

Mississippi Reading Progress: Miracle or Staying the Course?

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Mississippi Early Literacy Policies Result in Gains in Reading and Math

SREB Legislative Advisory Council

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Mississippi State Superintendent of Education (2013-2022)

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Laying the Foundation for Success

- **Reorganized state education department** around Strategic Plan goals
- Adopted **rigorous, college- and career-ready standards for English Language Arts and Math**
- Developed **assessments aligned to new standards** and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Implemented **strong accountability system** for schools and districts and improved data quality and transparency
- **Built teacher and leader capacity** through major professional development initiative to ensure students master higher standards

Two New Laws Enacted in 2013 to Advance Early Literacy

Early Learning Collaborative Act

- Establishes first state-funded pre-K program
- \$3 million first two years; increased to \$16 million annually by 2021, with additional \$20 million state-funded support in 2022

Literacy-Based Promotion Act

- Makes reading instruction a major focus K-3
- \$9.5 million in 2014; \$15 million annually thereafter

Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013: Key Components

- Provides funding to local communities to establish or expand high-quality early childhood education programs called Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCs)
- ELCs include a lead partner (public school or nonprofit group) and collaborators including school districts, Head Start sites, childcare centers and nonprofit organizations
- Enables state education department to establish first Office of Early Childhood Education
- Professional development offered, for free, to all early childhood providers in public and private settings
- Family engagement strategies help programs increase parent involvement

Additional Funding Provides Early Childhood Coaching Support

Role of Early Childhood Coach

- Observe classroom and teacher practices
- Set goals and action steps for quality implementation plan
- Help teachers identify strengths, areas for growth, and steps to improve instruction
- Provide supportive and constructive feedback
- Model developmentally appropriate practices supported with early learning standards and guidelines
- Share research- and evidence-based knowledge and practices
- Provide resources and support strategies for teachers

Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act of 2013

- Makes reading instruction a **major focus** K-3
- Takes a **comprehensive approach** to building the capacity of **teachers and school leaders** to **effectively teach reading** and implement an ongoing **system to monitor student progress**
- Requires 3rd grade students to **pass a reading to test to qualify for promotion** to 4th grade (unless they qualify for a good cause exemption)

Key Components of Mississippi's Literacy Law

- **Trains educators statewide** to be more effective at teaching the science of reading (teachers trained using Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling/LETRS)
- **Deploys literacy coaches** to lowest-performing schools to support teachers
- **Adds K-3 monitoring and assessment system**, including 3rd grade reading test for students to qualify for 4th grade promotion
- **Requires schools to engage parents** and communicate with them regularly
- **Enables state education agency to establish** first Office of Elementary Education and Reading

Key Strategies of Mississippi's Literacy Law

- **State education agency (SEA) hired and deployed Literacy Coaches**
- **SEA trained pre-K through grade 3 teachers, special education teachers through grade 8, and elementary principals** on reading instruction based on the science of reading (training also offered to higher education faculty)
- **Law focused on prevention and intervention, as well as retention**
- **Parent meetings** held statewide to provide information about the law and how families can help children at home

Laws & Amendments to Enhance Literacy-Based Promotion Act

- **Teacher Certification:** 2016 law requires elementary education candidates to pass “a rigorous test of scientifically research-based reading instruction and intervention” to ensure they know effective practices for teaching reading (Foundations of Reading Assessment)
- **Individual Reading Plan:** 2016 amendment requires educators to create Individual Reading Plans for students to improve reading
- **Dyslexia:** Requires districts to conduct four hours of awareness training for dyslexia and other related disorders to all licensed educators and paraprofessionals responsible for instruction

2016 Amendment Set Higher Expectations for Grade 3 Reading

- Original 2013 law required students to score above the **lowest achievement level**
- 2016 amendment **raised the passing score** on the 3rd grade reading test starting in the 2018-19 school year
- Schools had **three school years to get students ready** for the higher expectation
- Students now required to score **above the lowest two achievement levels**, which shows they are approaching proficiency (test has five levels; level 3 is passing, level 4 is proficient)

Educator Resource: State Literacy Guide for Birth through Grade 12

How to Build Strong Readers

strongreadersms.com/GUIDE

- **Provides a clear vision and comprehensive guide** for educators to implement effective, evidence-based literacy instruction throughout the state
- **Promotes strong language and literacy acquisition** and supports literacy reform efforts across the educational continuum in districts, schools, and communities
- **Supports effective implementation of literacy instruction** birth through grade 12 that provides measurable differences in literacy achievement statewide



Family Resource: Strong Readers Strong Leaders Website

StrongReadersMS.com

Website developed to help families assist children with building their reading skills. The site provides activities, resources and information for children from birth through grade 5 to become strong readers.



Math Reform Efforts

- Aligned new math content standards **to NAEP and ACT math** framework
- Added **Transition to Algebra course in middle school** and **SREB Math Ready in high school** to support students in need of additional intervention (provided teachers with intense training, professional development and resources to implement courses)
- Provided regional **trainings for teachers, administrators and math specialist** centered on **focus, coherence, progression and rigor of standards**

Math Coaches

- State funds support **one full-time math coach director** and **two regional math coach coordinators**
- External providers supply math coaches
 - Teaching Lab **math coaches served 35 schools in 2021-22**
 - Catapult Learning **math coaches currently serving 75 schools**
(4-year contract with option to renew for year 5)

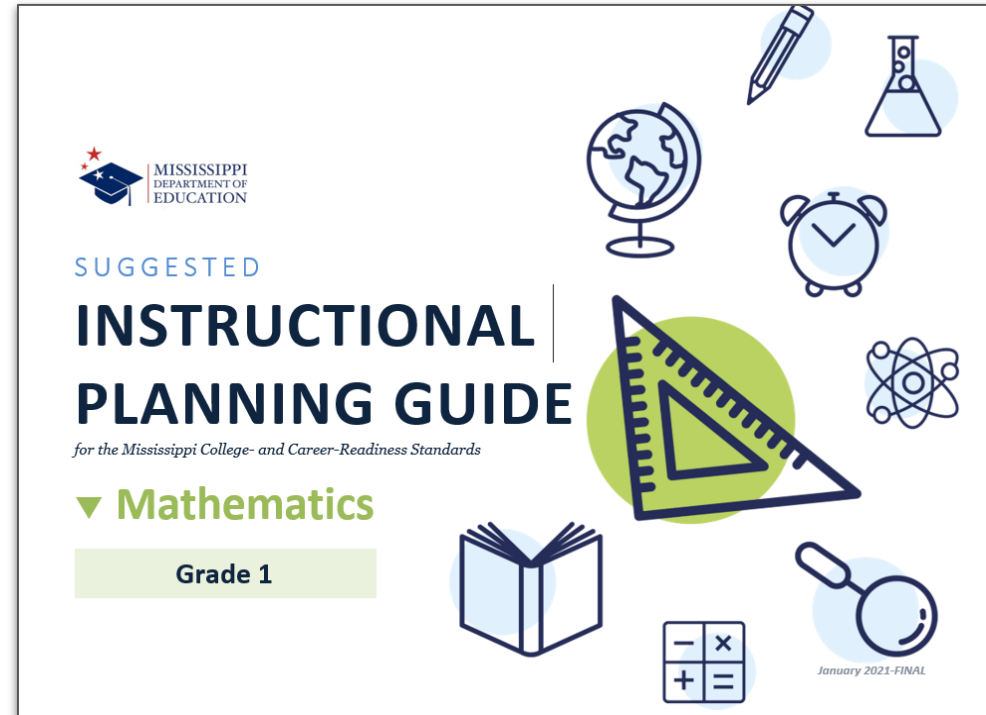
Educator Resources for Math

- Developed and published the **Mississippi High-Quality Instructional Materials Mathematics Review Rubric**
- **Prioritized math** for the state's High-Quality Instructional Materials initiative and website, msinstructionalmaterials.org



Educator Resources for Math

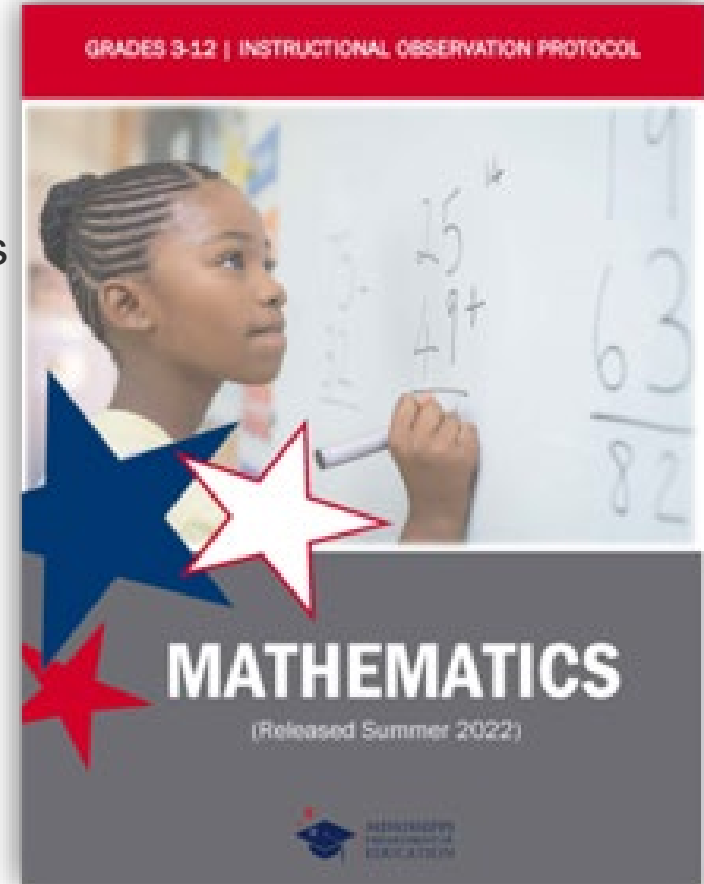
- Instructional Planning Guides for Mathematics K-12
- Exemplar Lesson Plans (funded through with W.K. Kellogg grant)
- Scaffolding Document
- Mississippi Math Manipulative Manual Loan Out Program



Administrator Resource for Math

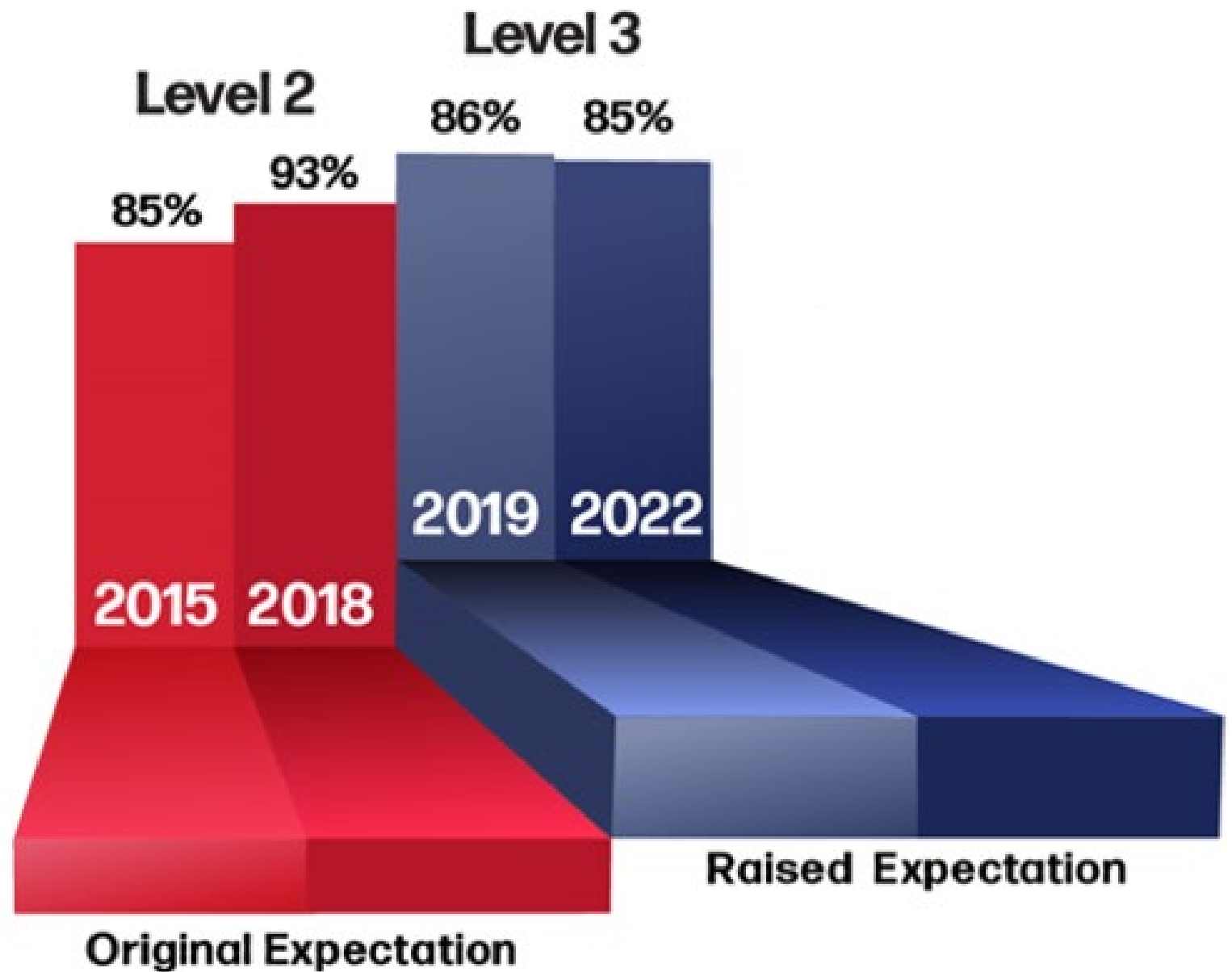
Mathematics Instructional Observation Protocol

Provides instructional leadership teams with common, research-based, and content-specific criteria when conducting instructional observations in grades 3-12 mathematics classrooms

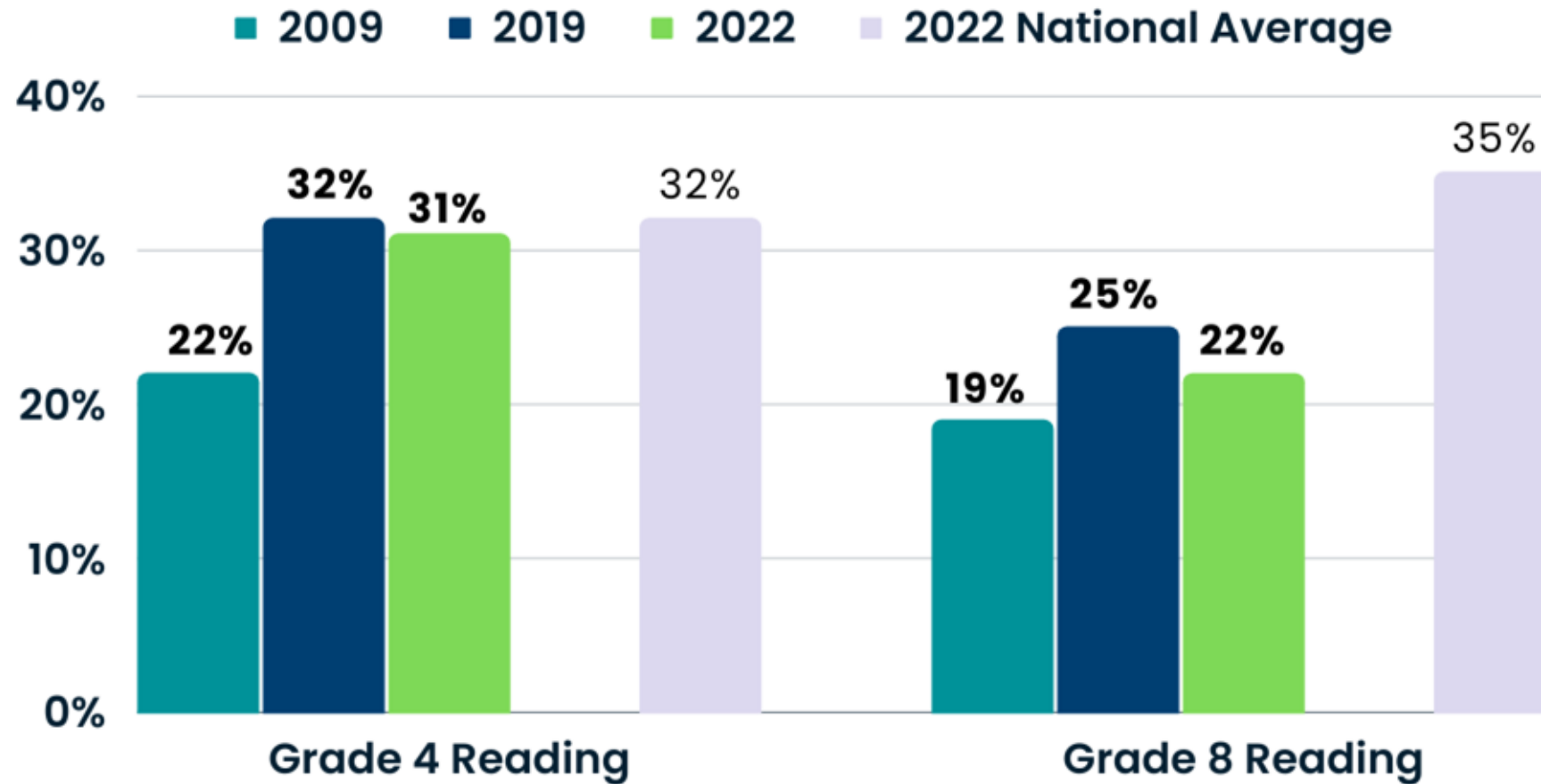


3rd Grade Reading Achievement

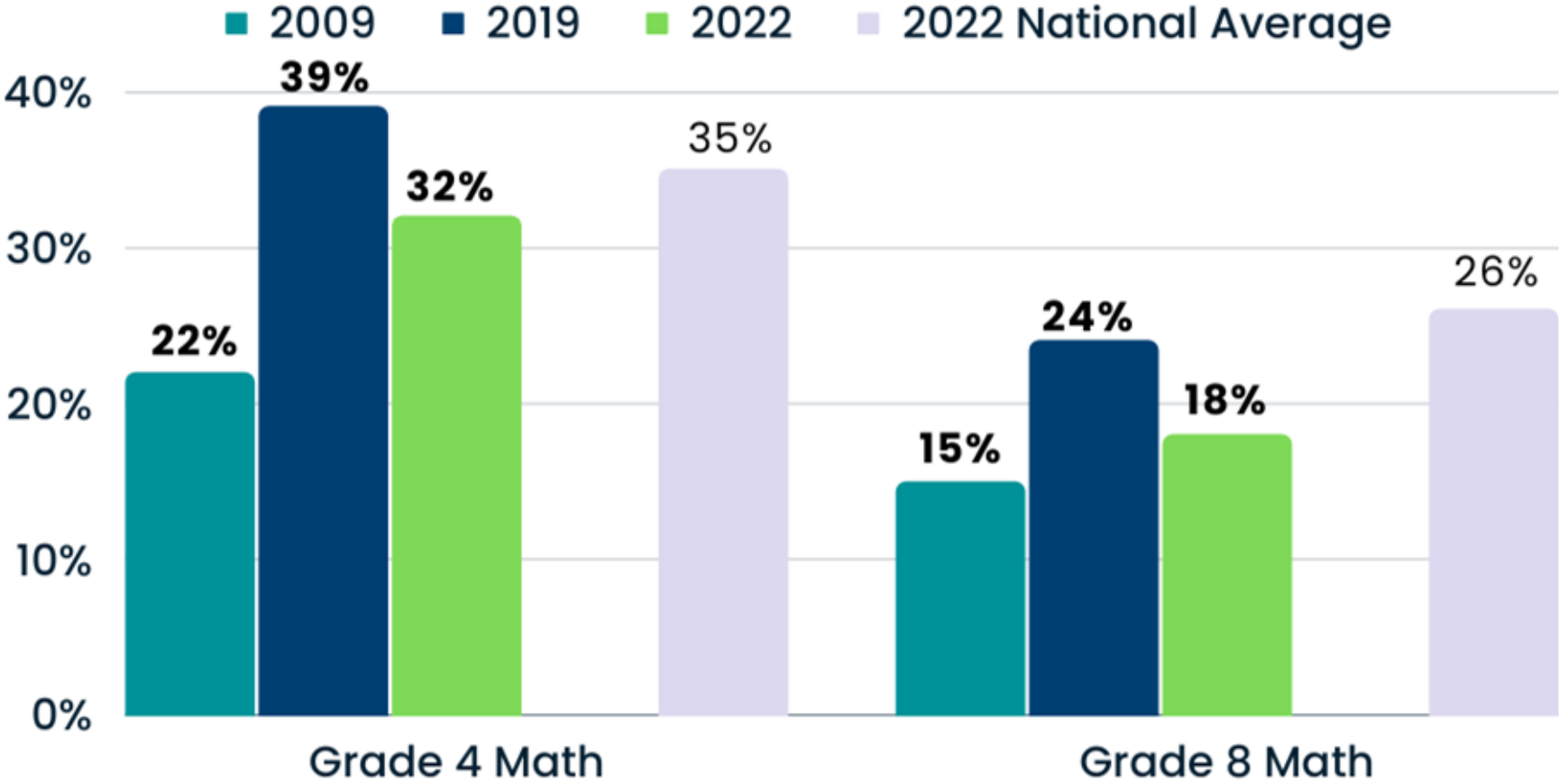
Final Pass Rate



MISSISSIPPI READING NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

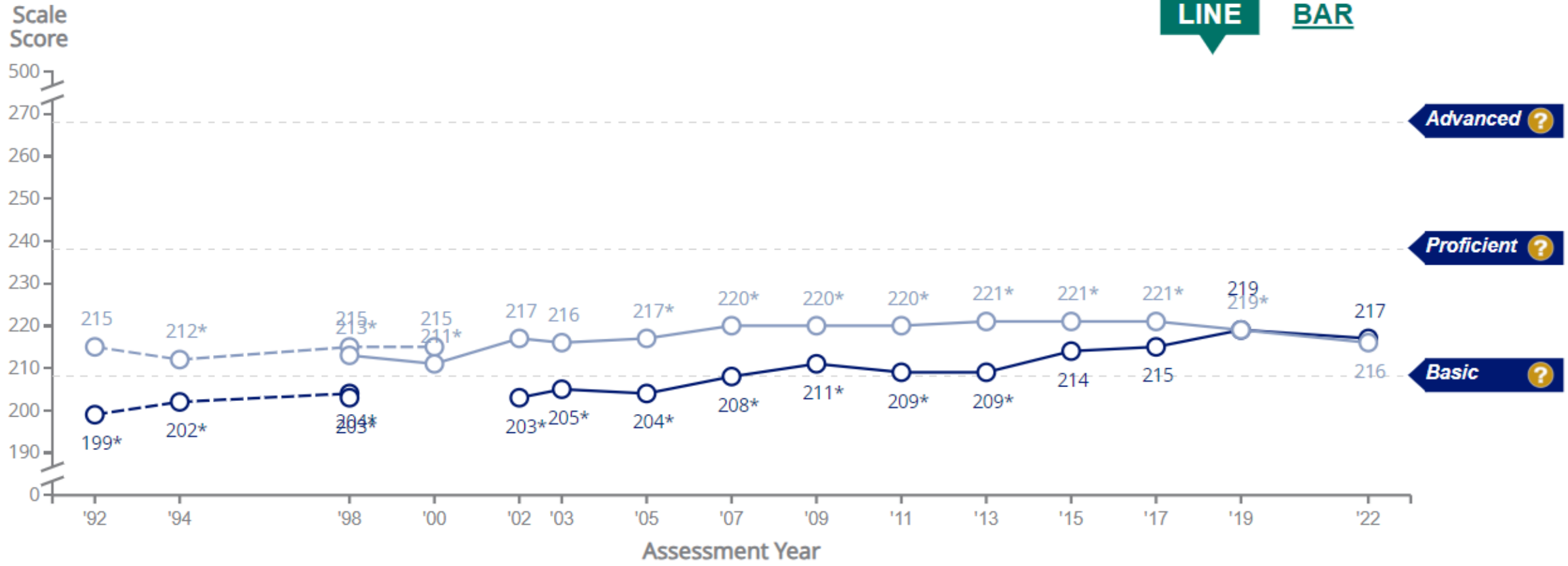


MISSISSIPPI MATH NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)



GRADE 4 | READING

Average scale scores for grade 4 reading, by All students [TOTAL] and jurisdiction: 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2022



Mississippi



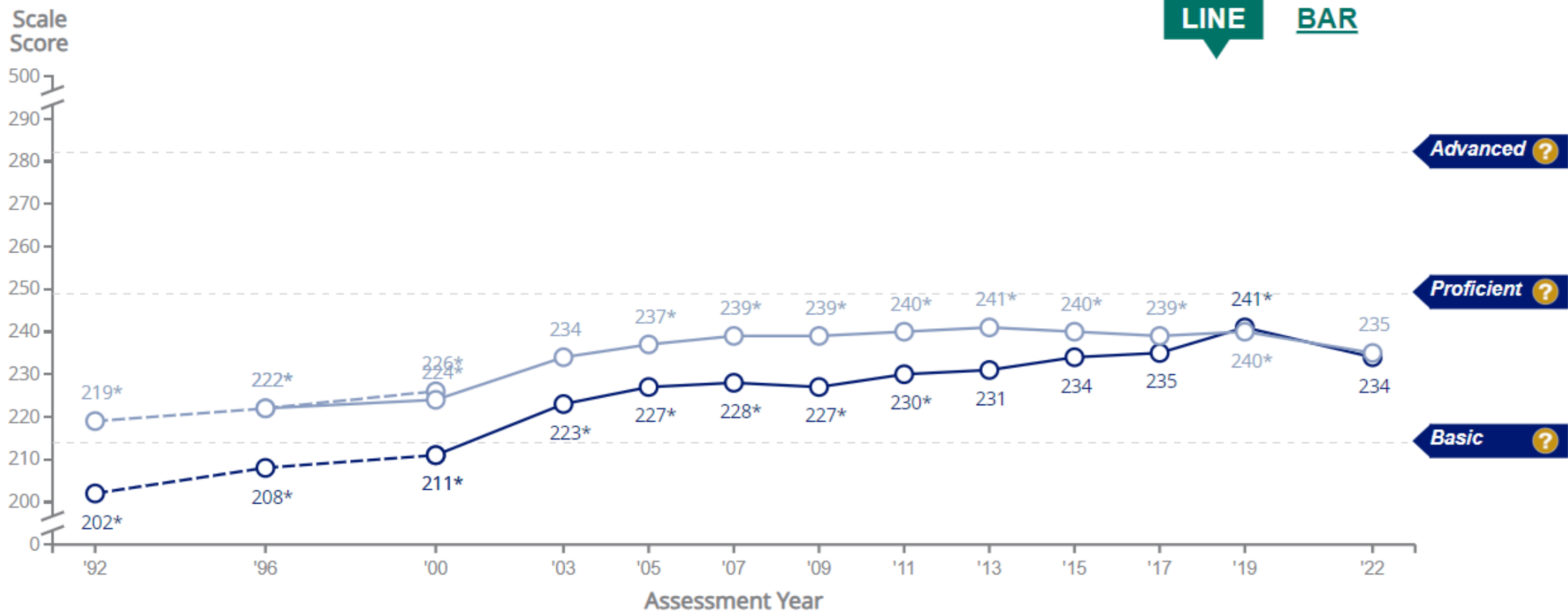
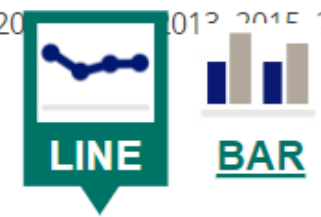
National public

--- Accommodations not permitted
 — Accommodations permitted

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2022.

GRADE 4 | MATHEMATICS

Average scale scores for grade 4 mathematics, by All students [TOTAL] and jurisdiction: 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2022



MS Mississippi **NP** National public

--- Accommodations not permitted
 — Accommodations permitted

* Significantly different (p < .05) from 2022.

2022 NAEP: Closing Achievement Gaps

- Mississippi 4th graders scored **at the national average** in both **reading and math**.
- Among **children in poverty**, **Mississippi 4th graders** are **tied for No. 1** in the country in **reading** and rank **No. 2** in **math**
- Mississippi black, white and Hispanic 4th graders living in poverty **achieved higher scores in reading and math** than their peers nationally and in the South.
- Mississippi is the **No. 2 state for closing 4th grade reading achievement gap** between students in **low-income families and their wealthier peers**

Mississippi National Rankings

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Gains



1st

IN THE NATION 2011-2022

FOURTH GRADE MATH



1st

IN THE NATION 2011-2022

FOURTH GRADE READING



3rd

IN THE NATION 2011-2022

EIGHTH GRADE MATH



7th

IN THE NATION 2011-2022

EIGHTH GRADE READING

Mississippi Public Education Progress 2013-2022

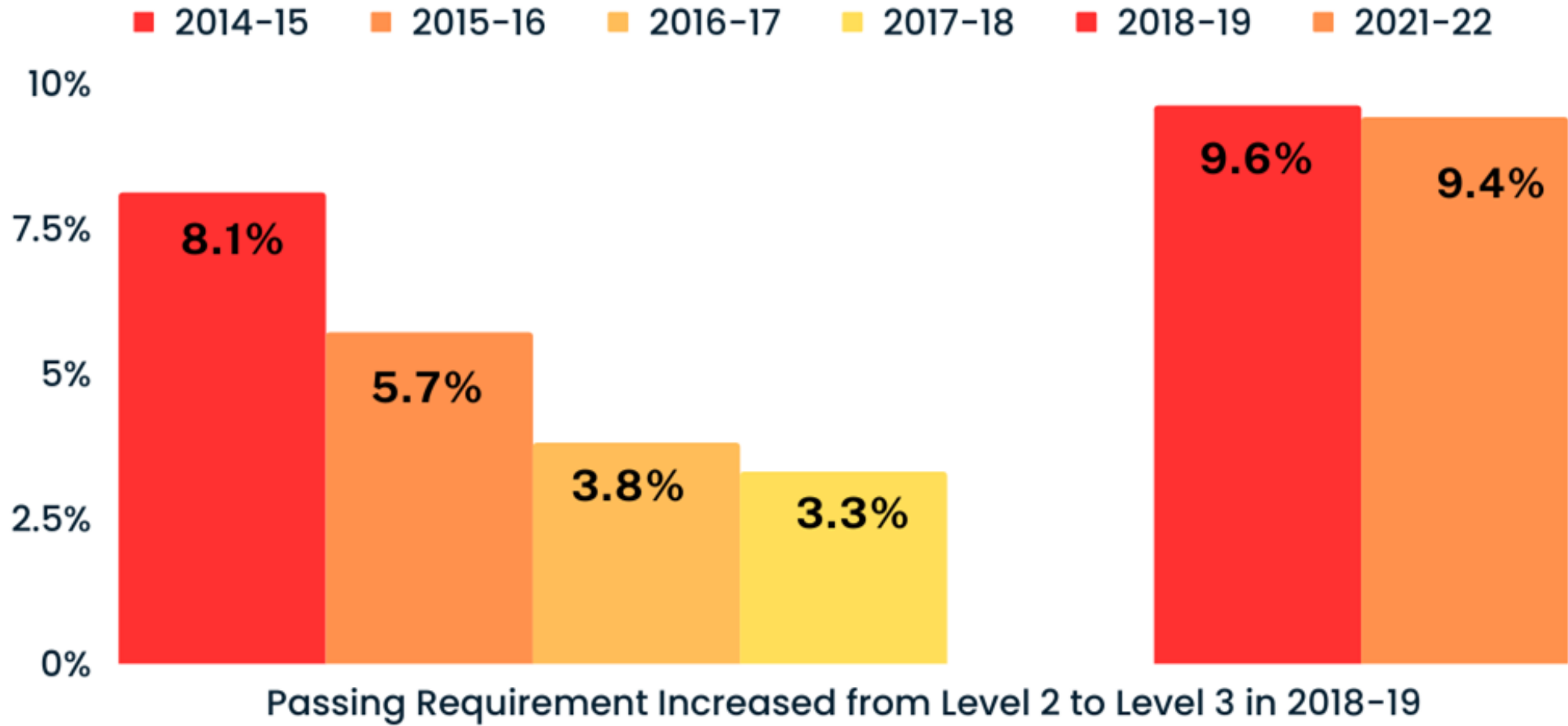
Mississippi Public Education **Report Card**

	2013	2022
QUALITY COUNTS GRADE FOR OVERALL EDUCATION	F	C-
QUALITY COUNTS NATIONAL RANKING	50 th	35 th
NAEP 4TH GRADE READING NATIONAL RANKING	50 th	21 st
2022 NAEP 4TH GRADE READING AND MATH SCORES AT NATIONAL AVERAGE		
GRADUATION RATE	75.5%	88.9%

Key strategies for improved outcomes:

- Major focus on early literacy
- High expectations for students and educators
- Higher academic standards
- Professional development for educators
- Strong accountability system for schools and districts

3RD GRADE RETENTION RATE



Retention Study from Boston University Wheelock Educational Policy Center

Study reviewed **English Language Arts (ELA) scores** and later academic outcomes **from the first cohort of 3rd graders promoted and retained** under the Literacy-Based Promotion Act. Study compared the results between students **promoted to the 4th grade** and students **retained in the 3rd grade**.

Findings:

- By 6th grade, **students who were retained had substantial and sustained literacy gains on their ELA scores** compared to their peers who were promoted to 4th grade.
- Literacy **gains were especially significant among African American and Hispanic students** in the cohort.
- Results indicate **the law had no significant impact on student absences or special education identification** in the 6th grade.
- Students who were retained **did not appear to experience other negative consequences** as a result of their retention.

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