



Testimony for the Select Committee on *Education Opportunity & Enrichment*

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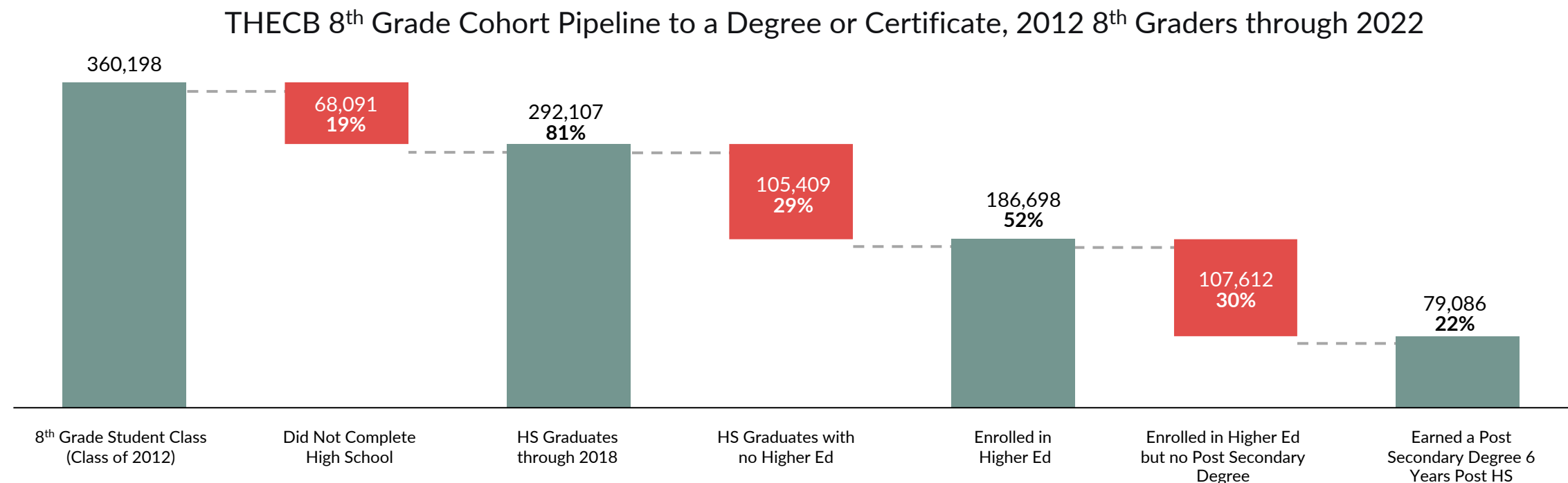
Senior Policy Advisor, Texas 2036

July 2023

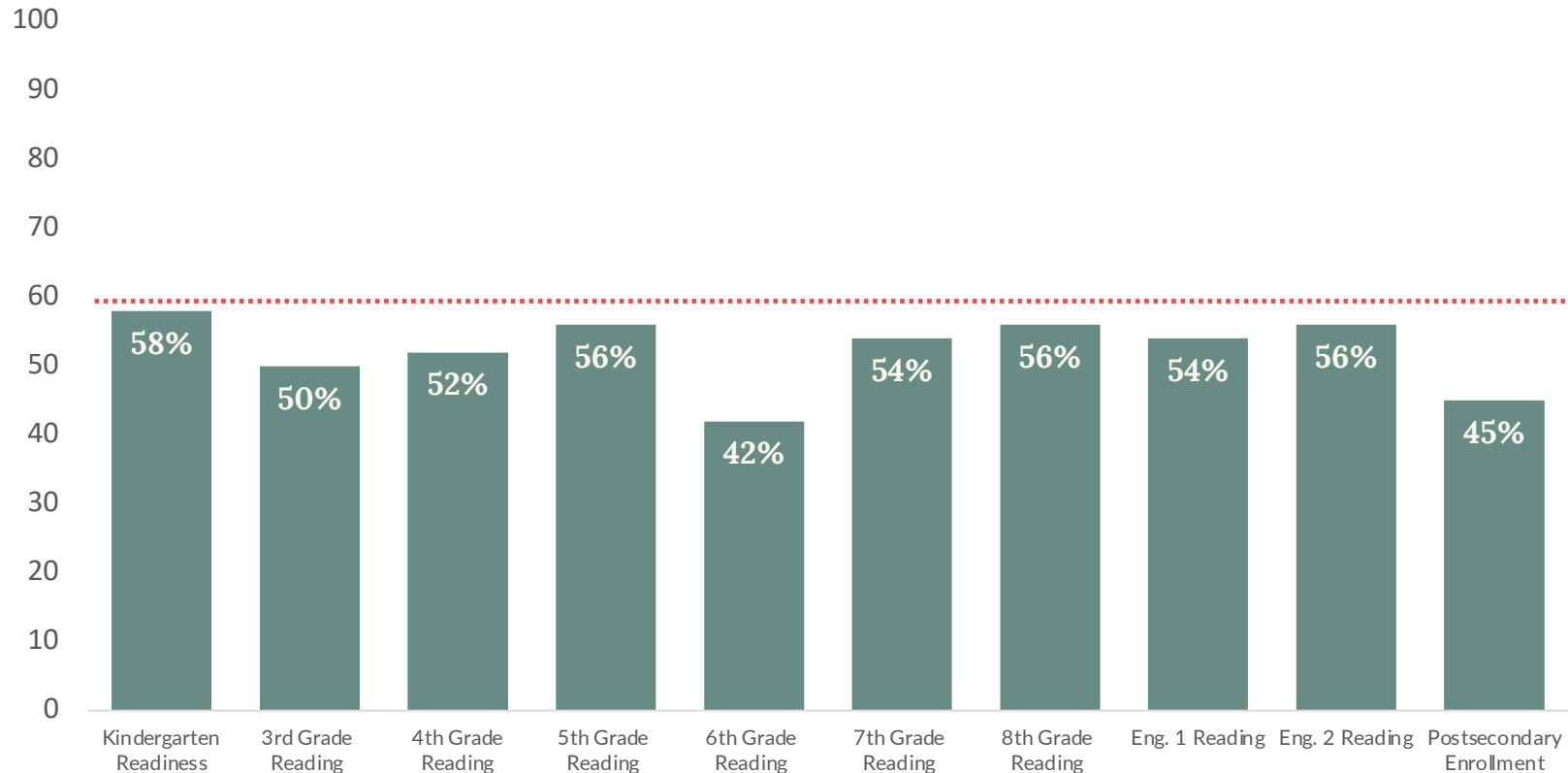


Only 22% of Texas 8th graders attain a Post-secondary Degree or Credential.

10% for African American and 13% for Hispanic young men



How do we get to only 22% readiness? At No Point are More than 60% of Students Ready for the Next Grade.



Legislation like House Bill 1605 (88R) will go a long way to addressing our readiness gap by providing school leaders with resources to purchase high-quality instructional materials.

Recommendation #1

Make Permanent the Texas Through Year Assessment Pilot Program

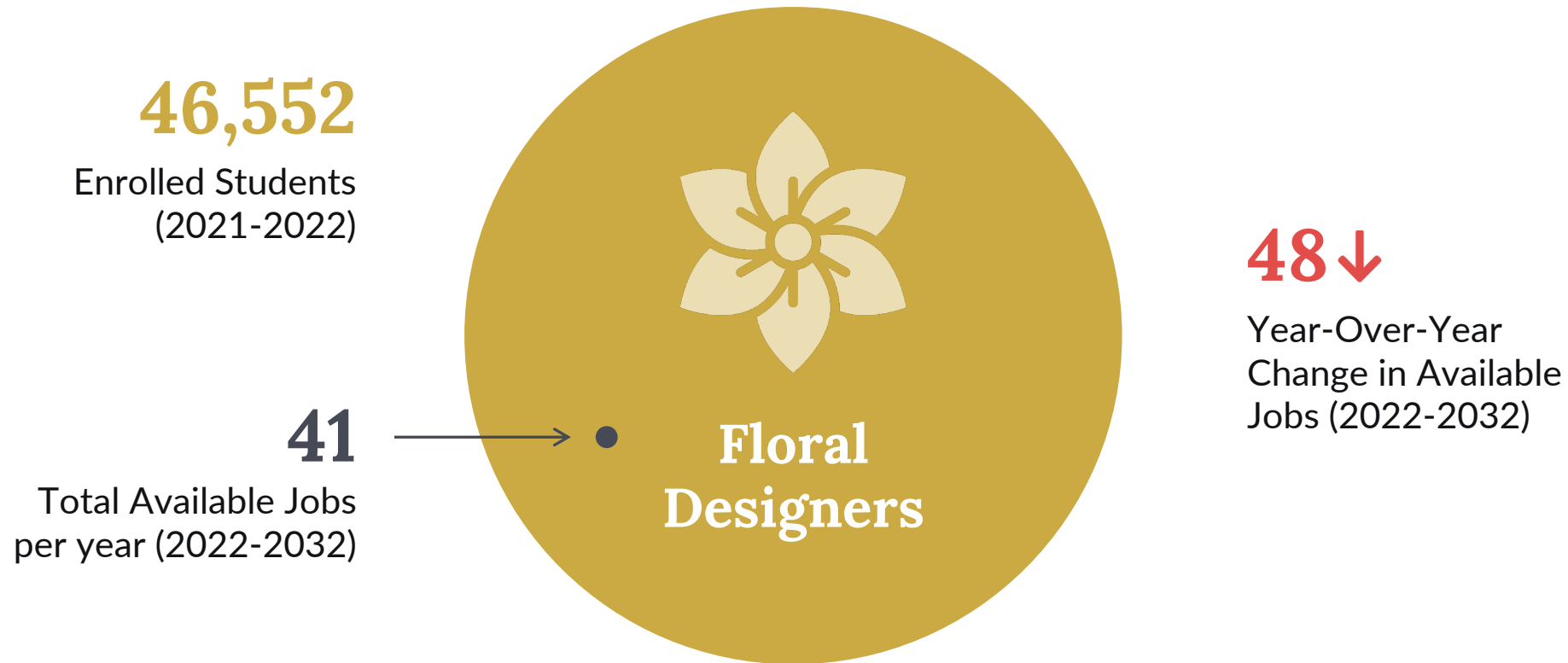


Recommendation #2

Address Our Readiness Gap by Improving CCMR in the Accountability System



More work is needed to tie CCMR to actual workforce need. Texas offers credit for courses and certificates that do not have enough jobs.



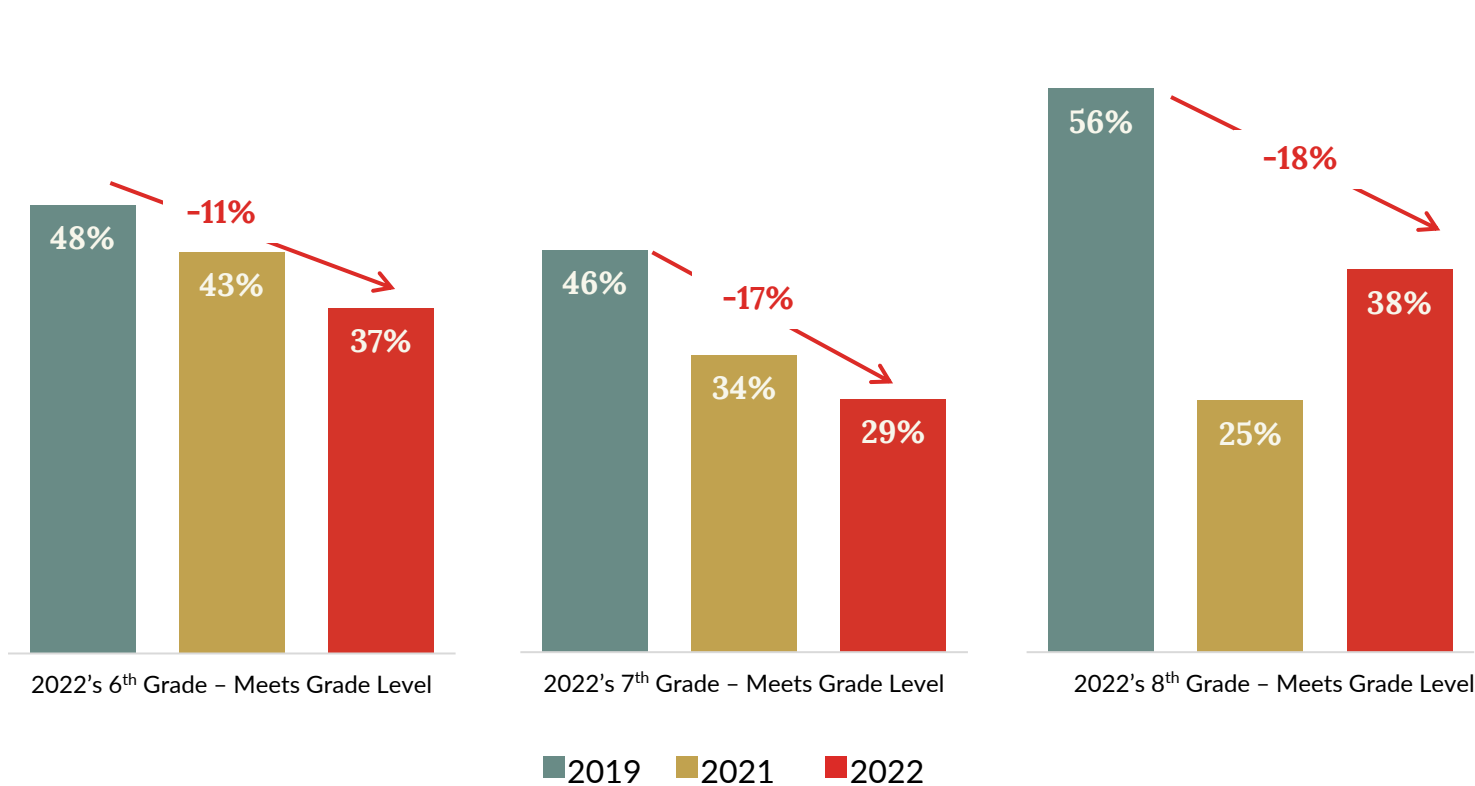
Recommendation #3

Pay Close Attention to Math Mastery



Texas Middle Schoolers are not Recovering in Mathematics at The Same Rate as Other Groups.

Current Middle Schoolers Face Alarming Declines in Cohort Math Scores Since 2019



Legislation like Senate Bill 2124 (88R) will help address this issue by getting more qualified students into advanced math courses.

Recommendation #4

Maintain the Exit Exam Requirement



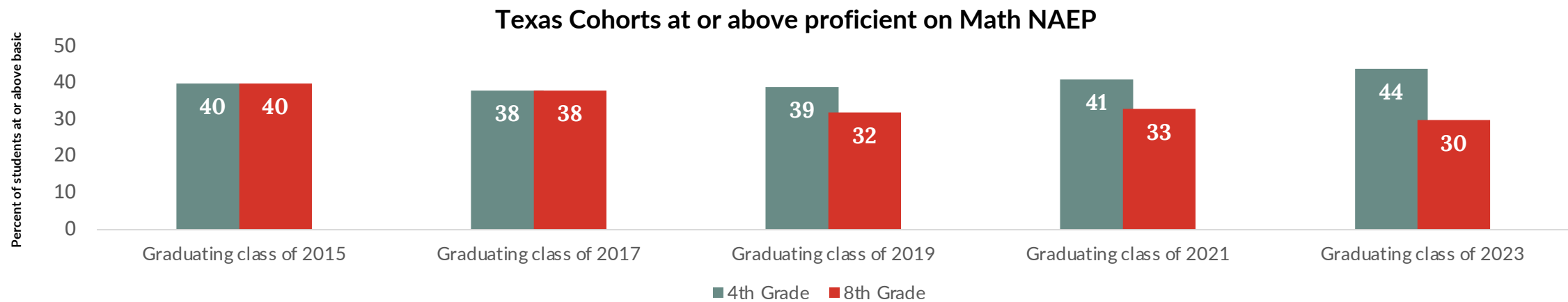
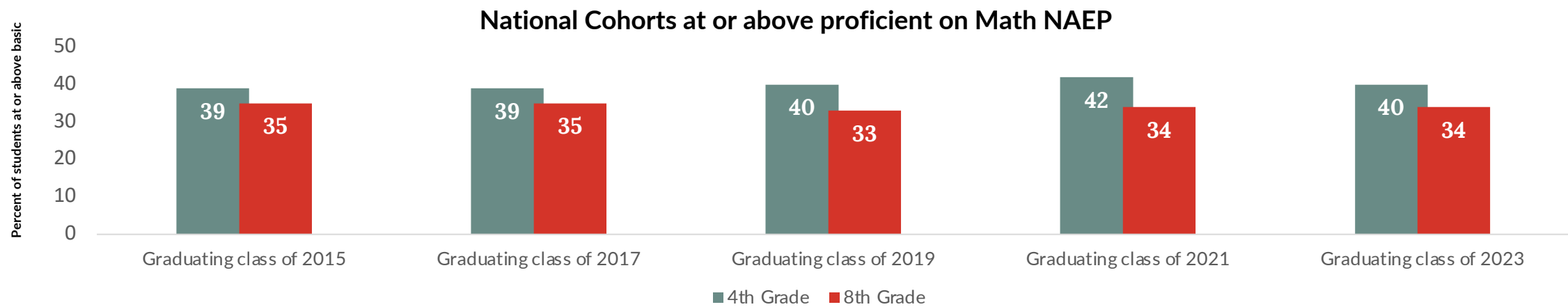
Thank You!

TEXAS²⁰₃₆

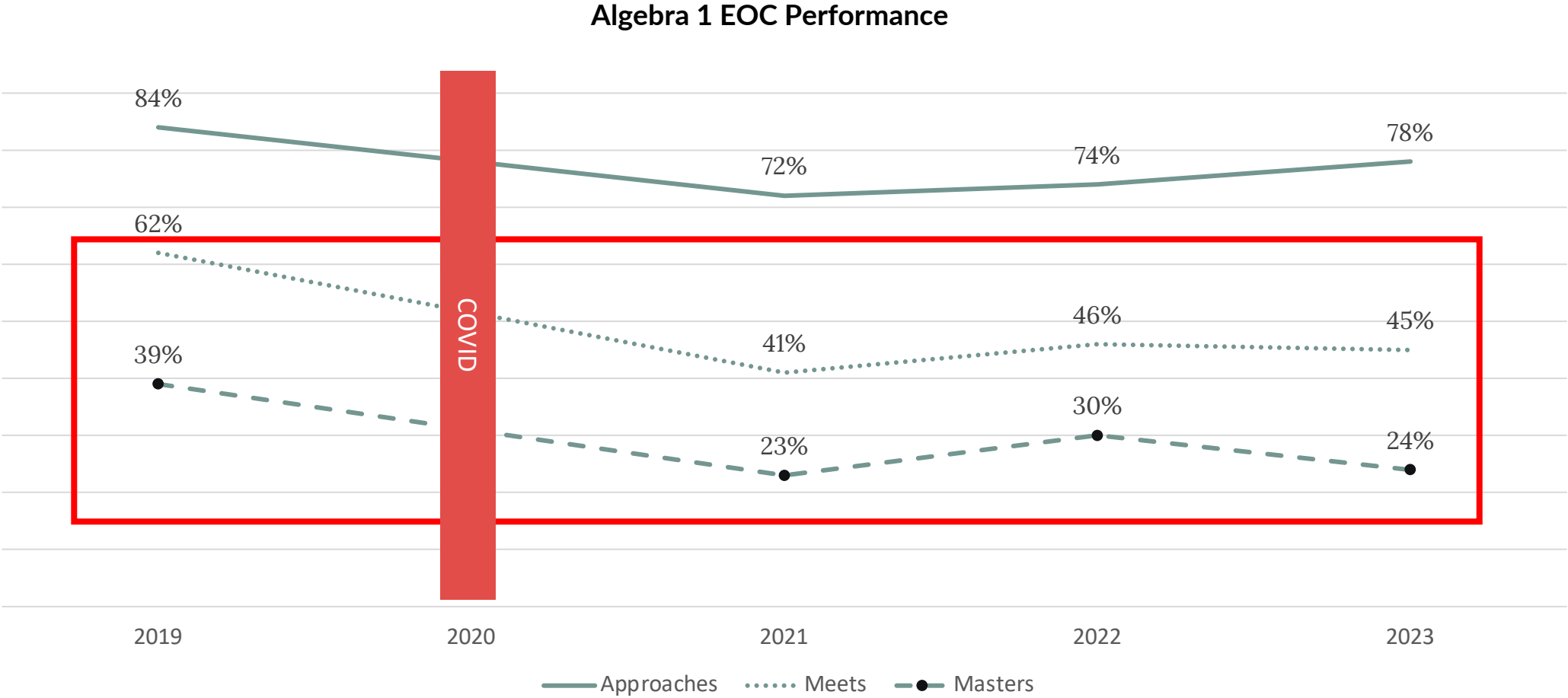
Appendix

More data on **mathematics**

This “Mastery Decline” is Reflect in Our NAEP Data as Well.



Algebra 1 Passage is Slowly Recovering While the Percent on Grade Level and Mastery Dropped Again.



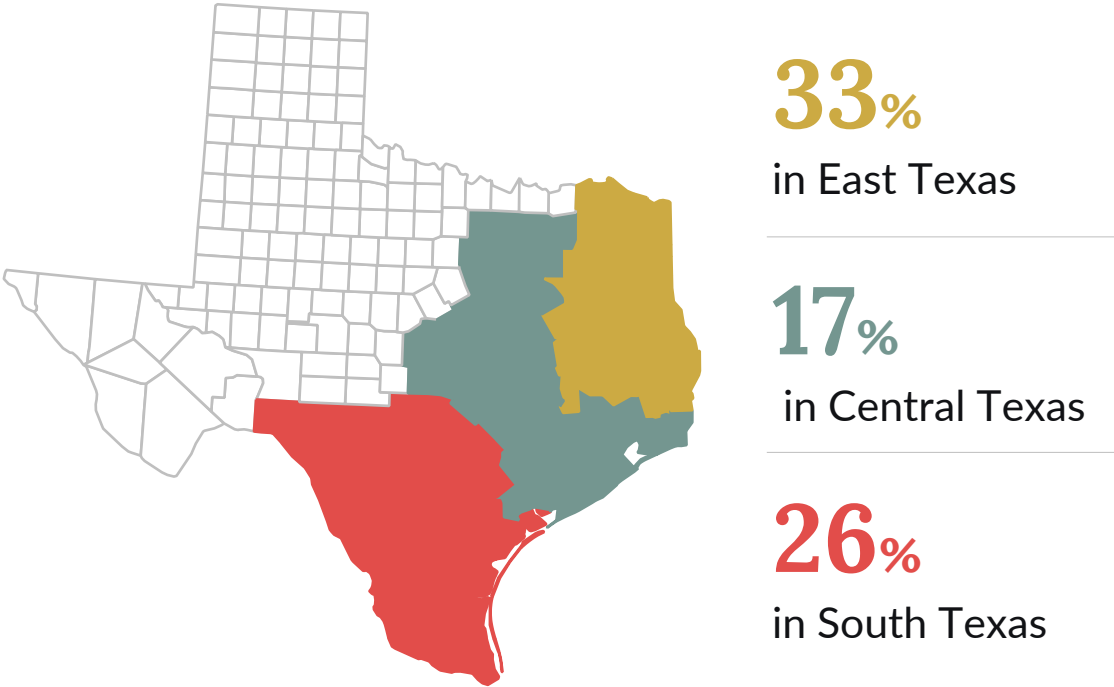
What Happened Before Our Assessment & Accountability System?

In the 1970s and 1980s, Texas and national data showed concerning performance gaps.



Across the U.S., in the 1970s Adults Struggled to Complete Daily Tasks that Required Very Basic Skills and Competencies.

Functional Adult Illiteracy Rates in Texas



2/3rd

of Texans with Spanish surnames

1/2

of Black Texans

1/5th

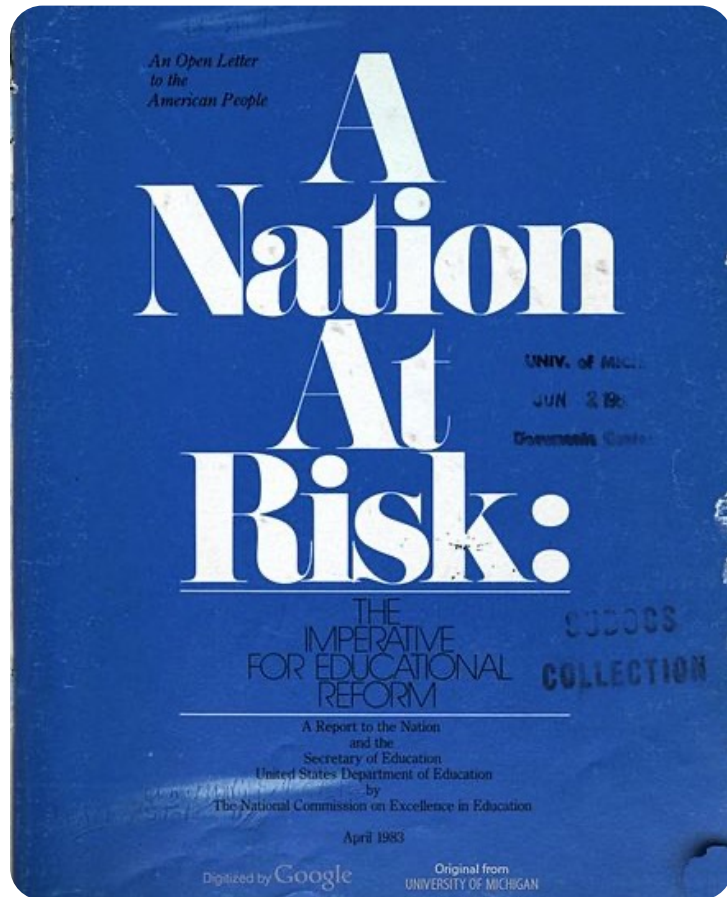
of White Texans

were so **academically unprepared** that they could **not be able to function properly in society.**

Another **1/3**

of the adult population in Texas was merely functional but **not proficient in completing everyday tasks.**

A Nation At Risk Focused the National Attention on Educational Outcomes.



60%

Percentage of 17-year-olds students who **could not** solve a **mathematics problem** requiring several steps.



25%

Percentage of Navy recruits who **could not** read at a **9th grade level**, the minimum needed to read safety instructions.



72%

Increase in the percentage of **remedial math course** offered at **universities** between 1975 and 1980.

What do we know about the **STAAR exam?**

The STAAR is Valid, Reliable, Fair, and Comparable.



Validity is the degree to which conclusions based on test results are appropriate and meaningful. A valid assessment is a good representation of the standards it measures.



Reliability means consistency. Different administrations of the same exam will have the same results for the same student. Different administrations of the test will also yield the same results across years and across student groups.



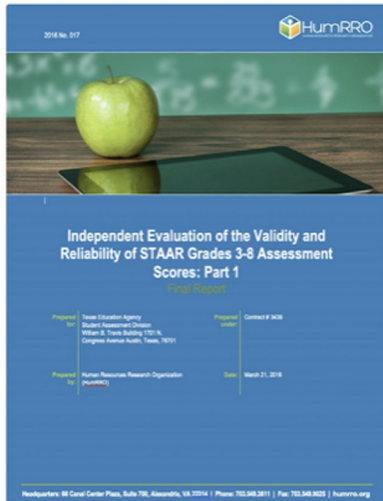
Fairness means the tested concepts are teachable and learnable in school, instead of incorporating experiences from outside of school.



Because the exam is valid, reliable, and fair, it is also **Comparable**. This means that results can be compared across districts, resulting in the state having grounds to take legitimate action to support students or intervene in school districts.

How Do We Know that the STAAR is Valid, Reliable, and Comparable?

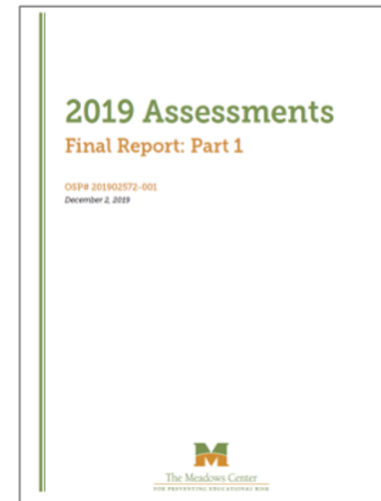
STAAR has been proven valid, reliable, aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), with passage readability on grade-level



House Bill 743, Rep. Huberty/Sen. Seliger
84TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Analysis Completed in 2016

Findings: STAAR was found to be valid. The evaluation confirmed the “**test bears a strong association with on-grade curriculum requirements.**”



House Bill 3, Rep. Huberty/Sen. Taylor
86TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Analysis Completed in 2019

Findings: Across grade levels and subjects, all tests included in the study **were aligned with the TEKS** for the grade level tested.

- **91% of passages met the criterion for readability** as defined in the study in terms of text complexity

Texas started assessing basic skills in 1979. Today we assess academic readiness for college and careers.

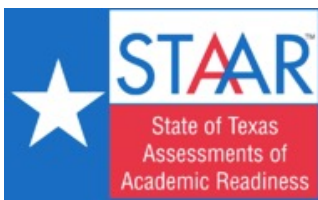


There is nothing new about adapting assessment to changing times and needs.

When Texas developed the STAAR exam, policymakers' performance on the STAAR exam was **pegged to certain post-high school performance indicators.**

What this means is that the **STAAR is the first Texas exam tied to post-graduation performance levels,** making it a more rigorous but also a more relevant exam.

Thanks to the accountability and assessment systems, we have the performance data we need to understand our readiness gaps.



For elementary and middle school students, the STAAR helps identify performance gaps and if students need interventions.

5.2%
of all graduates

in Texas graduate through an **Individual Graduation Committee**. The largest subgroups that graduate through an IGC are Hispanics (12,385 students) and males (10,617).



Reminder!

The only student-level consequences in our system are at the EOC level

Texas Teachers Ensure the STAAR Exam Reflects Classroom Experience



Each item on the STAAR exam is reviewed by Texas teachers.



Between **16–20** educators review each item.



There are around **50 items** on a STAAR exam.



Over **3,000 teacher hours** are spent reviewing the STAAR every year.

Over **5,000 teacher hours** went into the STAAR redesign process.

How Do Students Show Mastery of the TEKS on the STAAR Test?

Below are sample standards and their related question on the 2021 8th Grade Social Studies Exam.

8th Grade Social Studies Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Sample TEKS

(8.1) History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in U.S. history through 1877. The student is expected to

(A) identify the major eras and events in U.S. history through 1877, including colonization, revolution, drafting of the Declaration of Independence, creation and ratification of the Constitution, religious revivals such as the Second Great Awakening, early republic, the Age of Jackson, westward expansion, reform movements, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction, and describe their causes and effects; Readiness Standard

2021 STAAR 8th Grade Social Studies Question #6

6 Study the photograph and answer the question that follows.

President Abraham Lincoln Visiting
the Battlefield at Antietam, October 3, 1862



Source: NARA

Which era is represented by this photograph?

- F** The early republic
- G** The Age of Jackson
- H** Westward expansion
- J** Civil War

Below is a Sample of the New STAAR Exam for 8th Grade History:

The updated STAAR exam will include **more interactive items** that more closely reflect how students are instructed in the classroom. Instead of multiple choice, **students can use interactive maps, drop-down menus, select multiple options from a list, etc.**


3

GUEST, GUEST

This map shows a part of the eastern United States.

Which location on the map was the site of a turning point in the Civil War?

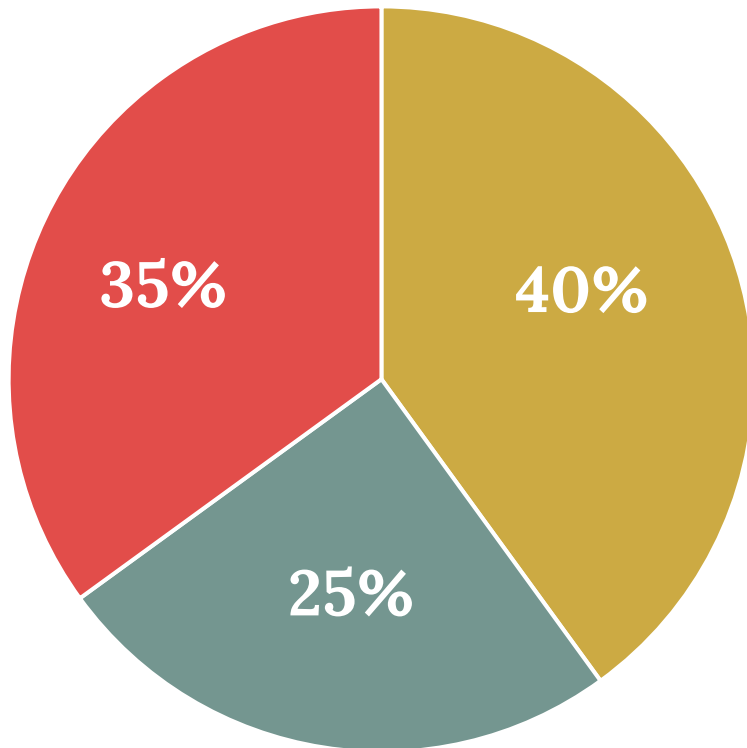
Select the correct answer.



What is the **A-F Sugar High?**

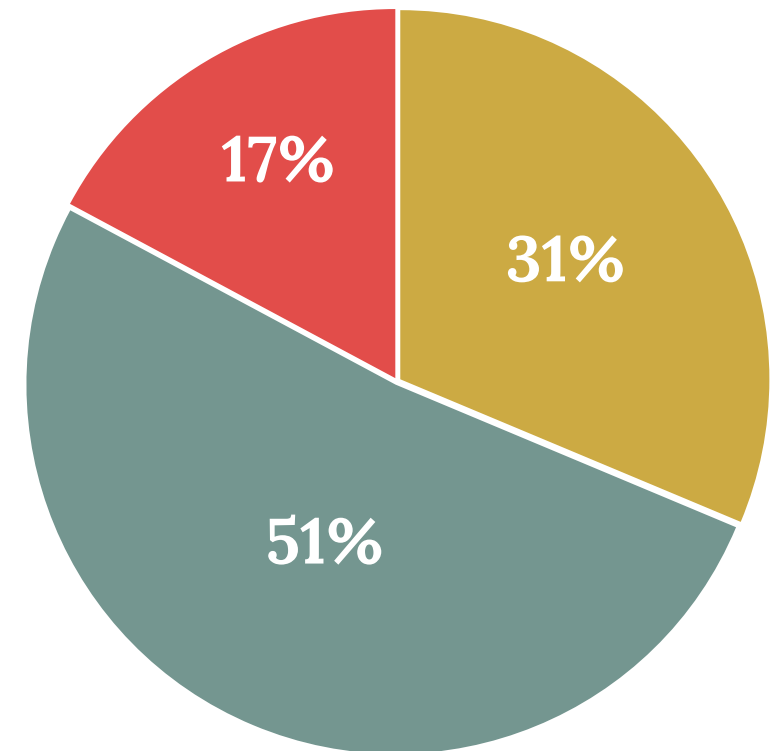
Where did Districts get their Best Score From?

2018-2019

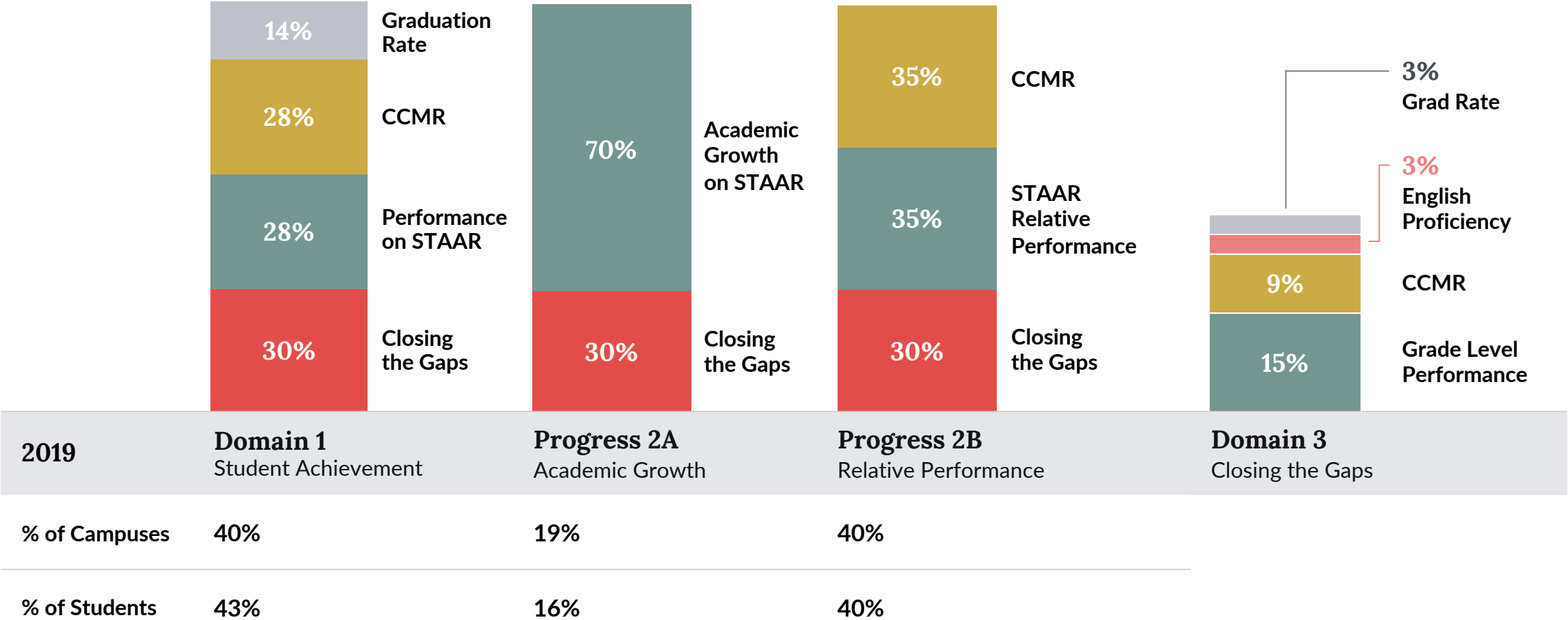


- Domain 1: Student Achievement
- Domain 2A: Academic Growth
- Domain 2B: Relative Performance

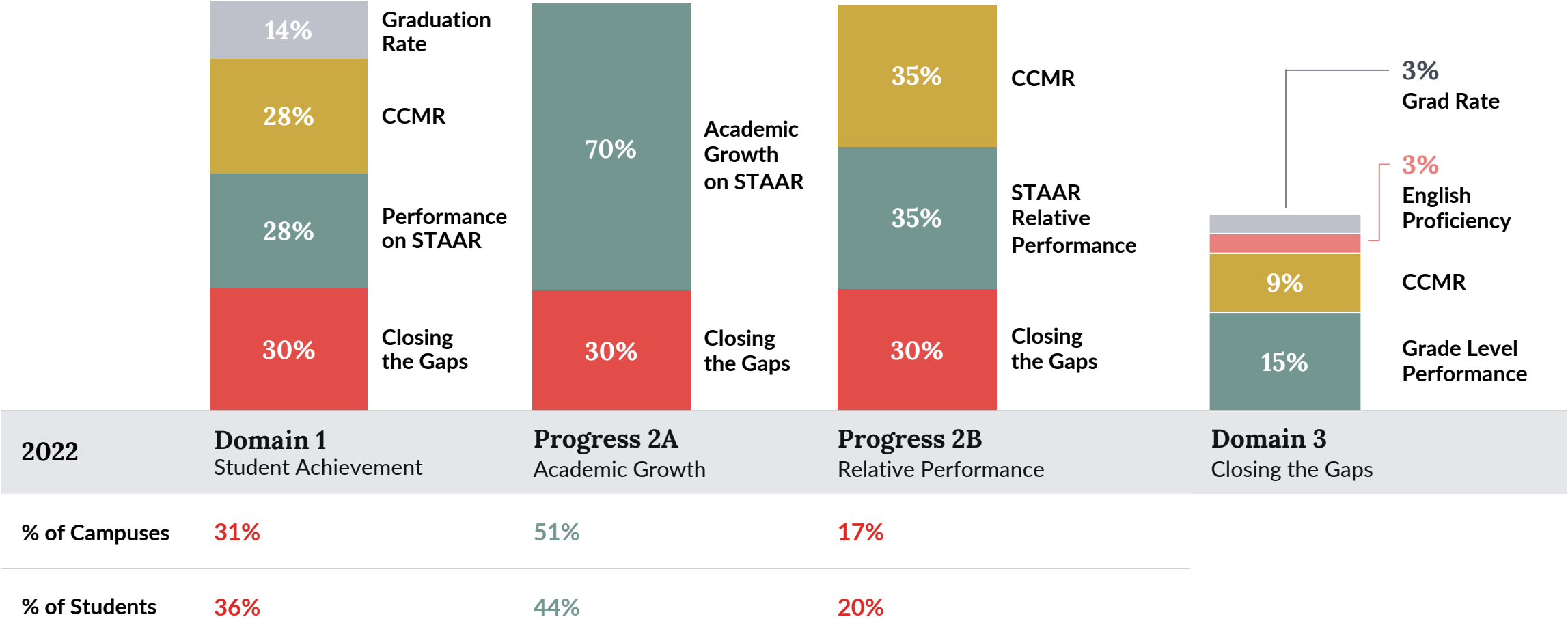
2021-2022



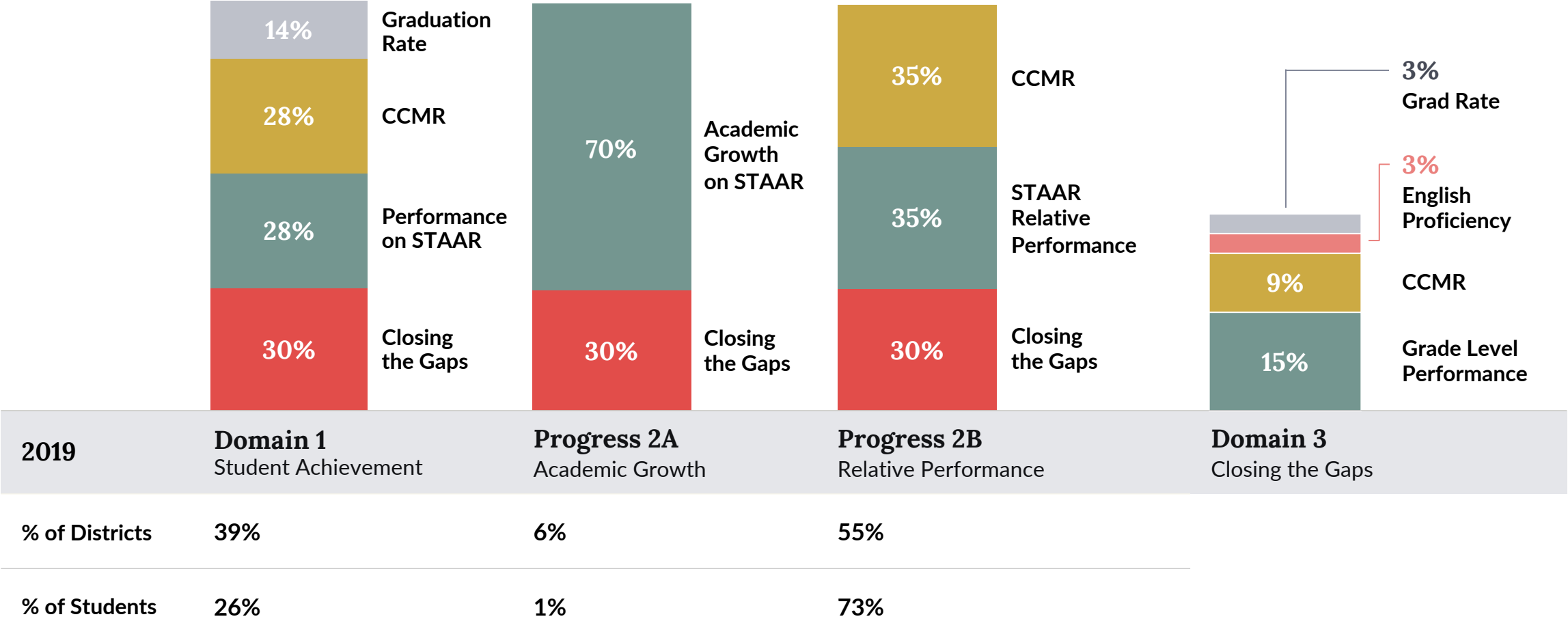
The A-F System has Three Domains:



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