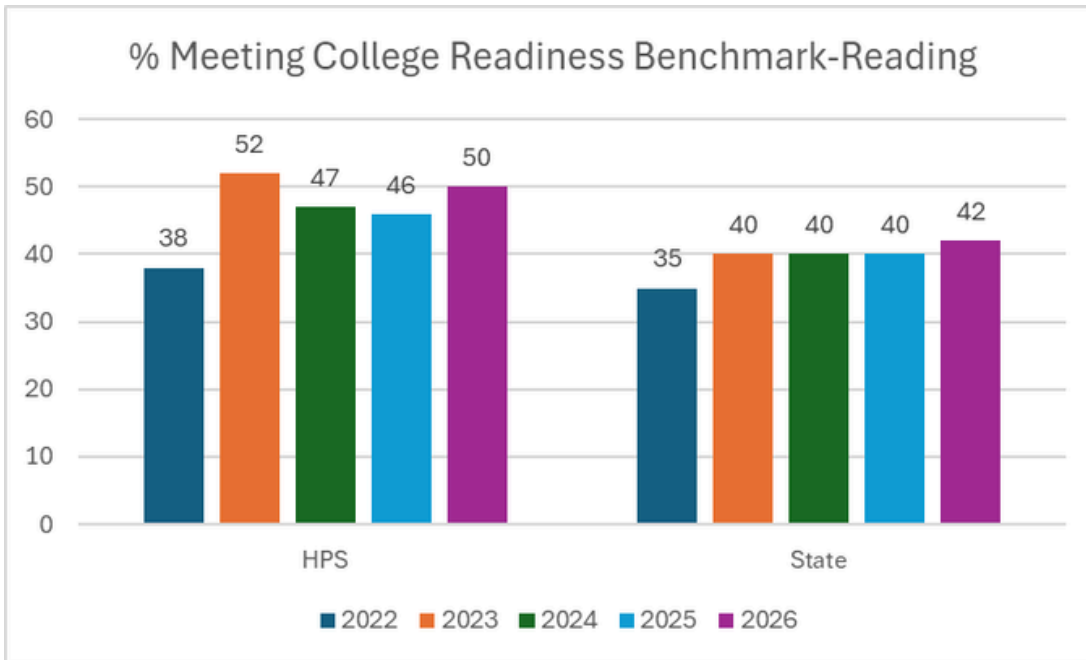
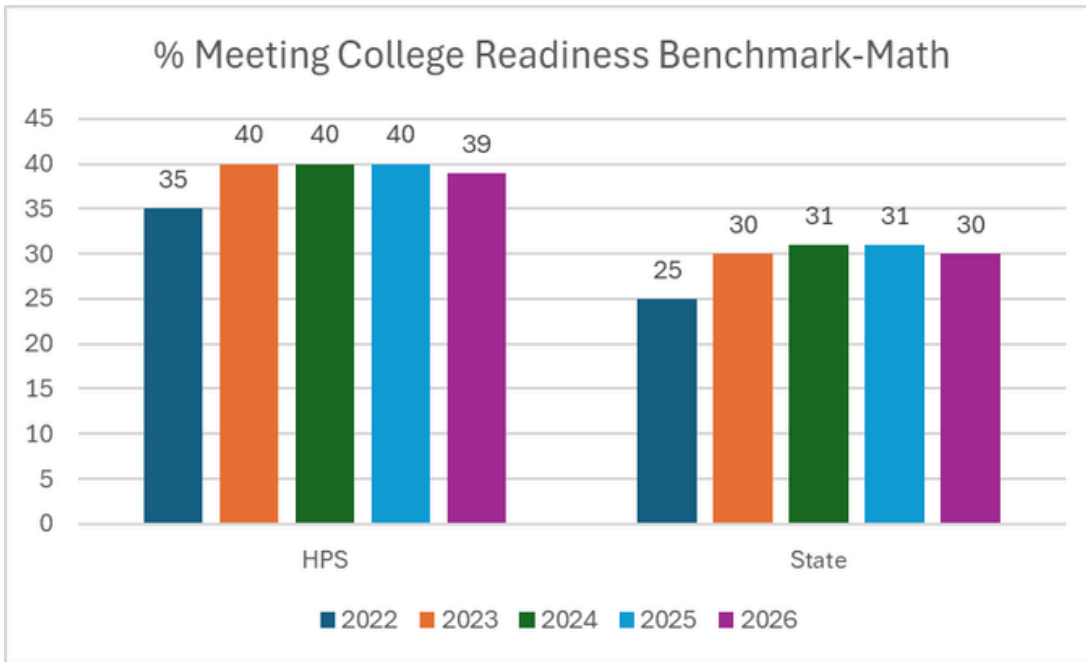
“THIRTY PERCENT OF 2024 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES MET THREE OR FOUR OF ACT’S COLLEGE READINESS BENCHMARKS IN ENGLISH, MATH, READING, AND SCIENCE...ACT DATA FROM PRIOR GRADUATING CLASSES SHOWS THAT 84% OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE MET ALL FOUR BENCHMARKS GRADUATE WITH POSTSECONDARY DEGREES WITHIN SIX YEARS” (ACT, 2024).



Before the 25-26 reporting period, the ACT indicated a percentage of students meeting all four benchmarks. Currently, they report the percentage that meeting three or four of these benchmarks.

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ACT-COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS



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ACT-COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

