



THE EDUCATION TRUST

Achievement Among English Language Learners:

Where Are We? What Can We Do?

Atlanta, GA

May, 2014

Copyright 2014 The Education Trust

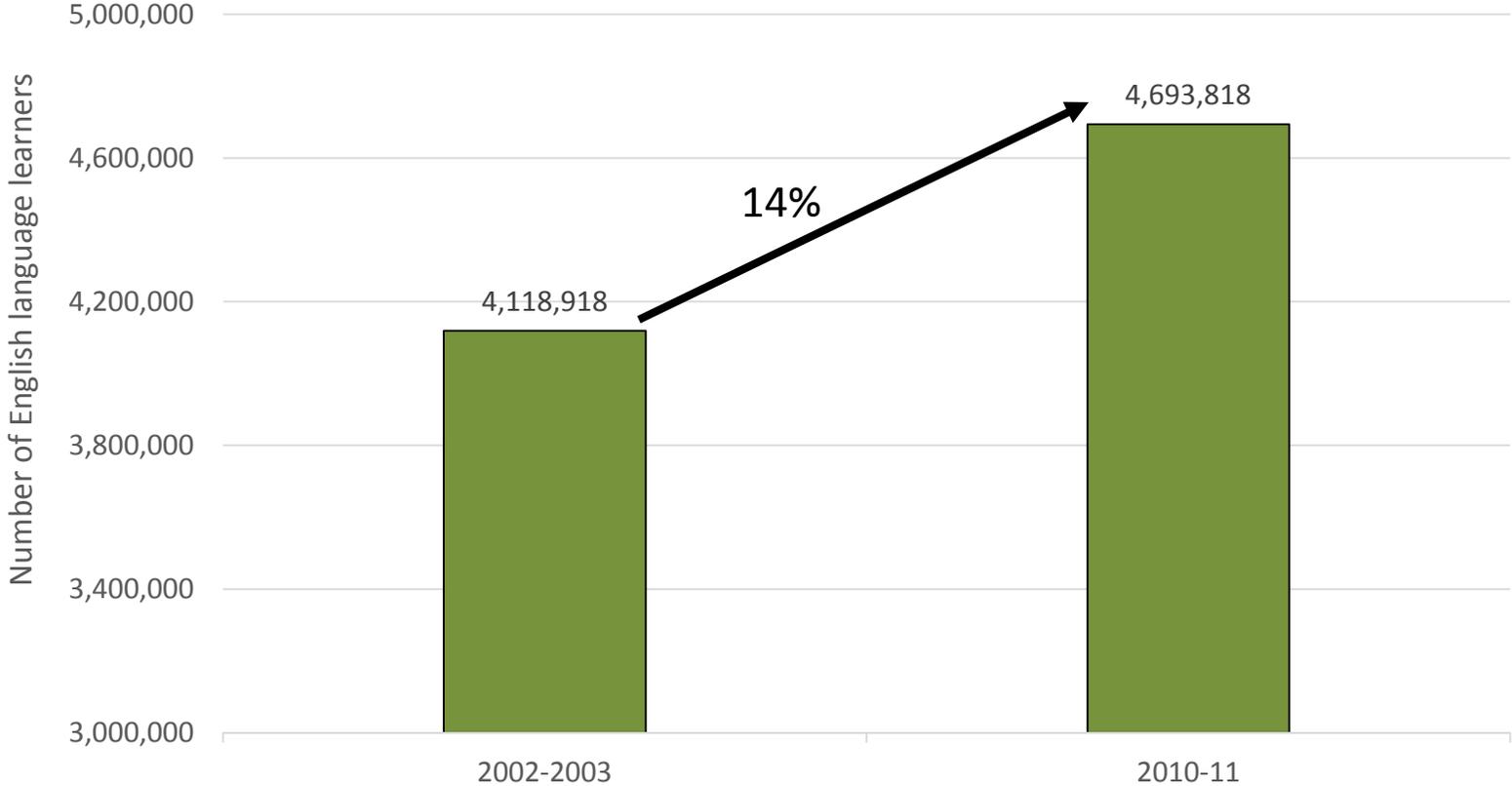


Nationwide, nearly
4,700,000
English learners are enrolled in
public schools.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2012, 2013*, Table 47, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/>.

Rapid growth in English language learner enrollment nationwide

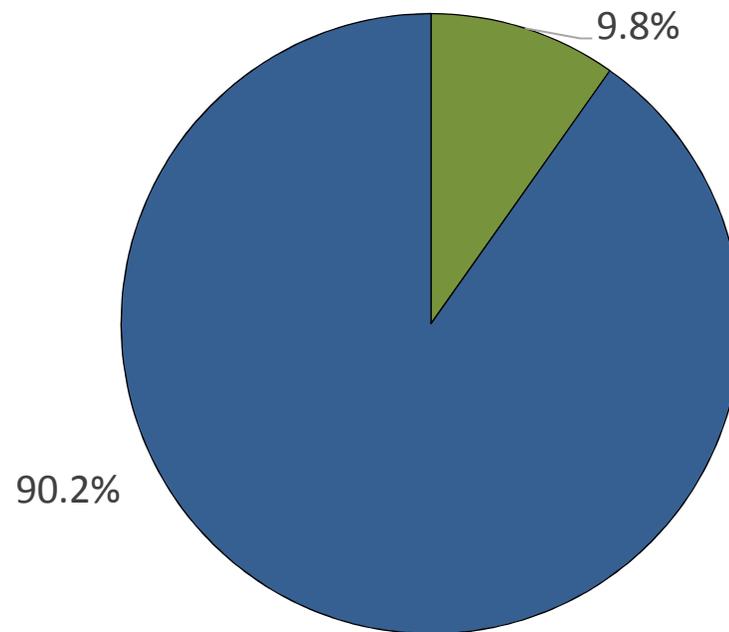
English language learner enrollment in U.S. public schools



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, 2013, Table 47, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/>.

Nearly 1 in 10 U.S. public school students is an English learner

2010-11 School Year

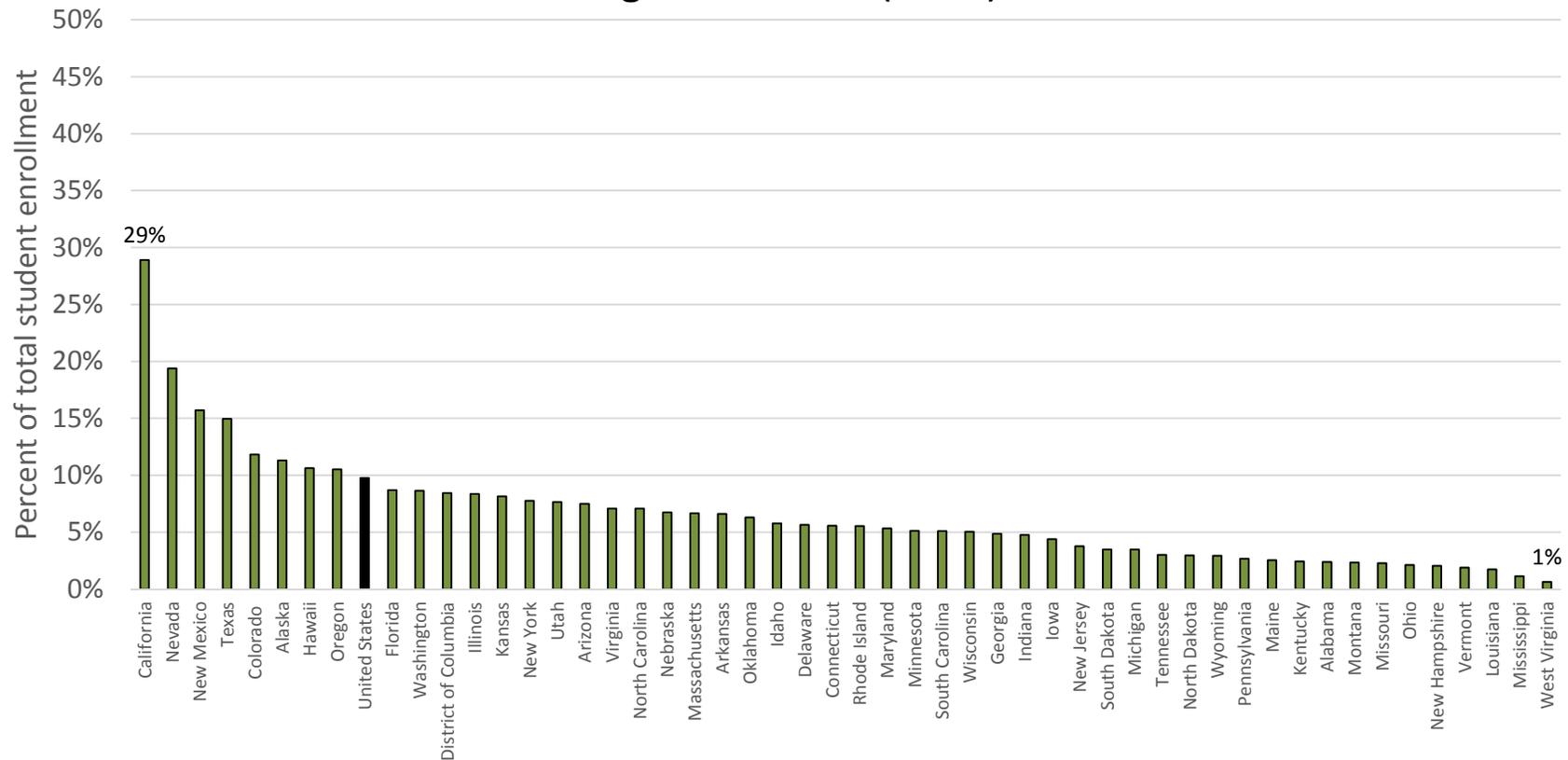


■ Participating in English language learner programs ■ Not participating in English language learner programs

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, 2013, Table 47, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/>.

Nearly 1 in 3 students in California is an English learner, compared to just 1 in 100 in West Virginia

English learners (2011)



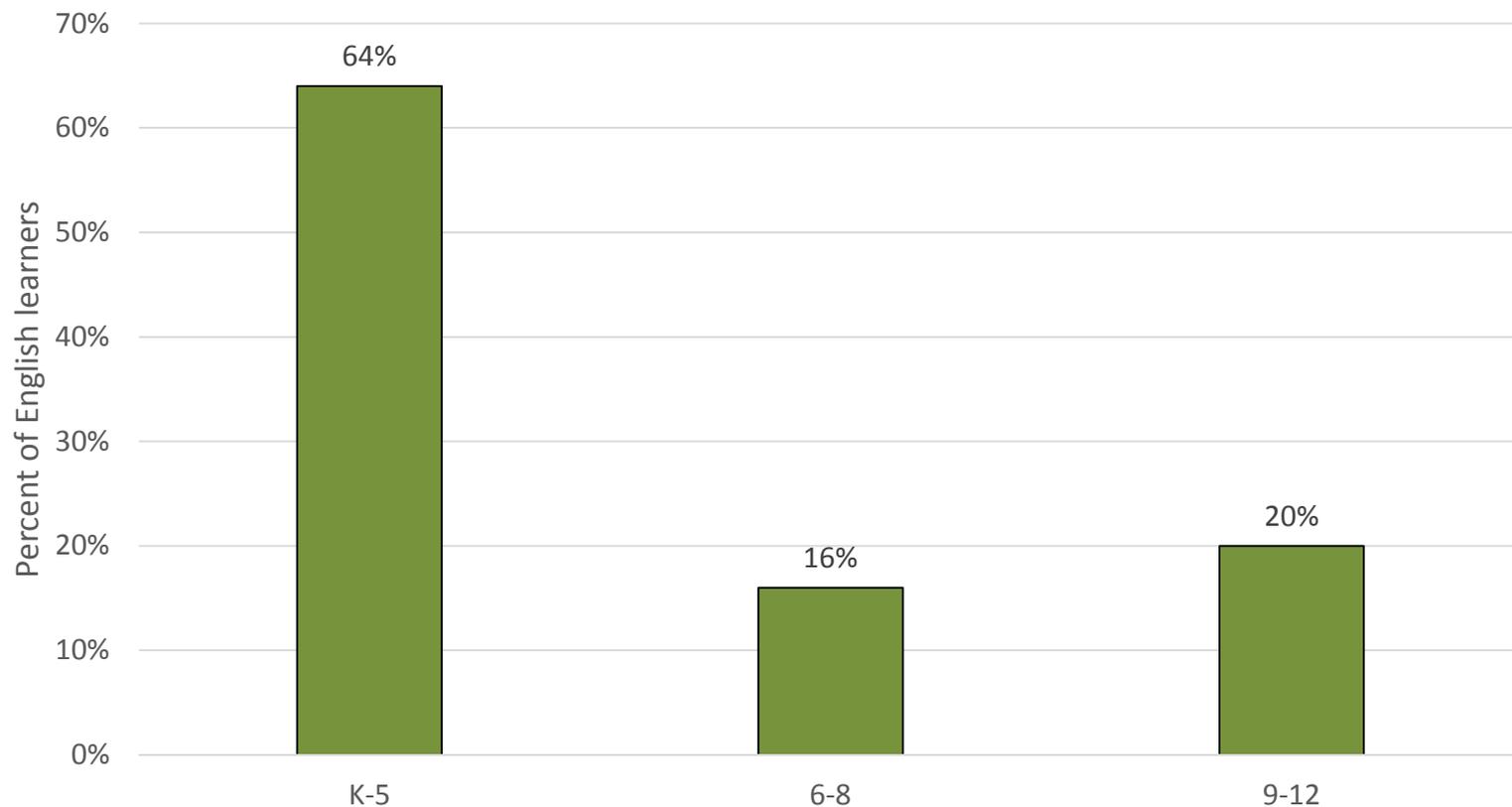
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2012, 2013*, Table 47, <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/>.



Sample data suggest that most English learners are in elementary grades – but substantial numbers are in upper grades, too.

In a sample of urban districts, 2 in 3 English learners are found in elementary schools

Distribution of English learners by grade span (2009-10)



Note: Data includes only the 36 urban districts that reported information on English learner enrollment by grade span.

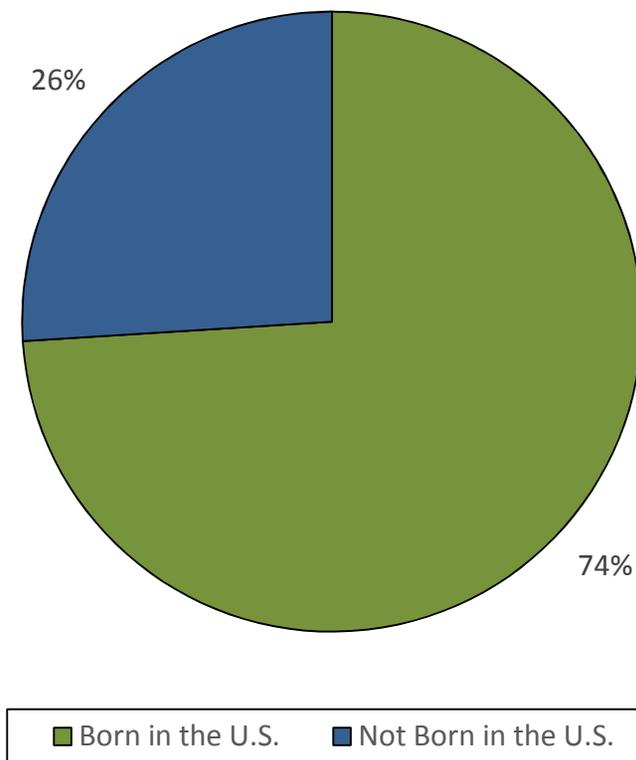
Source: The Council of Great City Schools, *English language learners in America's great city schools: Demographics, achievement, and staffing*, 2013.



Most English learners were born in
the United States.

Most school-aged English learners were born in the United States

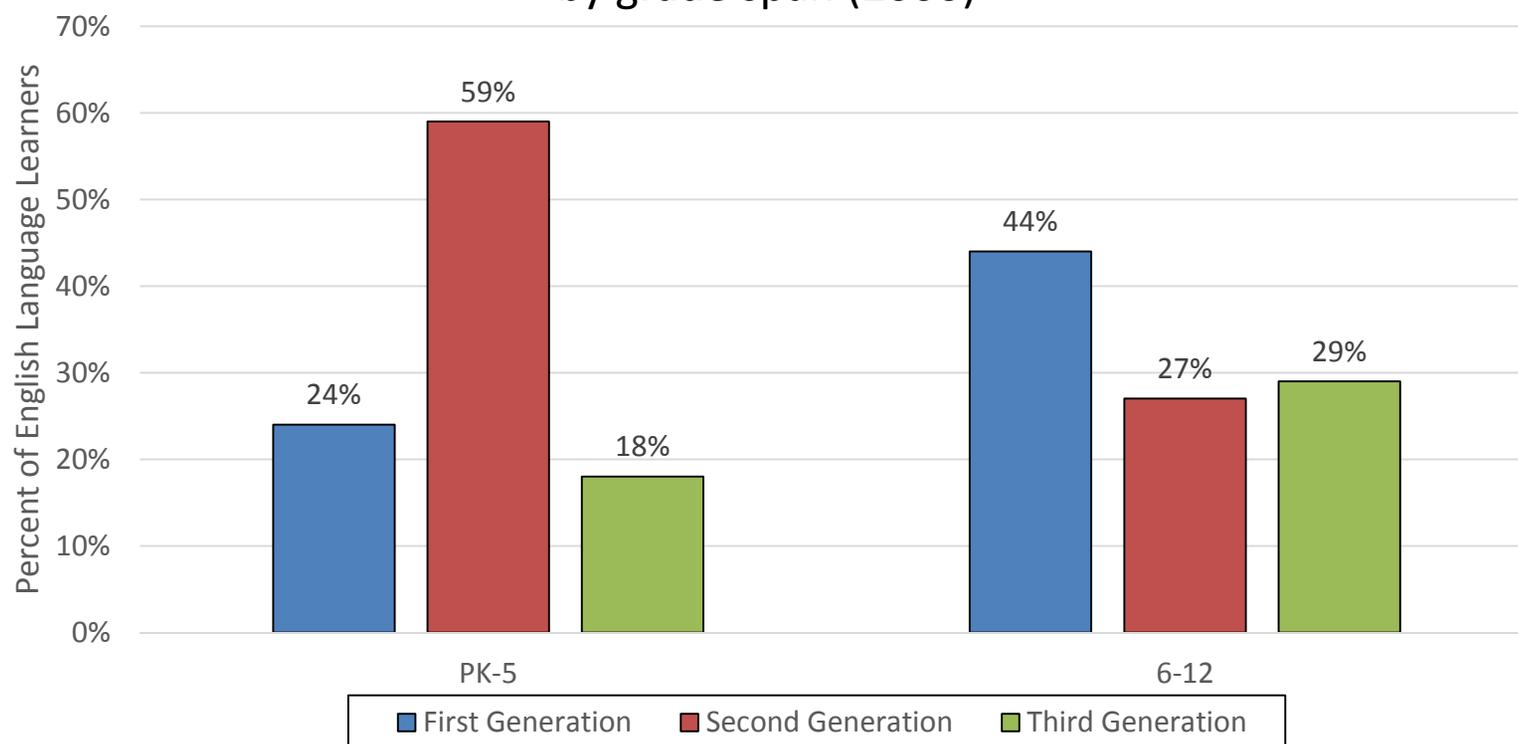
Birthplace of school-aged Limited English Proficient children



Source: Migration Policy Institute, "Limited English Proficient Population of the United States," 2013, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/limited-english-proficient-population-united-states>.

Far more secondary-grade ELLs were born outside of the U.S. – but in both elementary and secondary schools, most are native born

Nativity and Generation of English Language Learners, by grade span (2000)



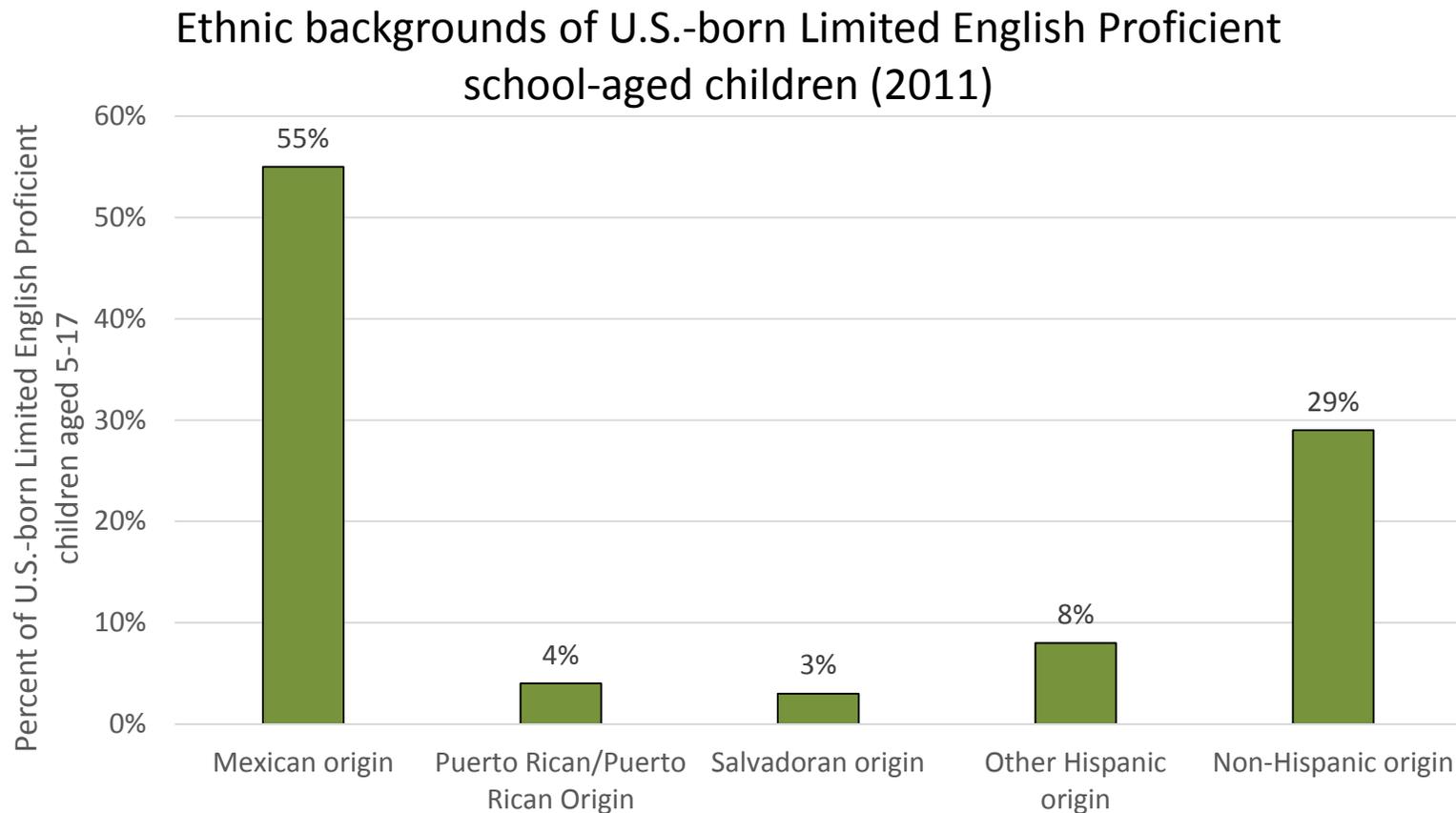
Note: First-generation students were born outside of the U.S., second-generation students were born in the U.S. but have parents who were born outside the U.S.; and third-generation students were born in the U.S. and have parents who were born in the U.S.

Source: Capps, R., et al., *The new demography of America's schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act*, 2005, The Urban Institute.



Most U.S.-born English learners are
of Hispanic descent.

Of school-aged English learners born in the U.S., almost 70% are of Hispanic origin

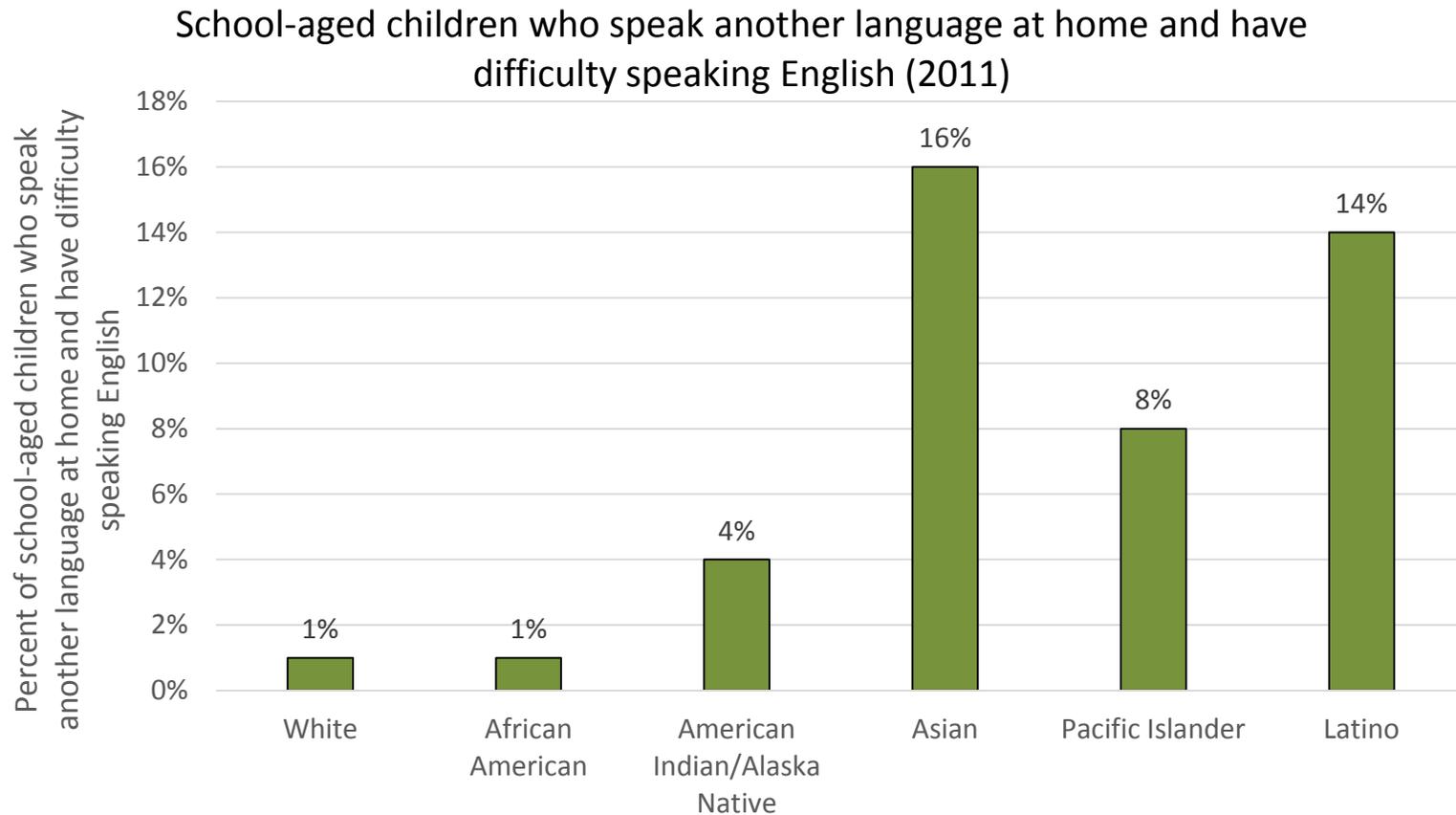


Source: Migration Policy Institute, "Limited English Proficient Population of the United States," 2013, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/limited-english-proficient-population-united-states>.



But *within* racial and ethnic groups,
Asian students are actually most
likely to be struggling to speak
English.

About 1 in 6 Asian children struggles to speak English



Source: Childstats.gov Forum on Child and Family Statistics, *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2013*, Table FAM5, <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/index.asp>.



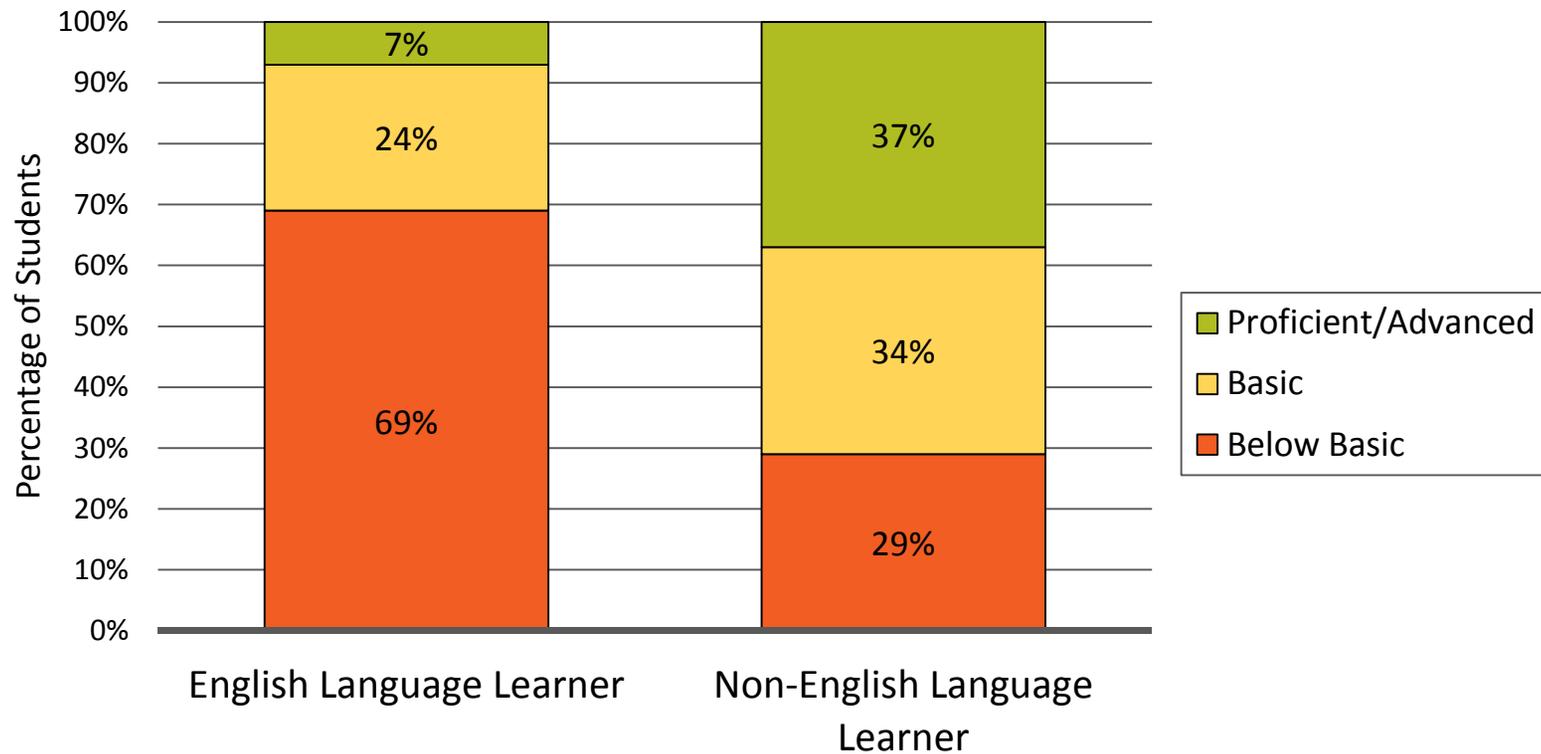
**Are English learners achieving at
high levels in key grades and
subjects?**

No!

English learners lag far behind non-English learners in both reading and math.

4th Grade Reading: Nationwide, English learners over twice as likely to show below basic skills

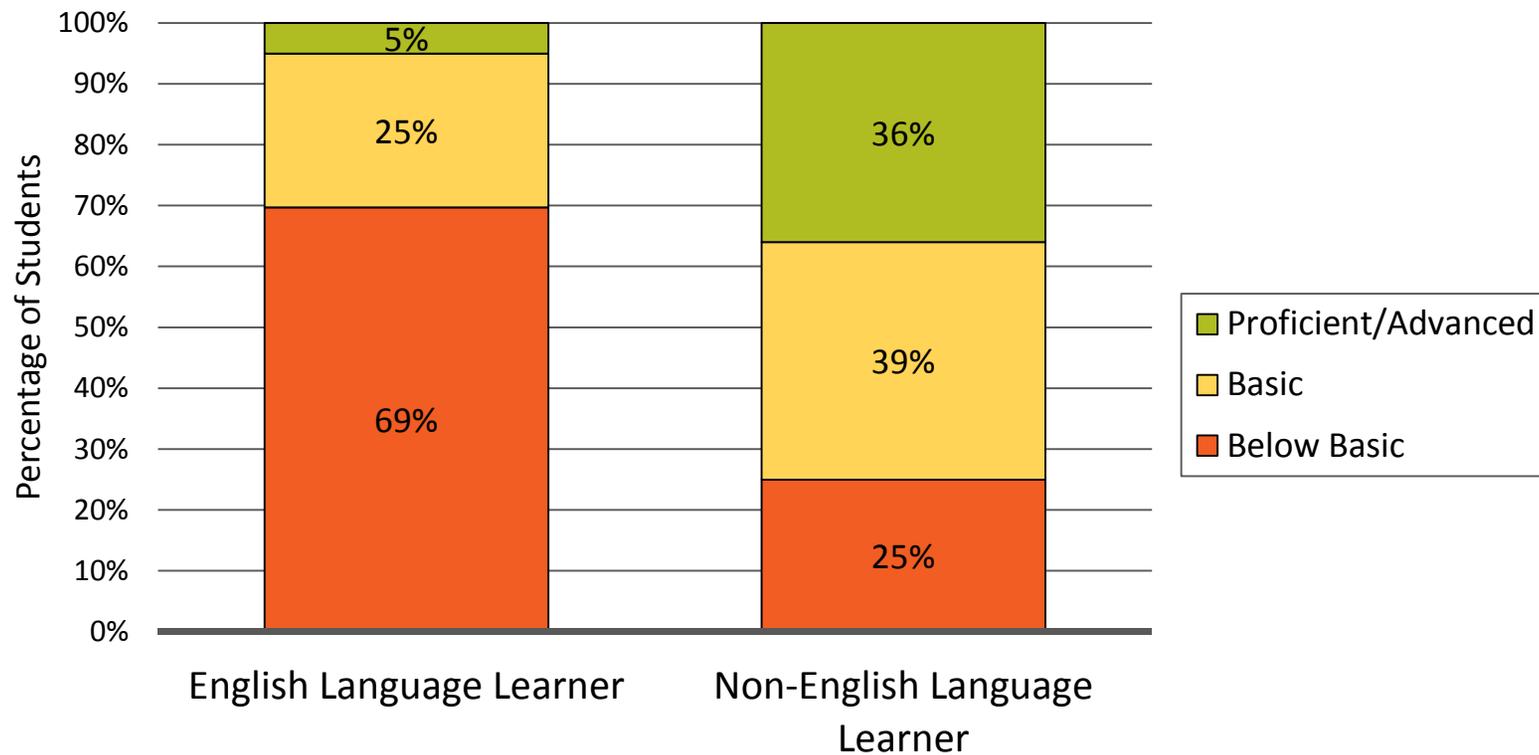
Grade 4 Reading – By English Learner Status
(National Public 2013)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.

8th Grade Math: More than 2/3 of English learners have skills below the basic level

Grade 8 Math – By English Learner Status
(National Public 2013)



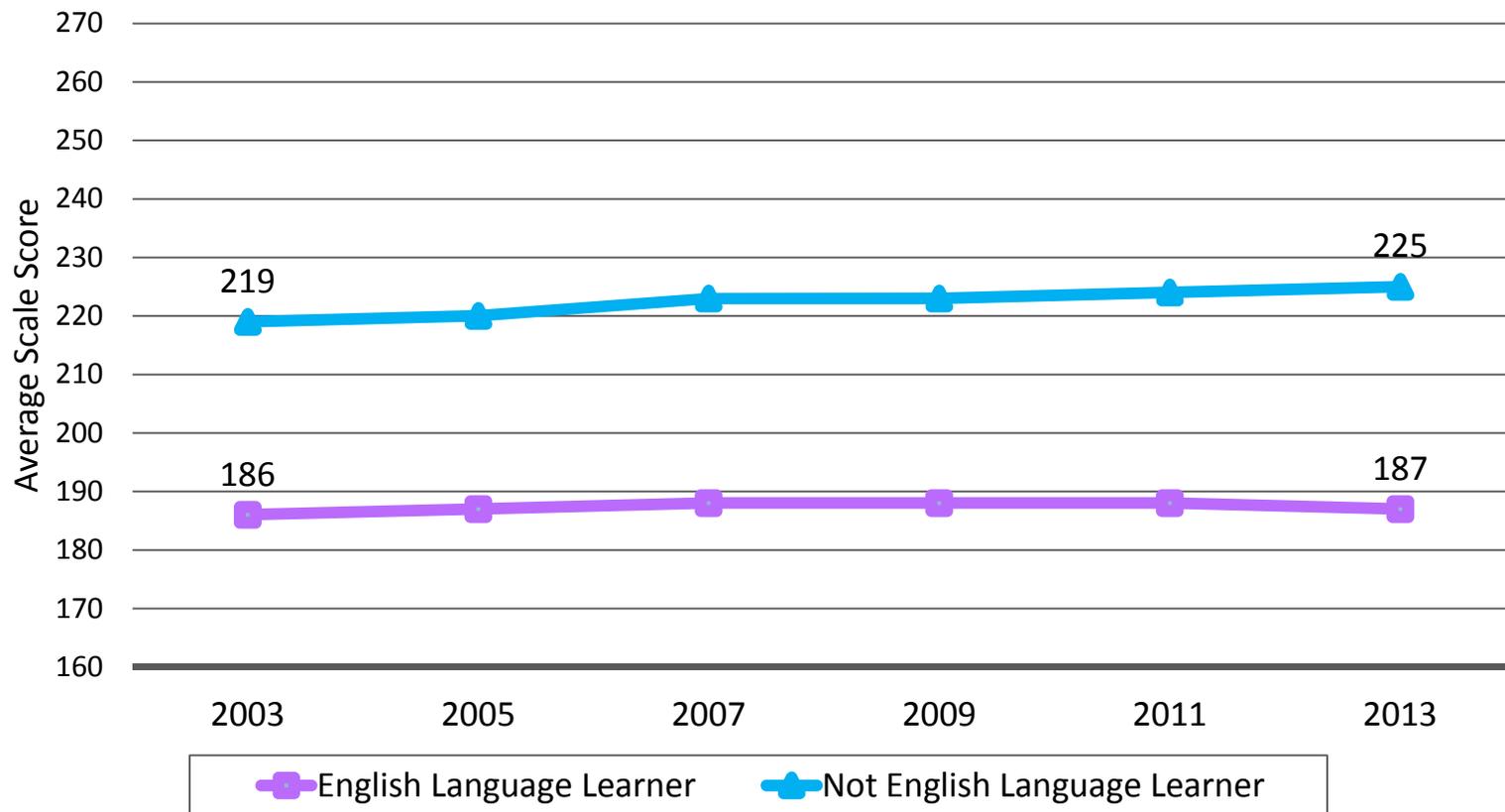
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.



And there's been little improvement
in performance in the past decade.

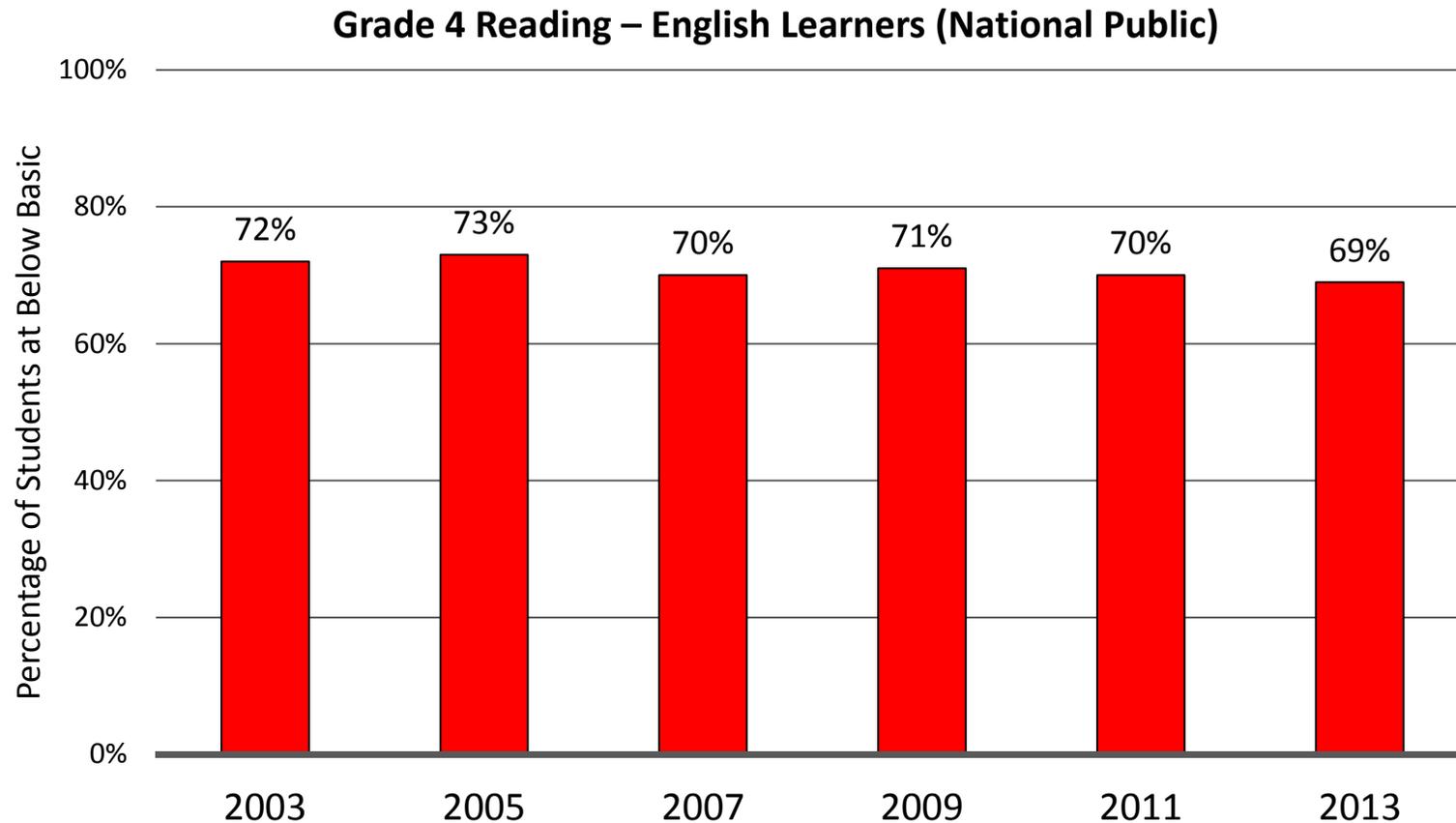
Stagnant scores for English learners; widening gaps with non-ELLs

National Public – Grade 4 NAEP Reading



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208).

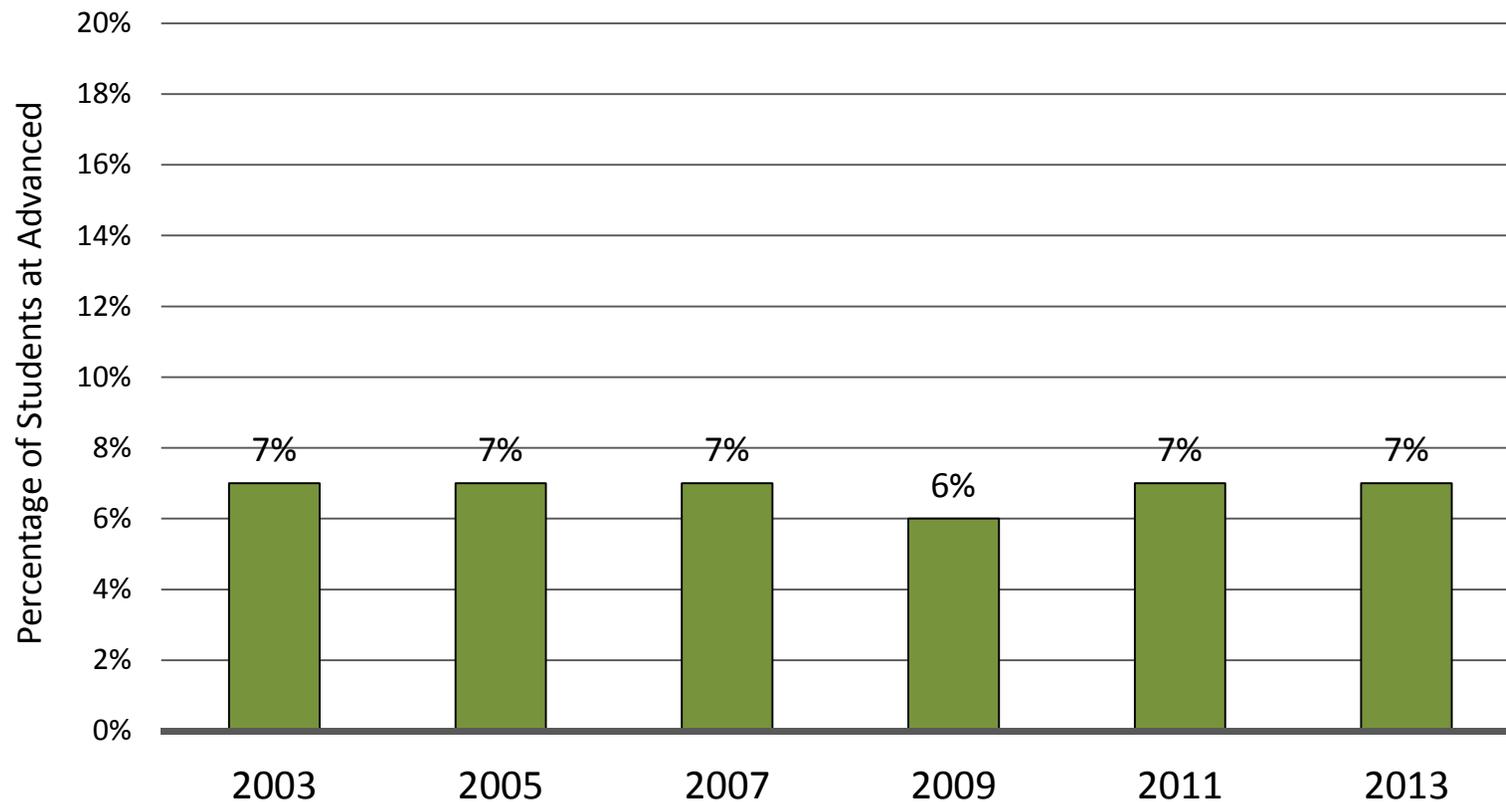
Little change in percentage of English learners with below basic reading skills



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.

No change in percentage of ELLs with proficient or advanced reading skills

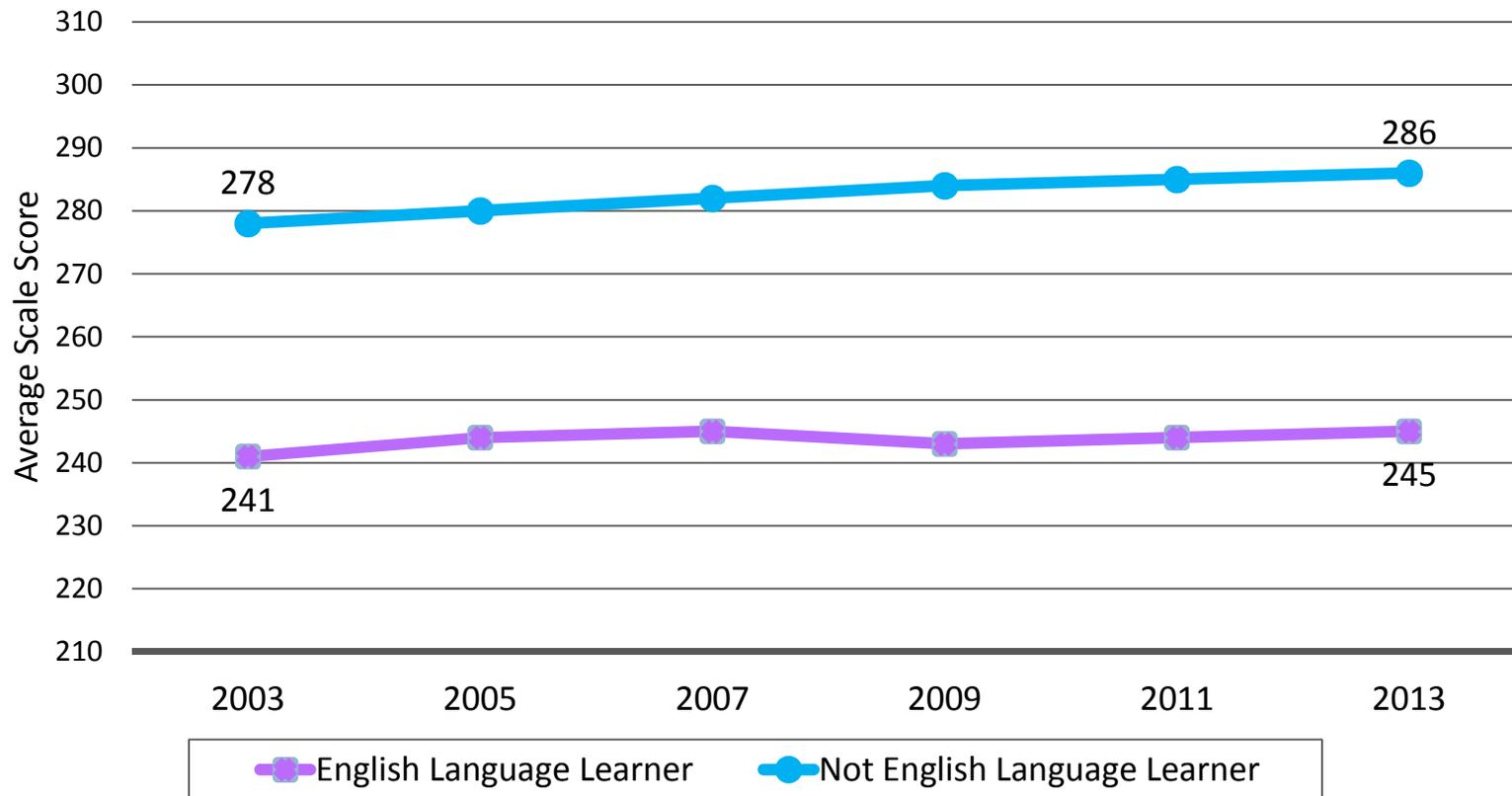
Grade 4 Reading – English Learners (National Public)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.

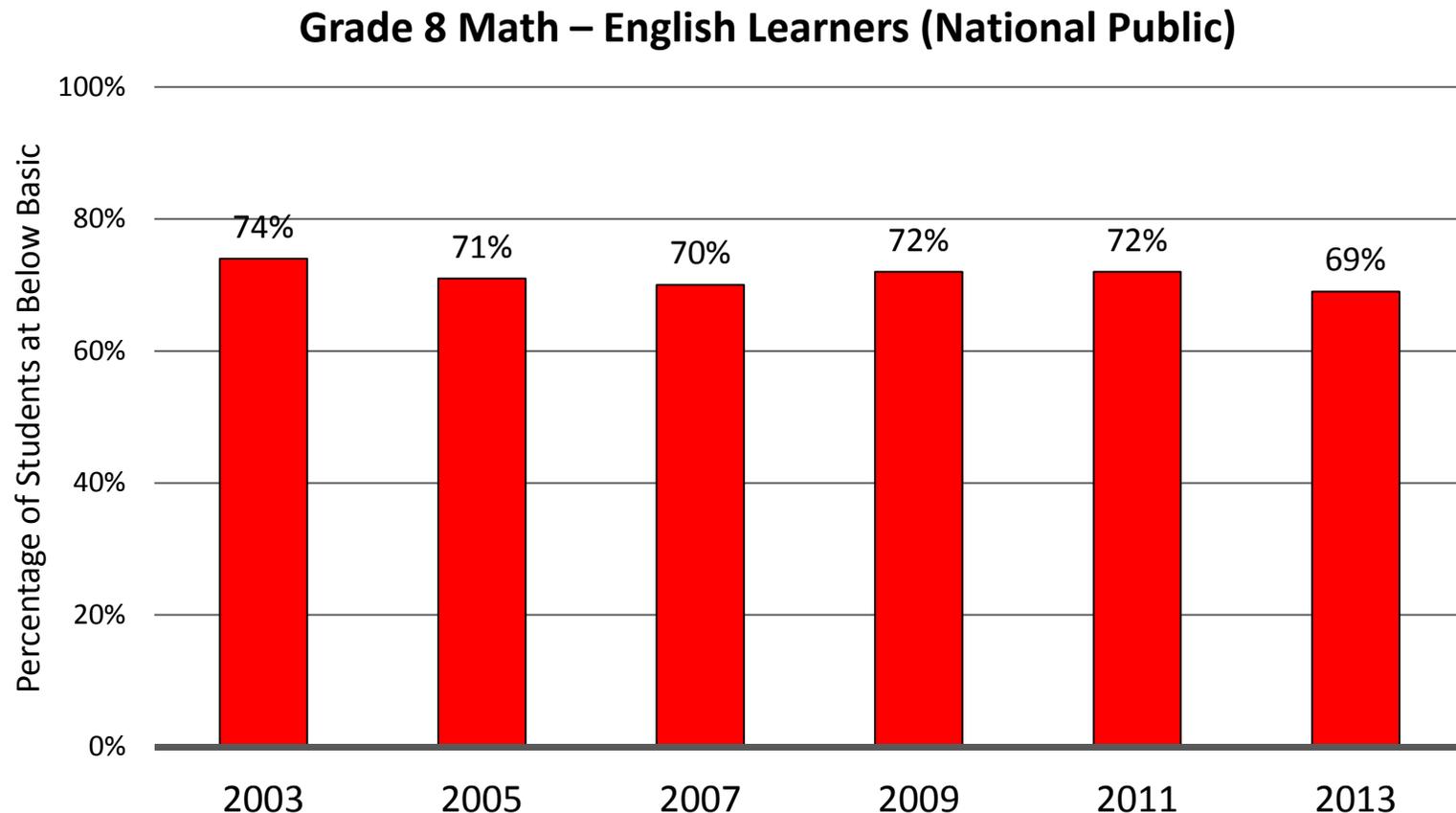
English learners scores rising slightly – but gaps widening

National Public – Grade 8 NAEP Math



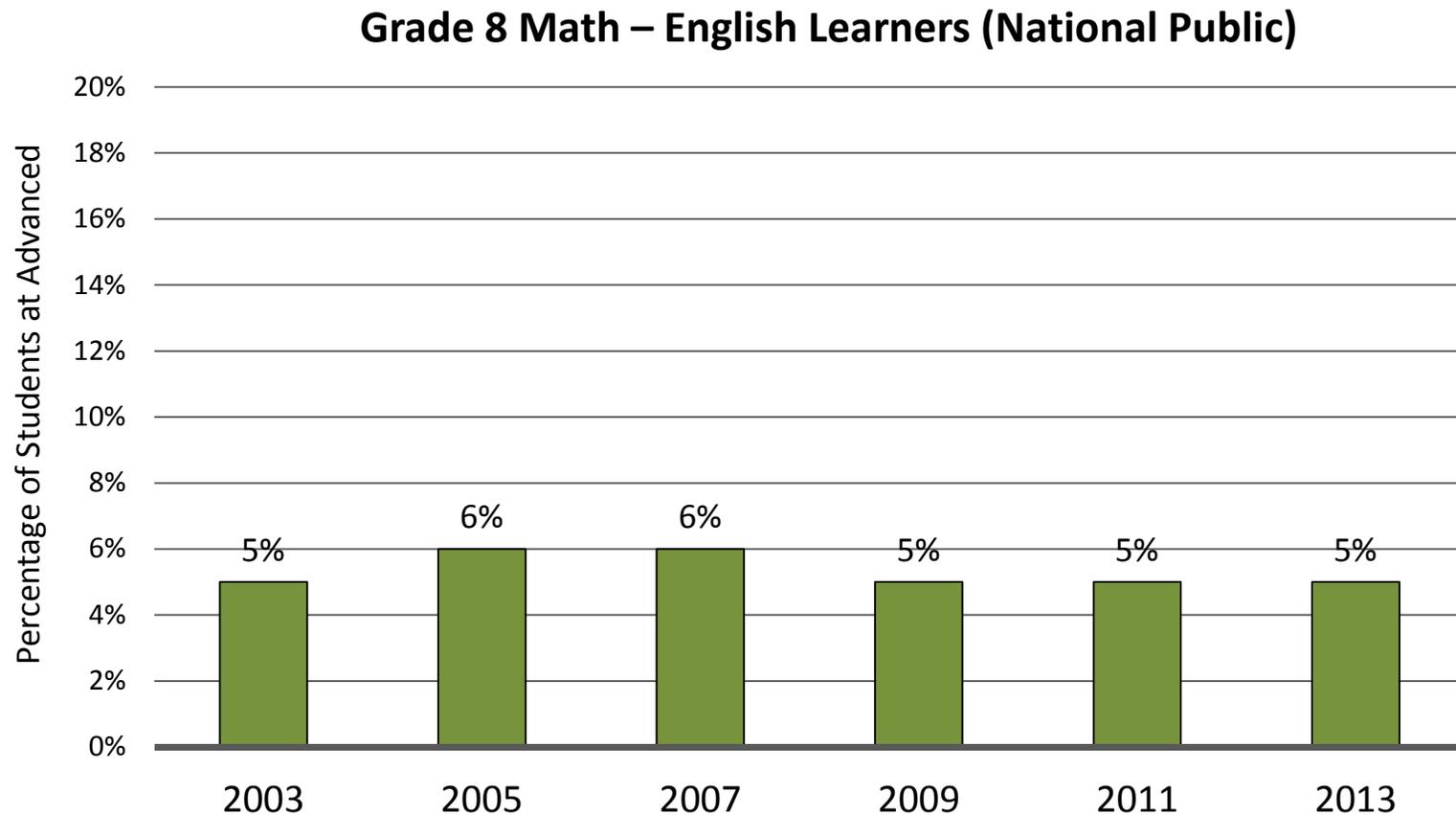
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 299; Basic Scale Score = 262).

Slight decline in the percentage of English learners with below basic math skills



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.

No change in percentage of ELLs with proficient or advanced math skills



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>.

Differences among the states?

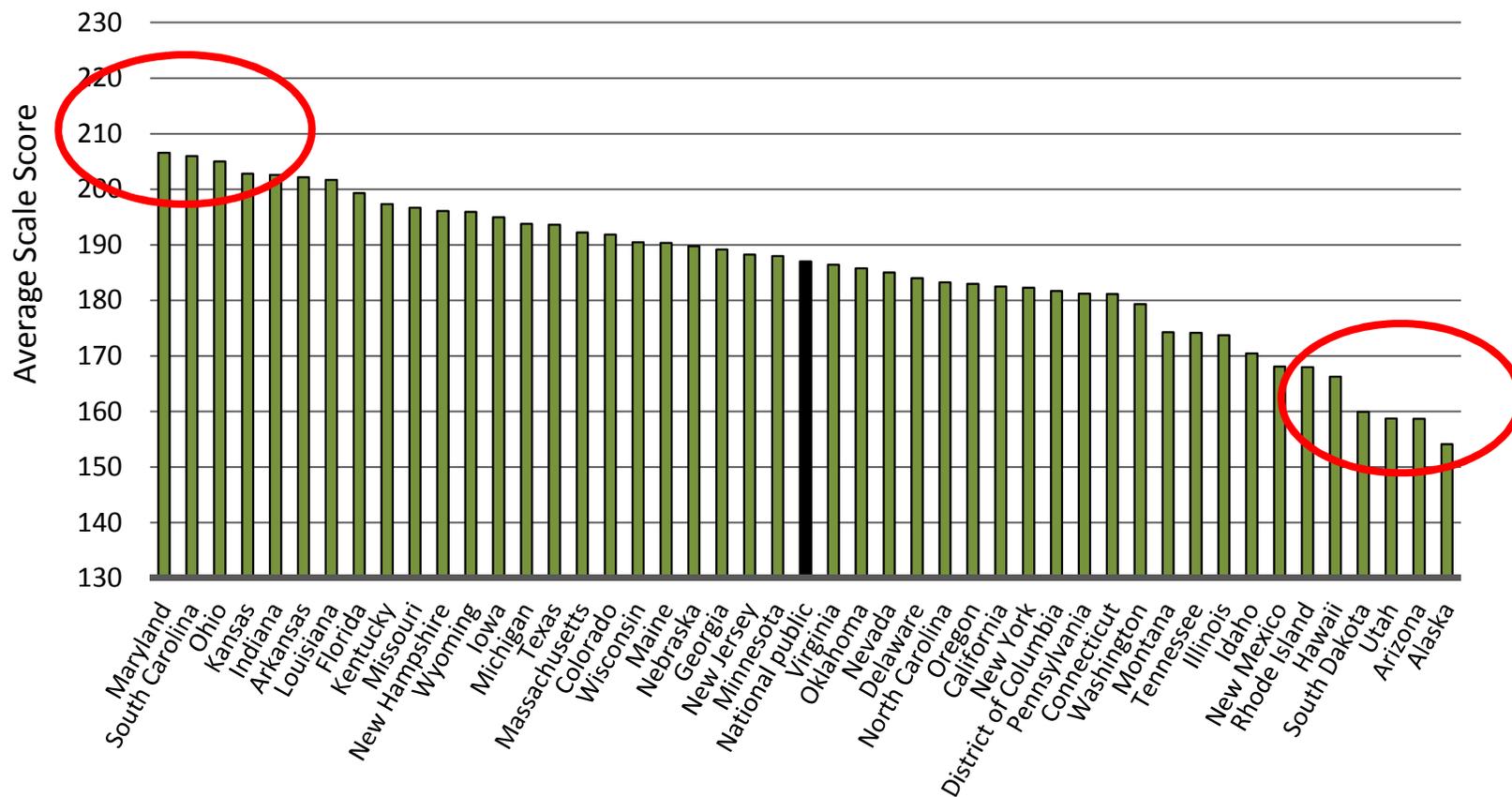
People naturally want to use NAEP to understand how states compare to each other with respect to educating English learners to high levels.



And states do vary widely in terms
of both performance and
improvement over time.

Wide variation in average English learner performance by state

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208).

NAEP Grade 4 Reading – English Language Learners

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores
(2003 – 2013)

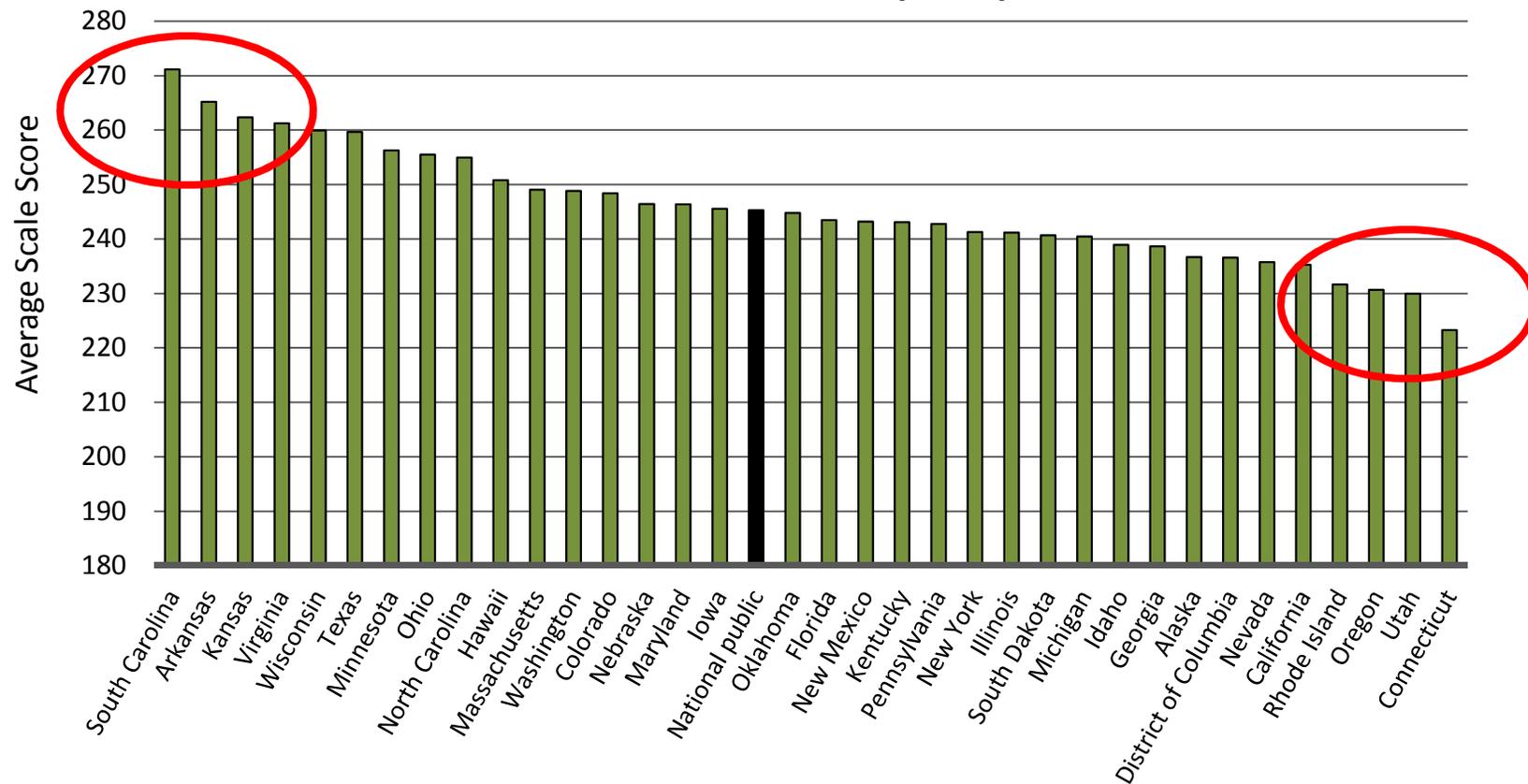
State	Gain
Ohio	31
Maryland	13
Minnesota	12
Kansas	12

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for English learners increased by 1 point from 2003 to 2013.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>

Scale Scores by State – English Learners

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 299; Basic Scale Score = 262)

NAEP Grade 8 Math – English Language Learners

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores
(2003 – 2013)

State	Gain
Ohio	20
Texas	16
Kansas	13
Hawaii	13

Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for English learners increased by 4 points from 2003 to 2013.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/>



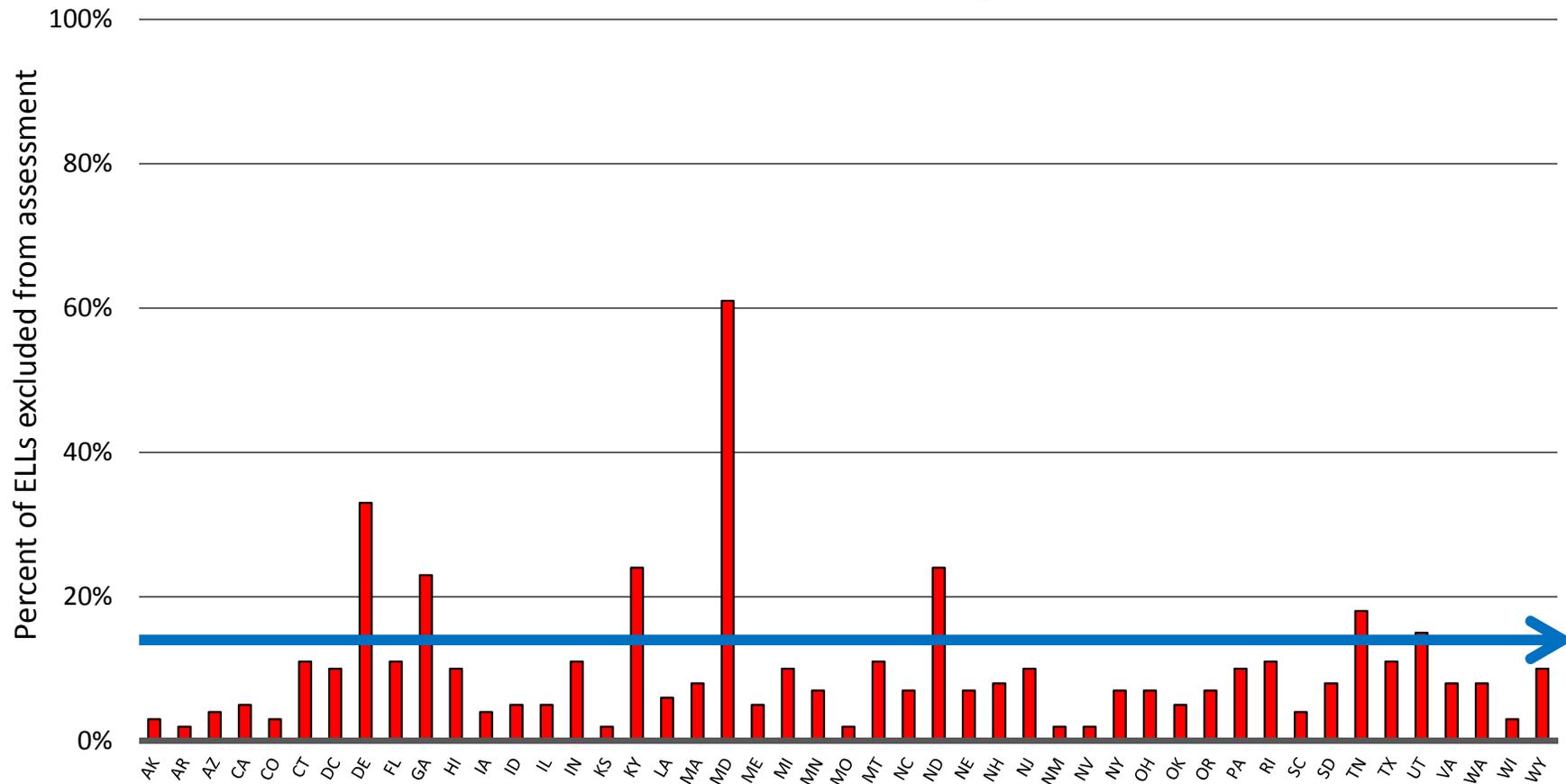
However, state comparisons must be made with *extreme caution*.



Some states exclude many English learners from the assessment because school authorities determine that these students can't fairly be assessed.

Wide variation in exclusion rates

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)



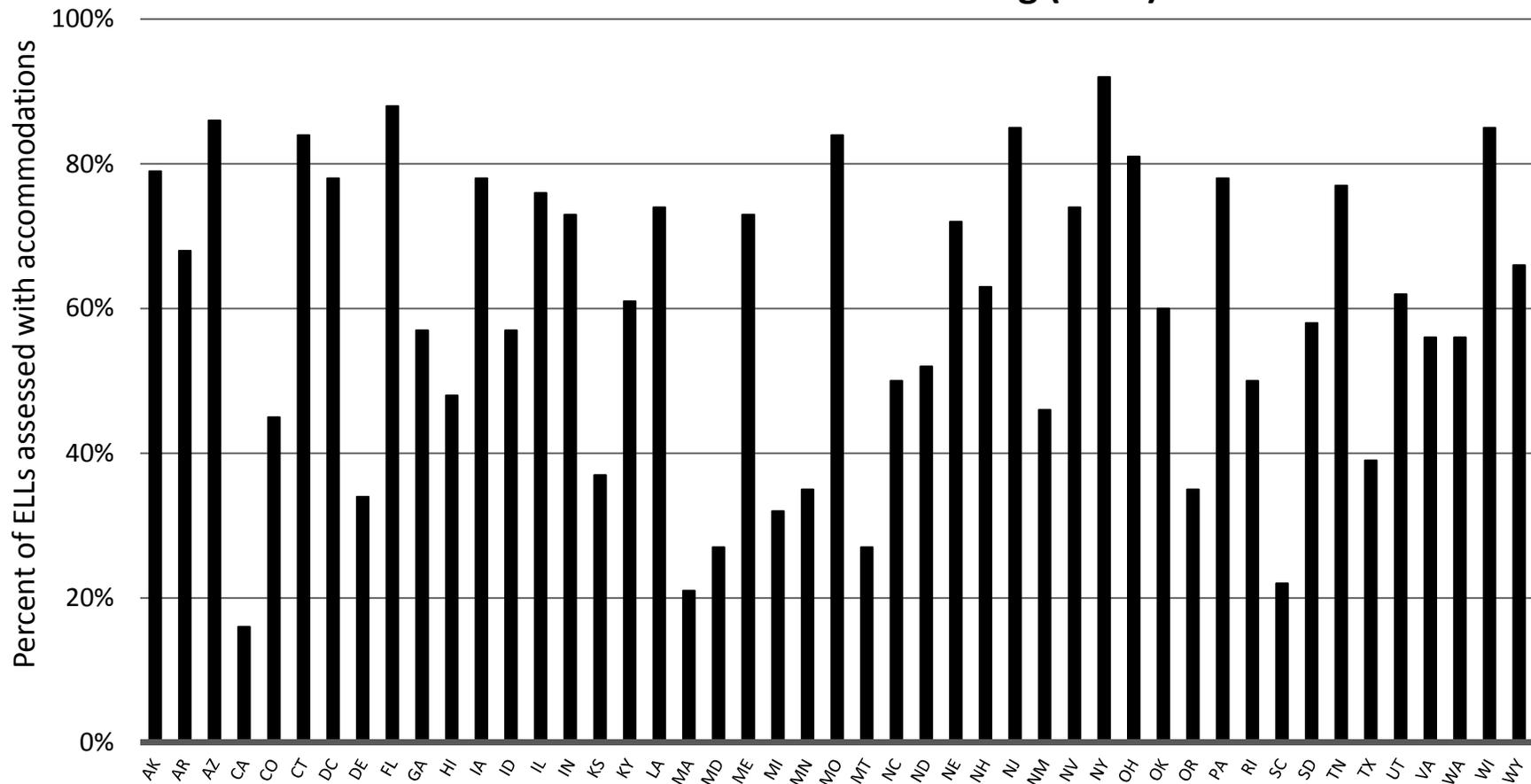
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 reading assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Reading.pdf.



And others assess large proportions
with accommodations – like
providing students with bilingual
test booklets or with additional time
to take the assessment.

Some states provide most ELLs with accommodations; others do so for few ELLs

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)



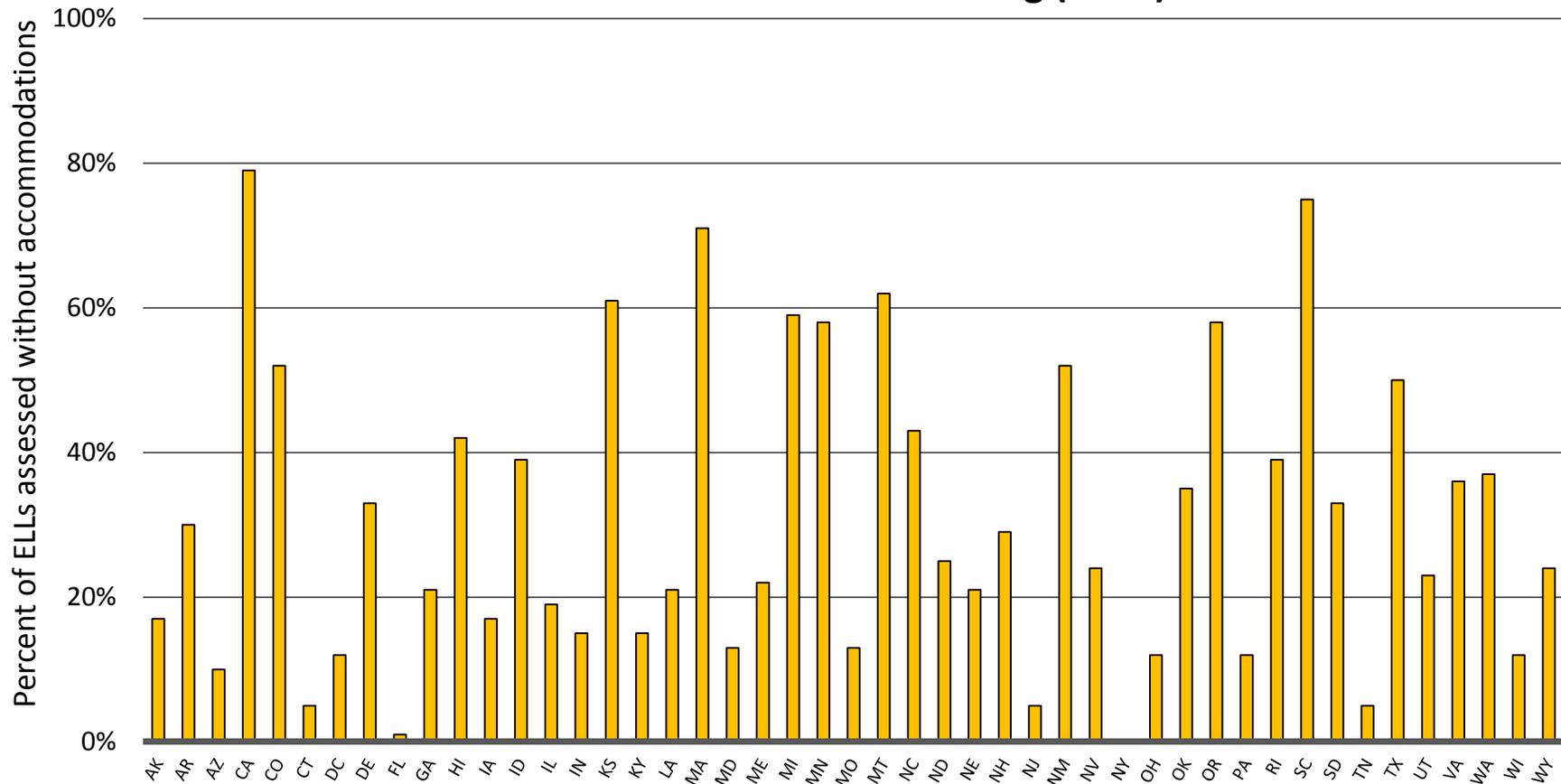
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 reading assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Reading.pdf.



Still others assess most English learners without accommodations – that is, under the same conditions as native English speakers.

Some states – like CA – assess most ELLs without accommodations on NAEP; others – like FL – assess few this way

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)



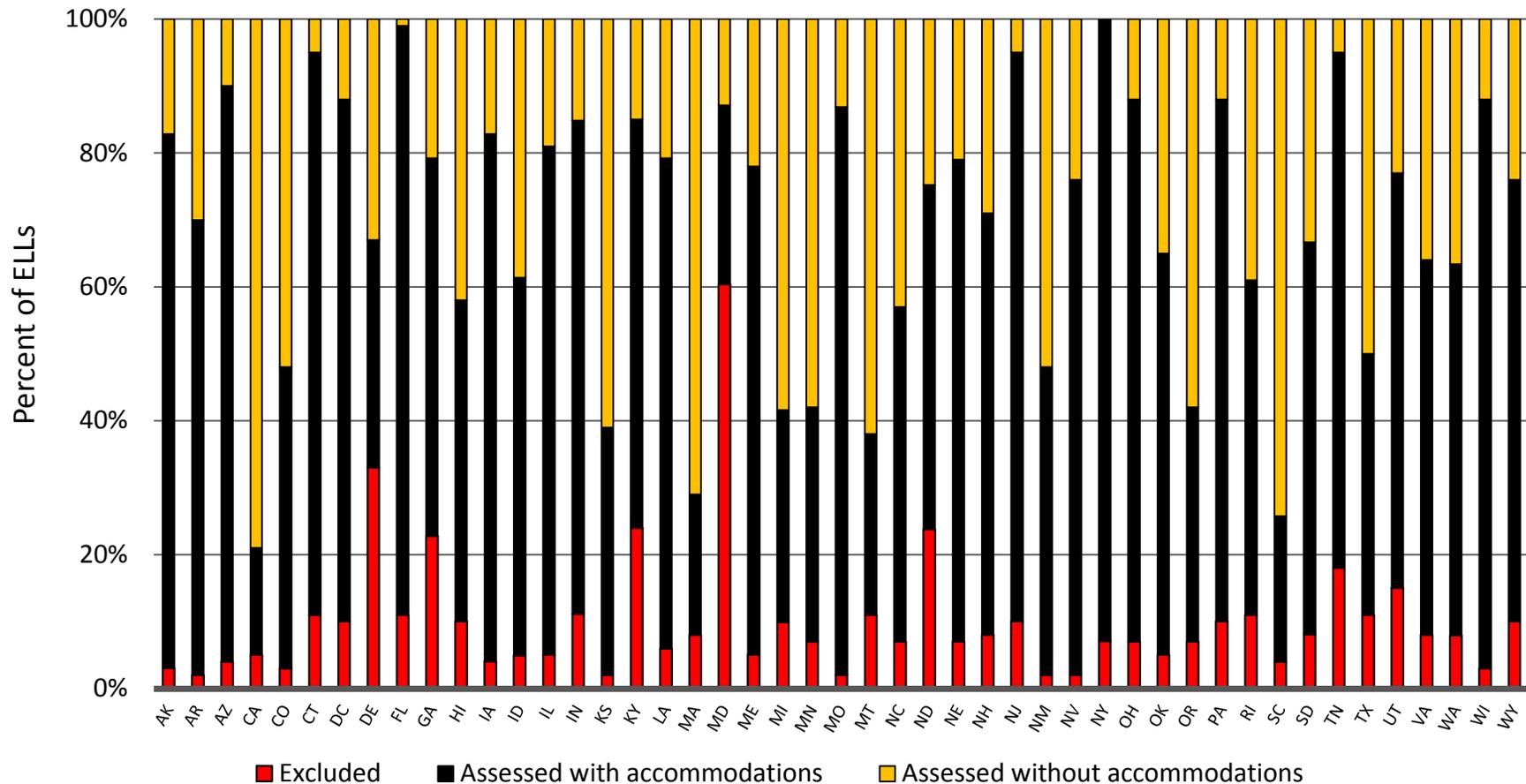
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 reading assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Reading.pdf.



As a result, states look very different
in terms of how – and whether –
English learners are assessed.

Wide variations between states in how English learners are assessed on NAEP

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 reading assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Reading.pdf.



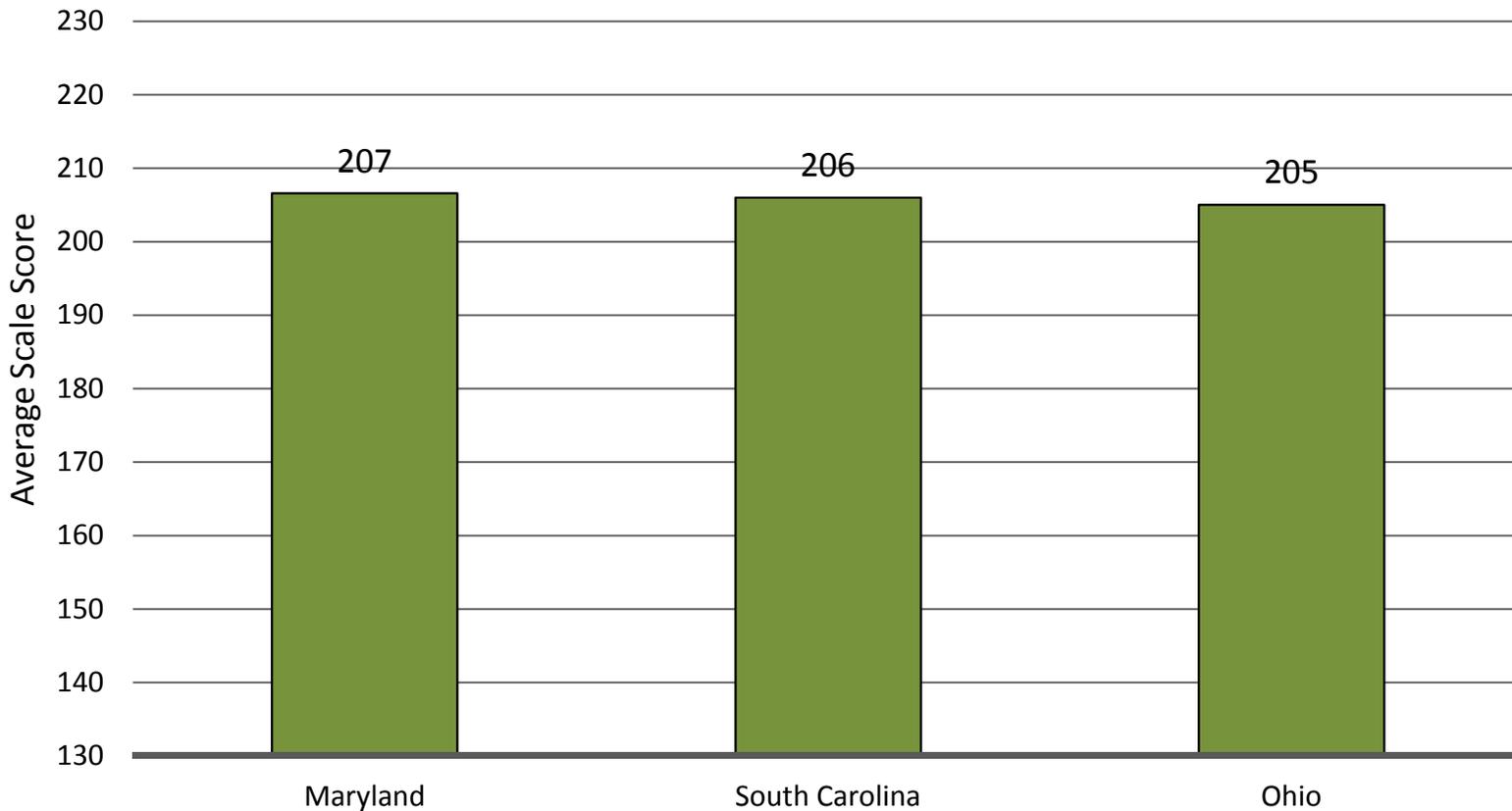
Take, for example, the three states
with the highest 4th grade reading
performance for English learners on
NAEP.



English learners in Maryland, South Carolina, and Ohio have very similar performance.

English learners demonstrate similar reading performance in MD, SC, and OH

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)

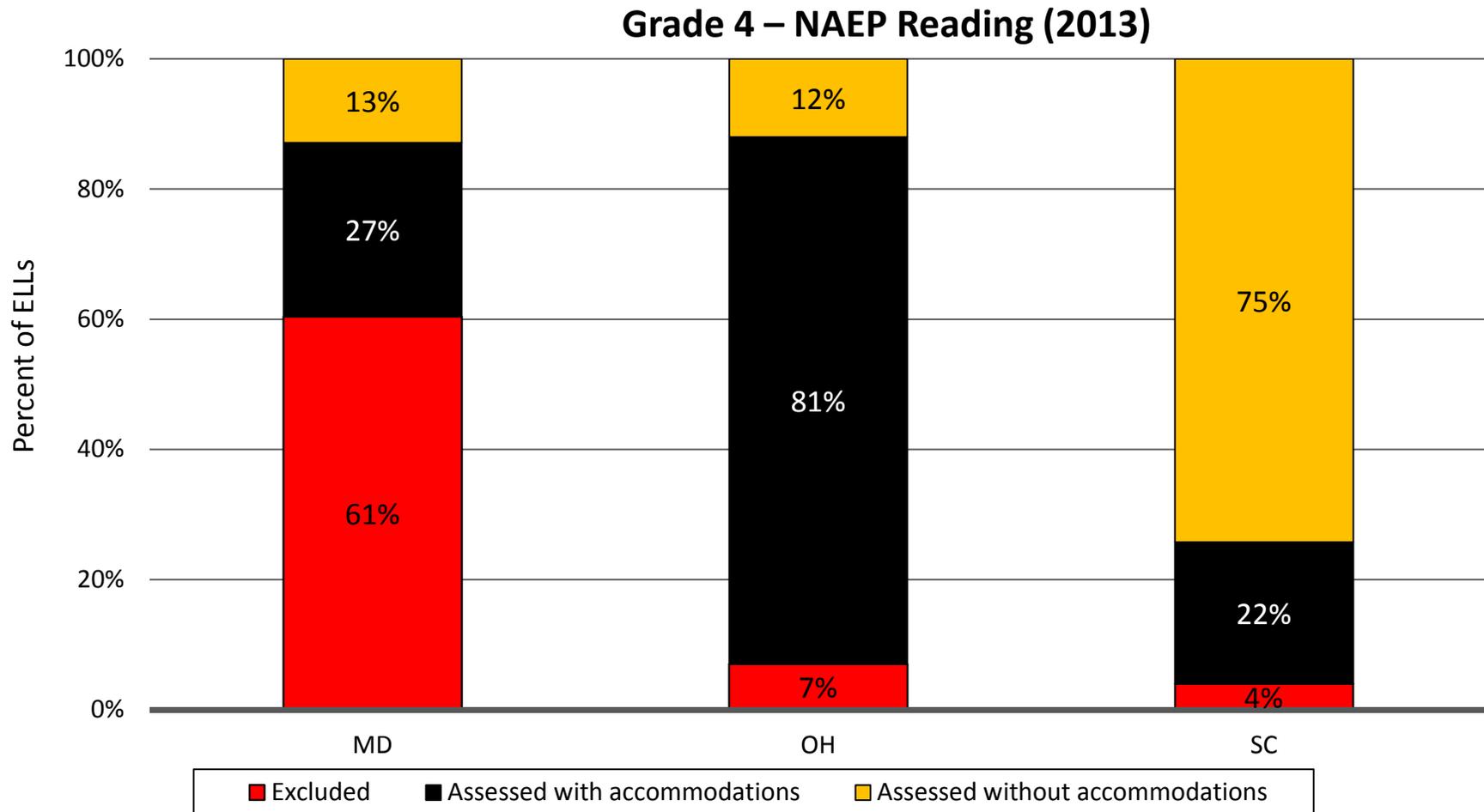


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208).



But these states are very different in
how they assess English learners.

MD excludes most of its English learners; OH assesses most with accommodations; and SC assesses most without accommodations



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 reading assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Reading.pdf.



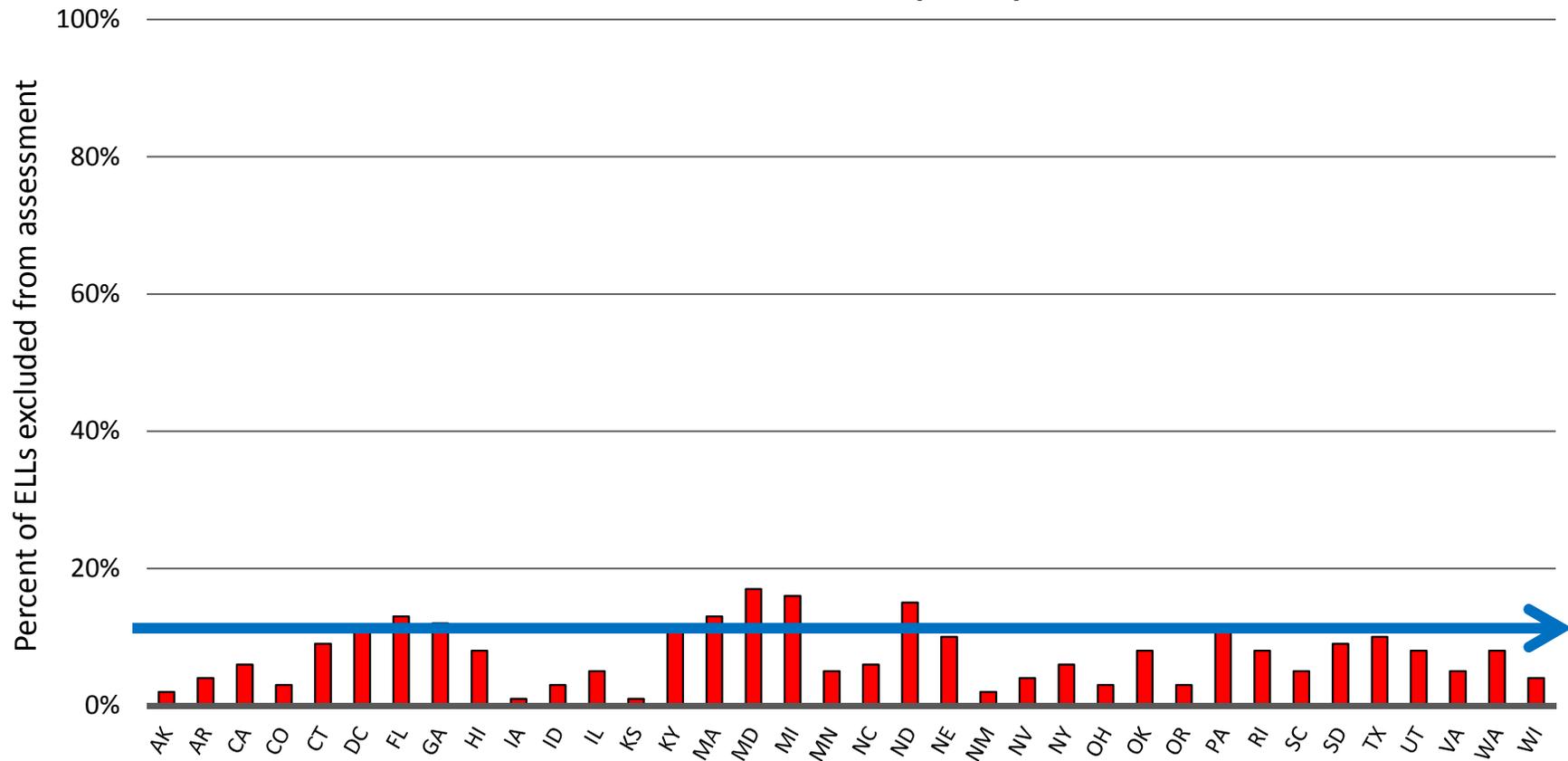
The patterns are much the same—
though less pronounced—in 8th
grade math.



Some variation in states' exclusion rates.

NAEP exclusion rates for English learners vary widely across states

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



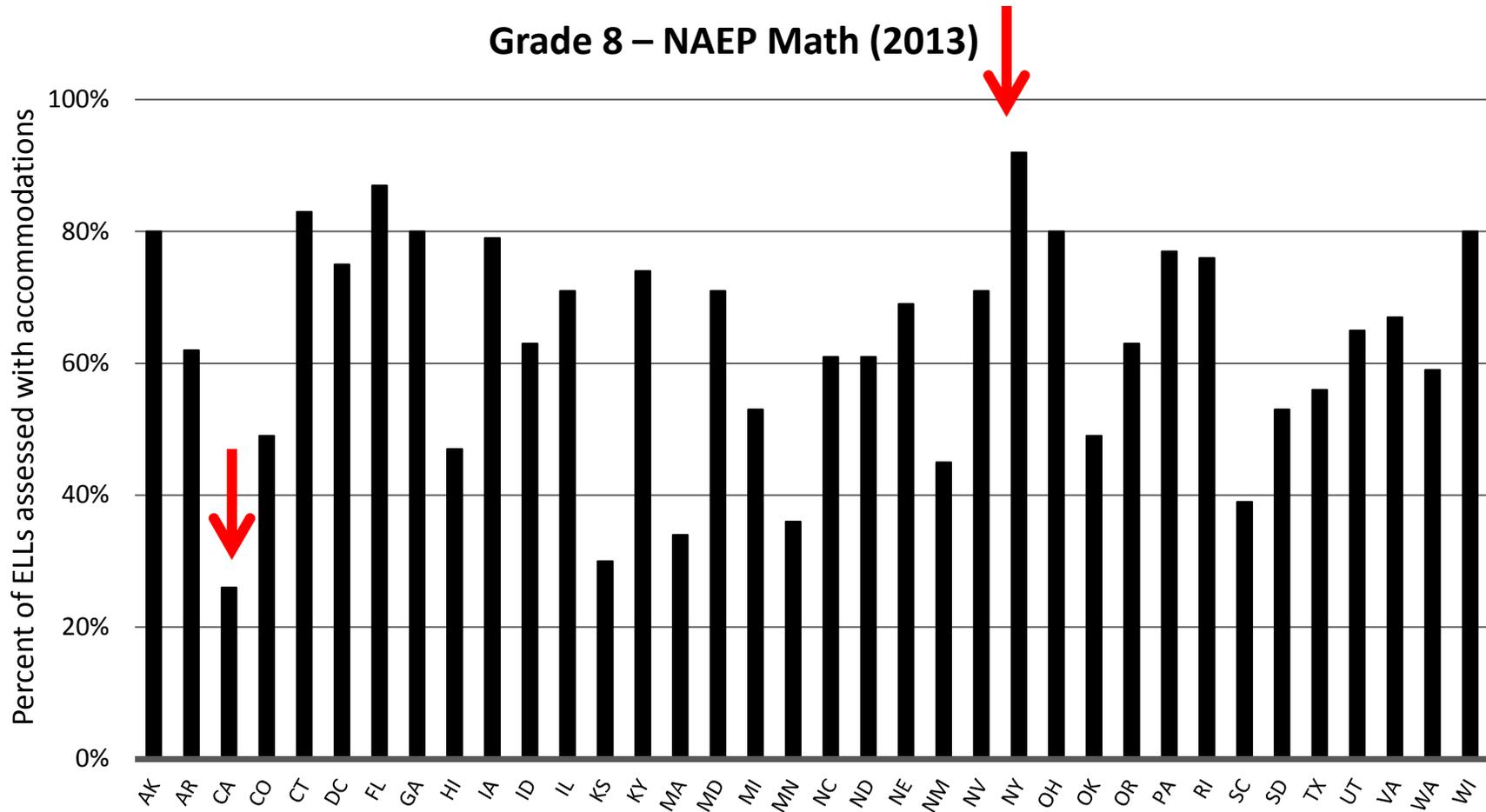
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 math assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Math.pdf



Wide differences in the proportion
of English learners assessed with
accommodations.

Some states, like NY, assess many ELLs with accommodations; others, like CA, don't

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



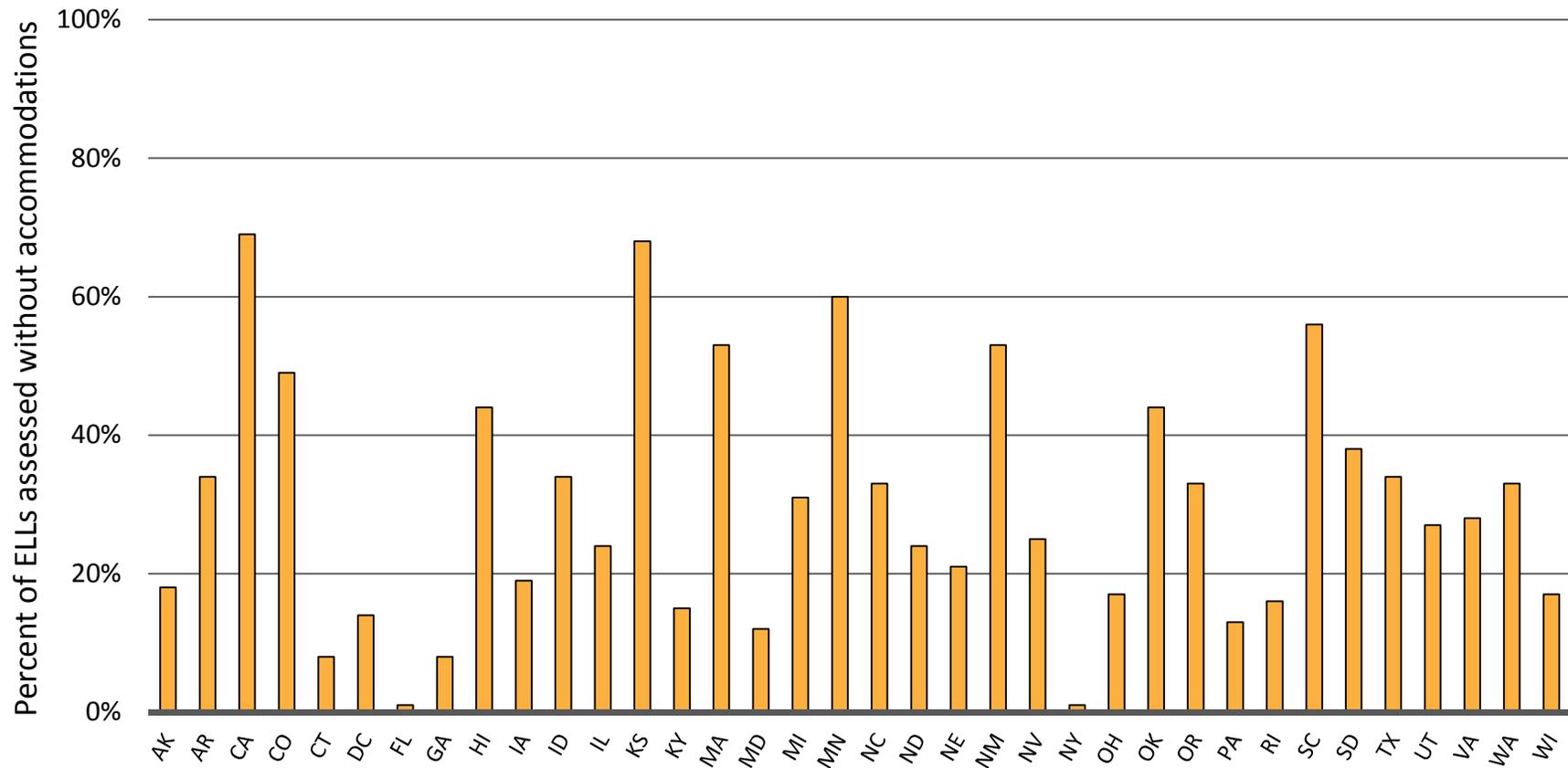
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 math assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Math.pdf



And wide variation in terms of
assessing students without
accommodation.

Some states assess many ELLs without accommodations on NAEP; others assess few this way

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



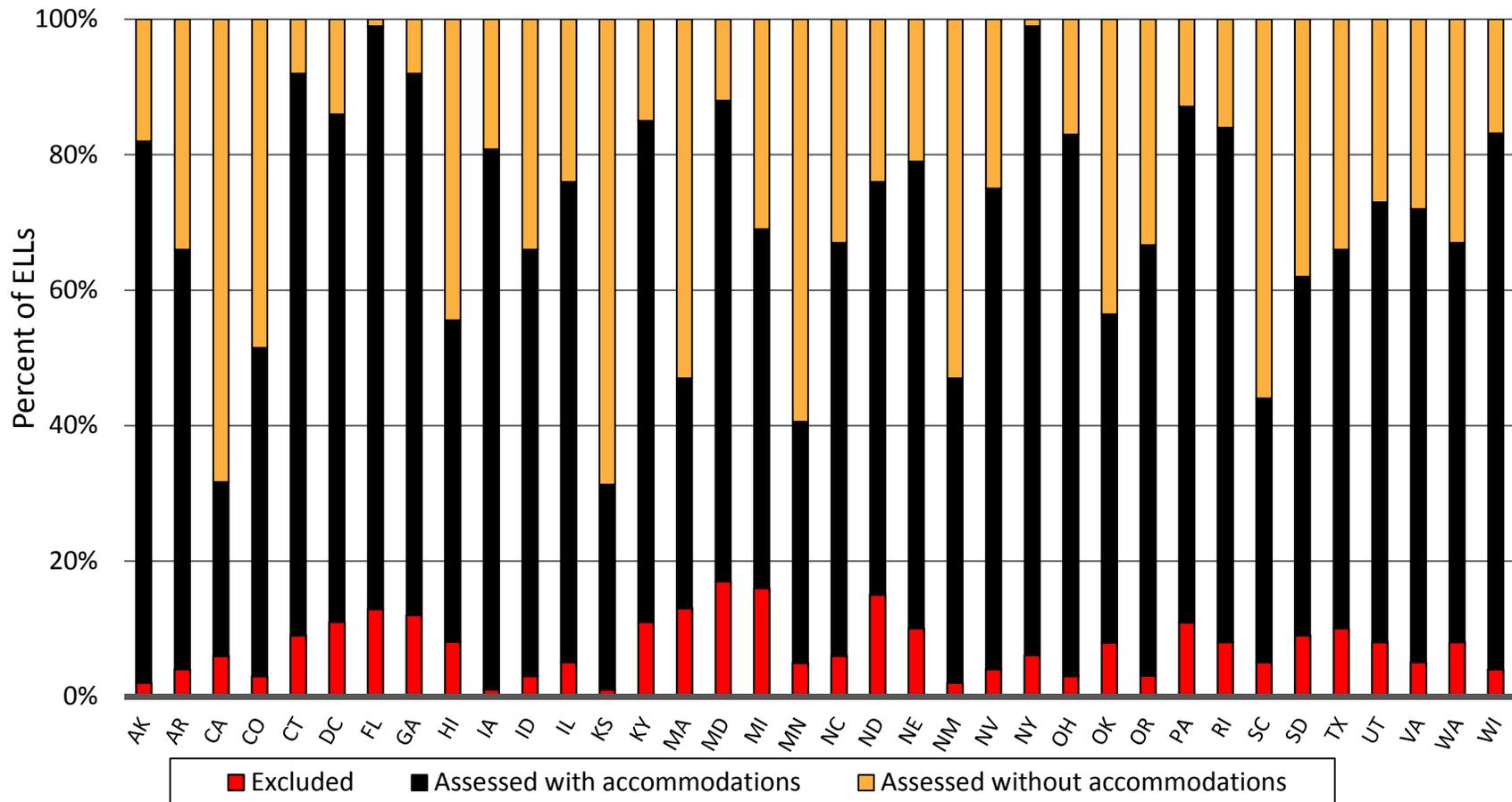
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 math assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Math.pdf



Add it all together, and states again look very different in how they treat their English learners.

Wide variations between states in how English learners are assessed on NAEP

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



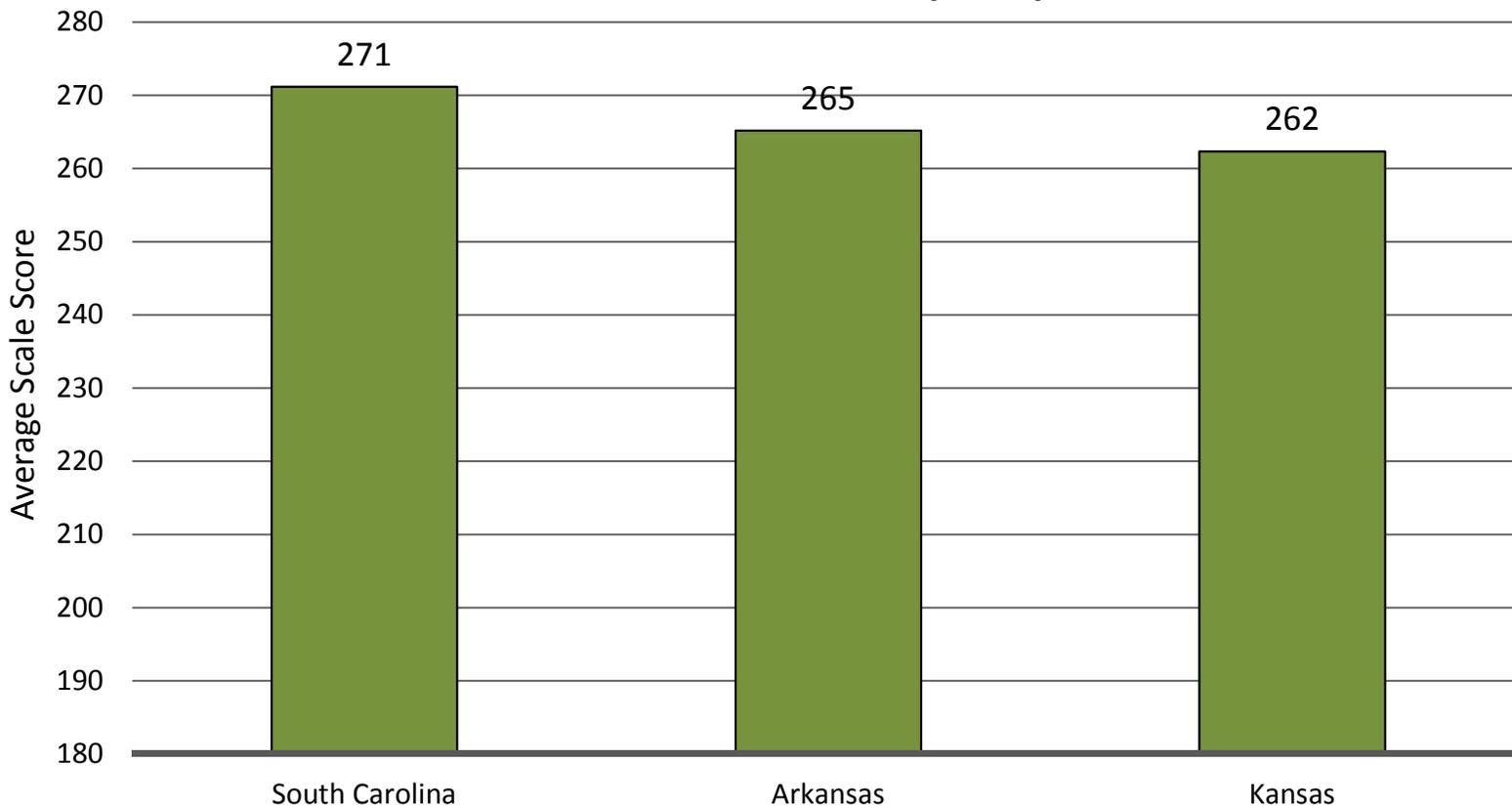
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 math assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Math.pdf



In the three states with the highest
math performance for English
learners, performance looks similar.

Similar math performance for English learners in SC, AR, and KS

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



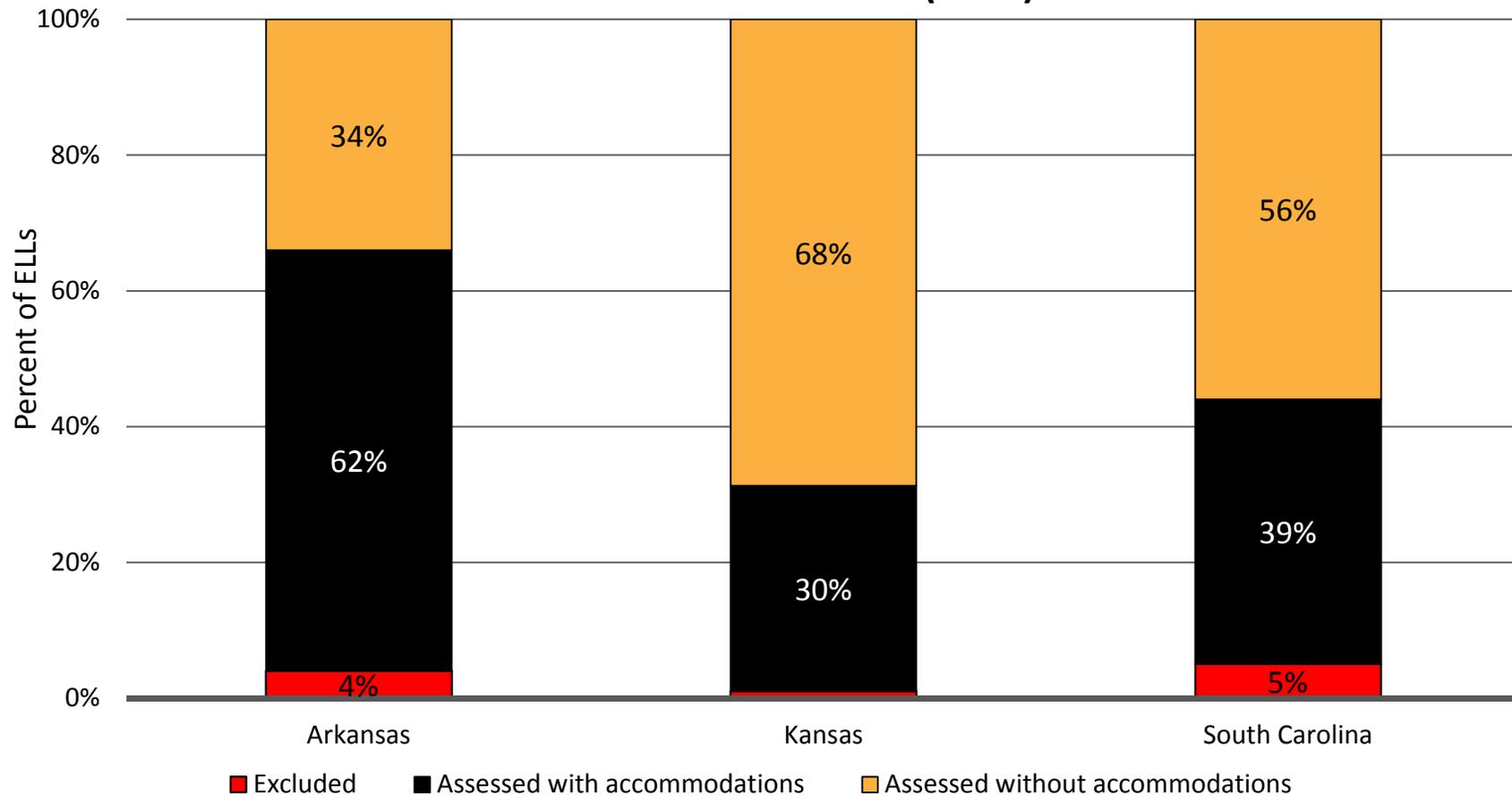
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/> (Proficient Scale Score = 299; Basic Scale Score = 262)



But we again see big differences in
how English learners are assessed.

AR assesses most of its English learners with accommodations; KS and SC assess most without accommodations

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013 math assessment report card: summary data tables for national and state sample sizes, participation rates, and proportions of SD and ELL students identified, http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Tech_Appendix_Math.pdf



So, before comparing state performance on NAEP, it's crucial to understand how state assessment policies differ.



Performance in High School and Thereafter?



Graduation rates can be challenging
to compare across states.

Even though states are now supposed to be using the cohort graduation rate, some have been doing so longer than others.

And we know that state reporting of cohort graduation rates gets better each year.

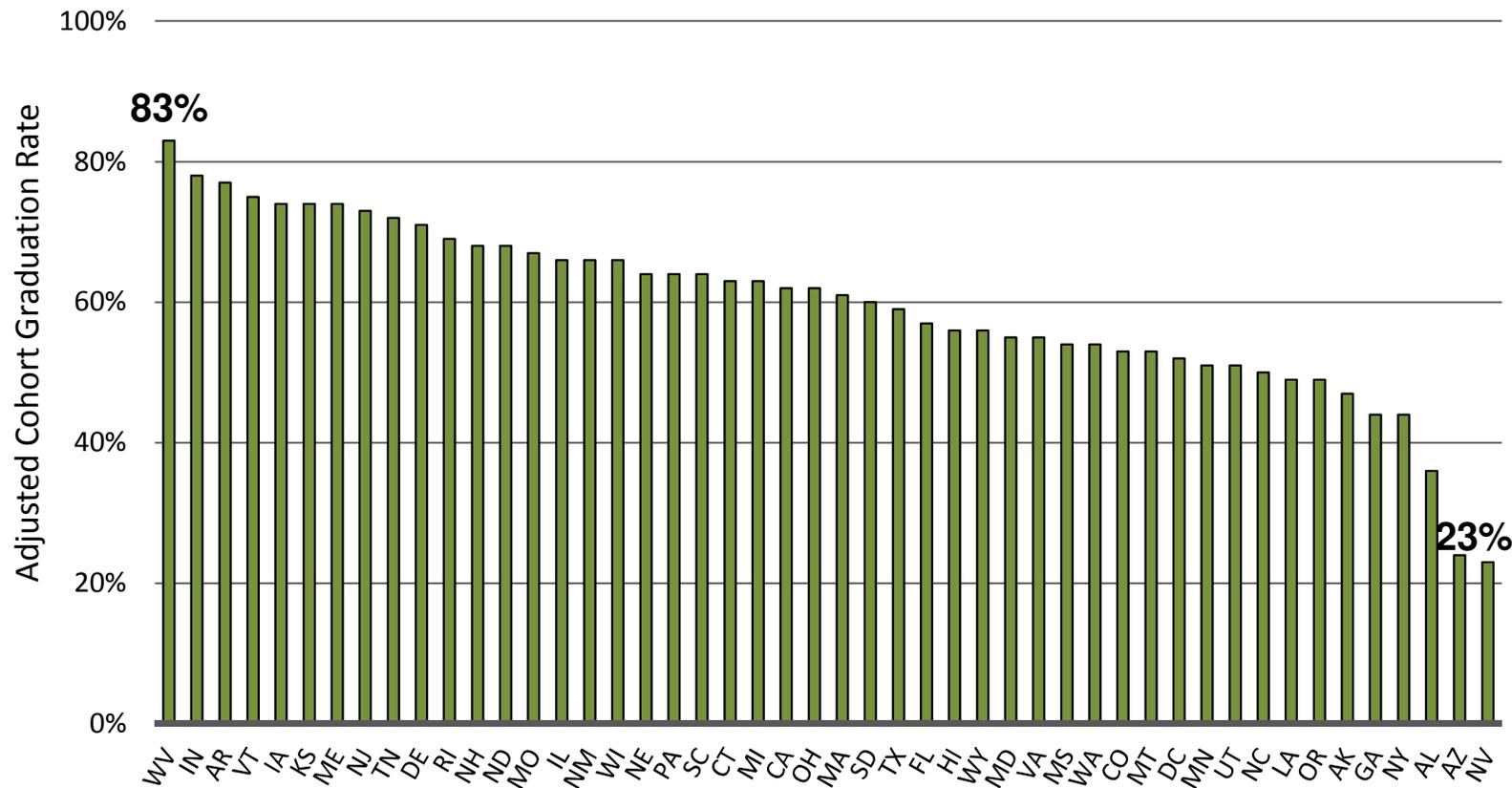


However, there are wide differences
in terms of how well states do at
graduating their English learners in
four years.

That's according to states' own reporting.

Wide variation in 4-year cohort graduation rates for English learners

Class of 2012



Source: EDFacts/Consolidated State Performance Report, 2011-12: <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html>.



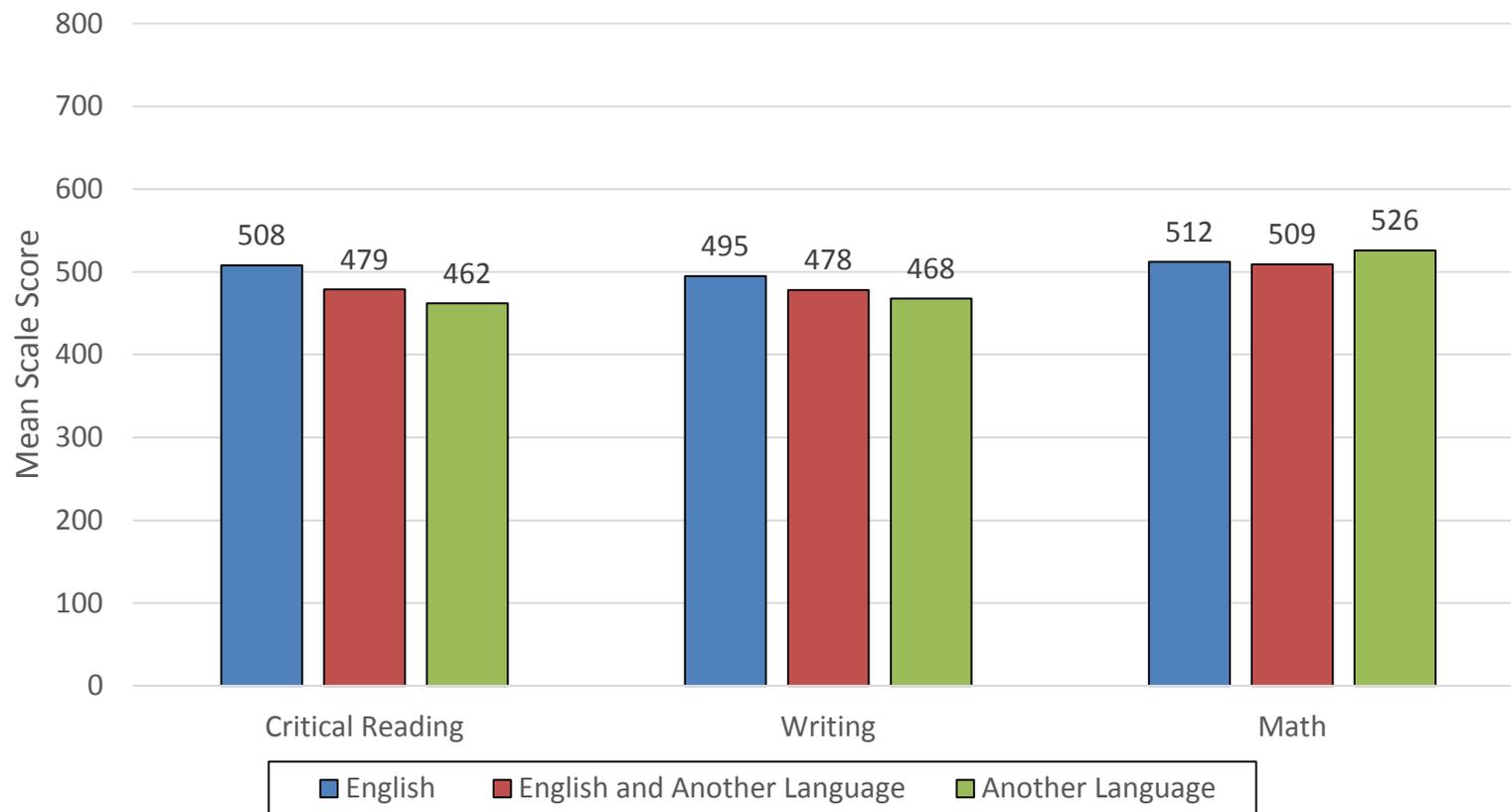
In general, students who are not native English speakers perform slightly below native English speakers in reading and writing on the SAT – but slightly above native speakers in math.



However, we don't know how many non-native English speakers take the SAT – or who these students are.

Higher reading and writing, lower math scores for native English speakers

Mean Score by First Language Learned



Source: The College Board, "2013 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report," 2013.

Bottom Line: English Learners

- Perform significantly below other students in both reading and math; gaps flat or growing;
- Complete fewer academic and advanced academic courses in high school;
- Considerably less likely to graduate from high school;
- Less likely to be “college ready” upon graduation, except in math.

Source:

Does it have to be this way?



Across the country, there are schools that are doing a much better job than schools serving the same kinds of kids.



Some are in states and districts that
have historically served large
numbers of English learners...

Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary School

Miami-Dade, Florida

- 511 students in grades PK – 5
- 98% Latino
- 87% Low Income
- 57% English Language Learners

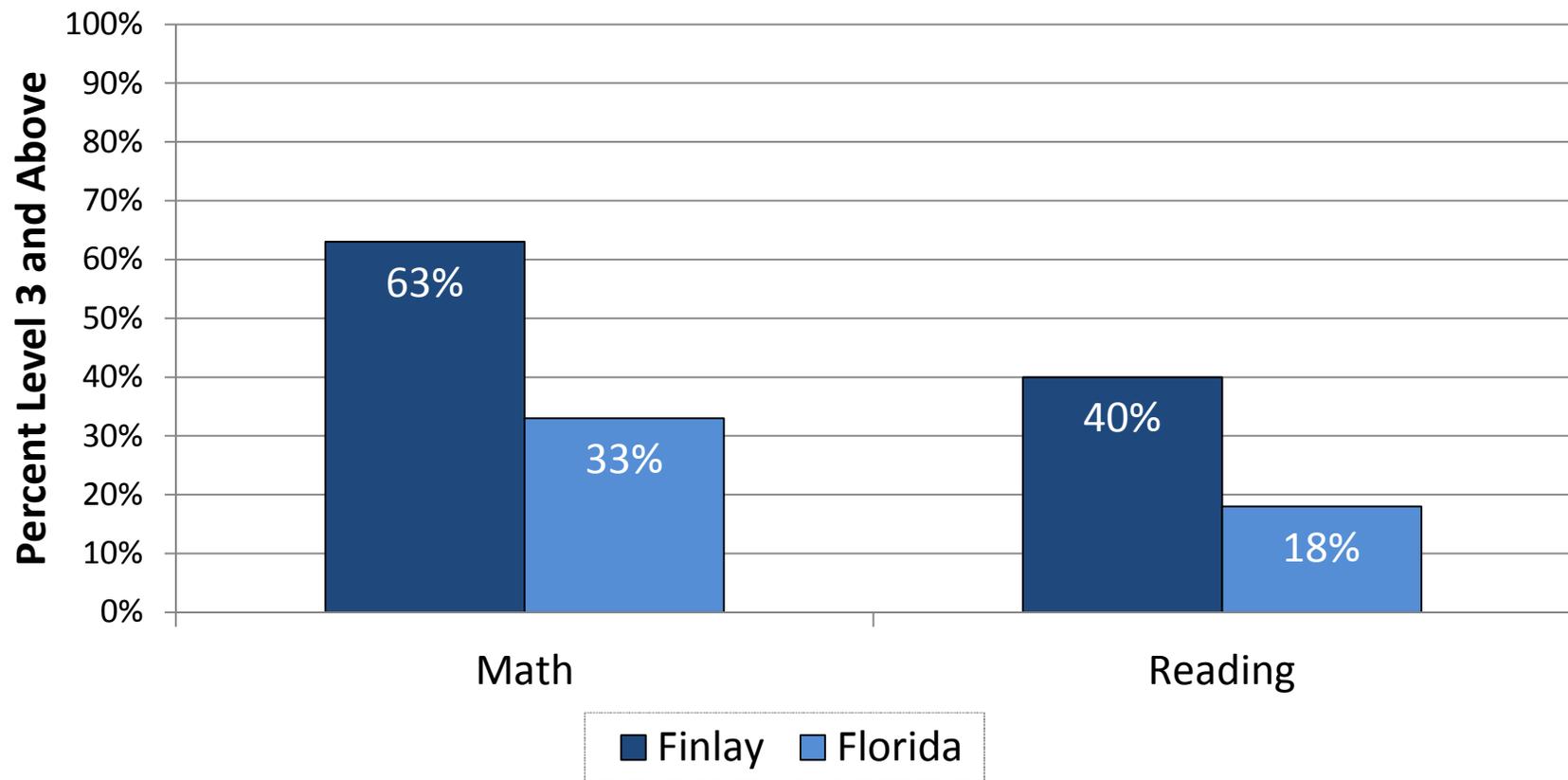


Note: Data are for 2012-2013 school year.

Source: Florida Department of Education

Outperforming the State at Finlay Elementary

English Learners – Grade 3 (2013)



Source: Florida Department of Education



Halle Hewetson Elementary School

Las Vegas, NV

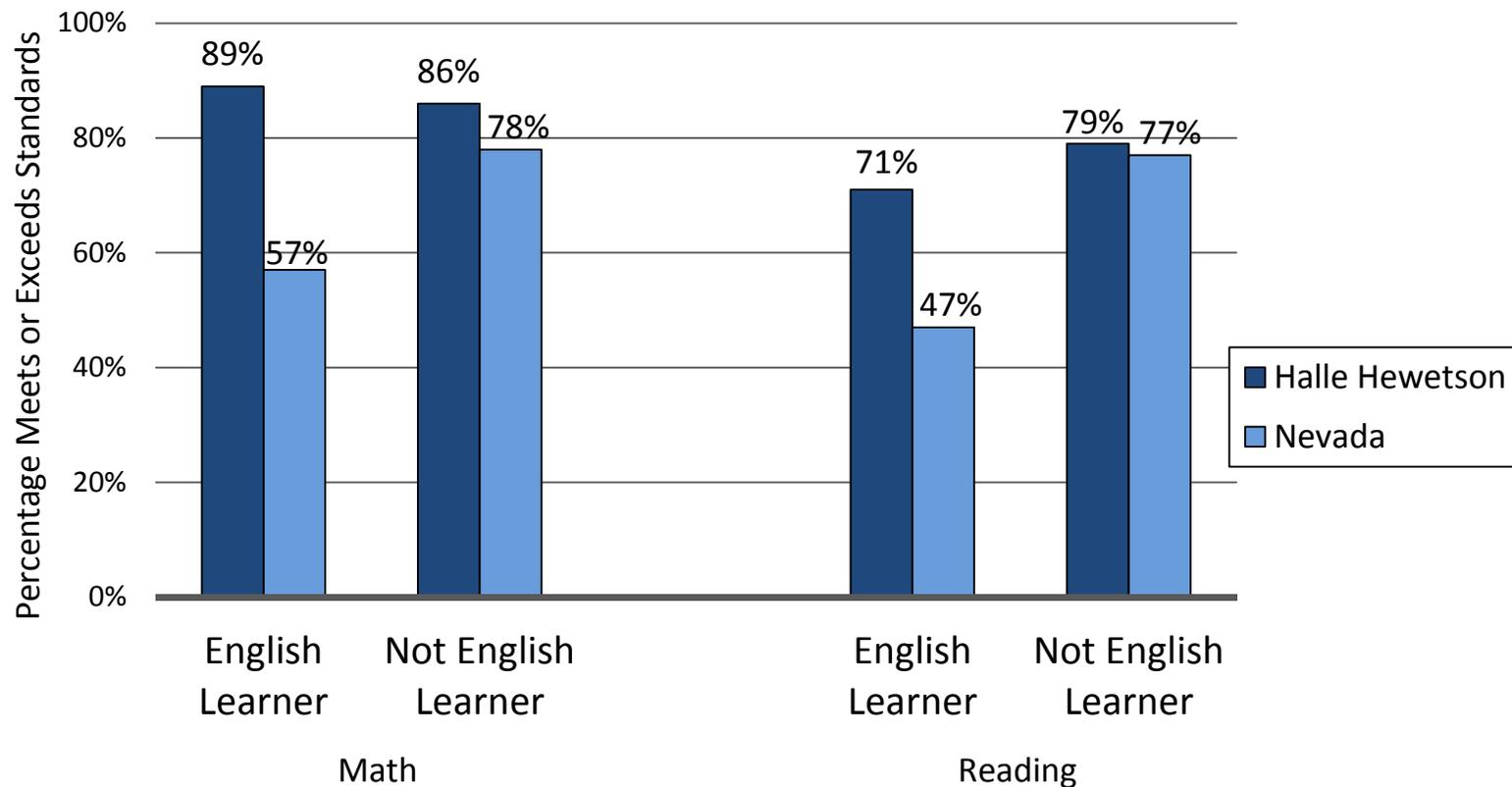
- 962 students in grades PK – 5
 - 85% Latino
 - 7% African American
- 100% Low Income
- 71% Limited English Proficient



Note: Data are for 2010-2011 school year
Source: Nevada Department of Education

High Performance at Halle Hewetson Elementary

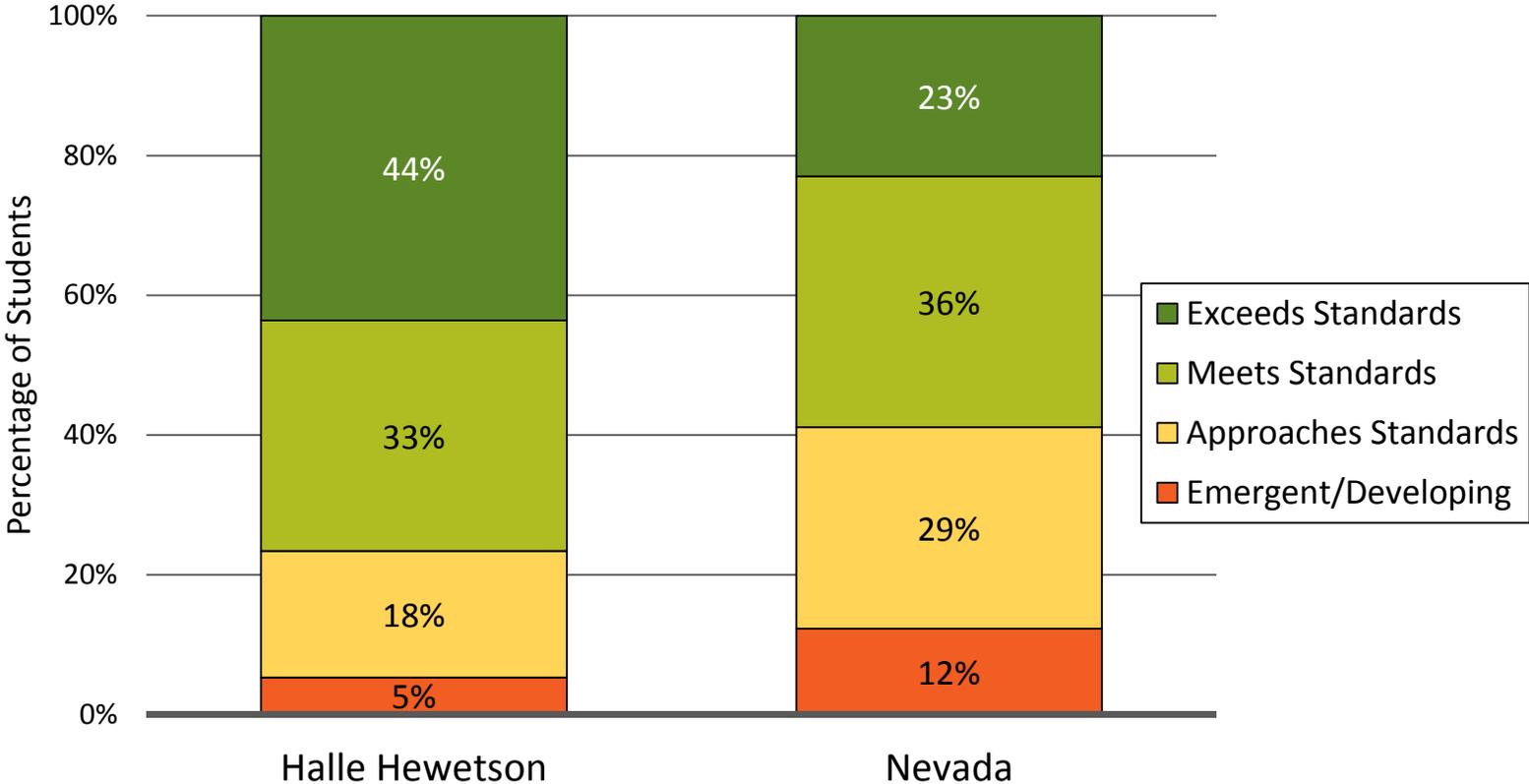
Grade 4 (2013)



Source: Nevada Department of Education

Exceeding Standards at Halle Hewetson Elementary

English Learners – Grade 3 Math (2013)



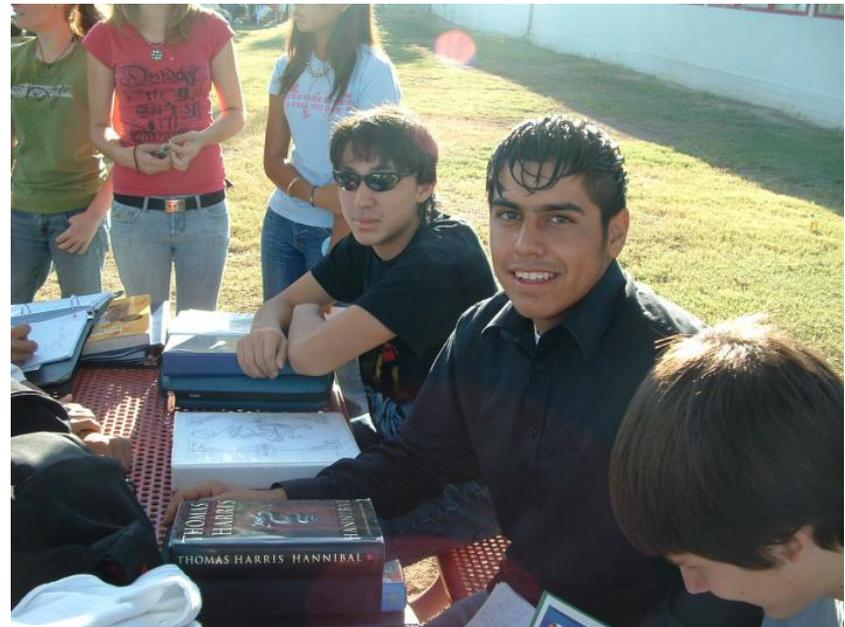
Source: Nevada Department of Education



Imperial High School

Imperial, CA

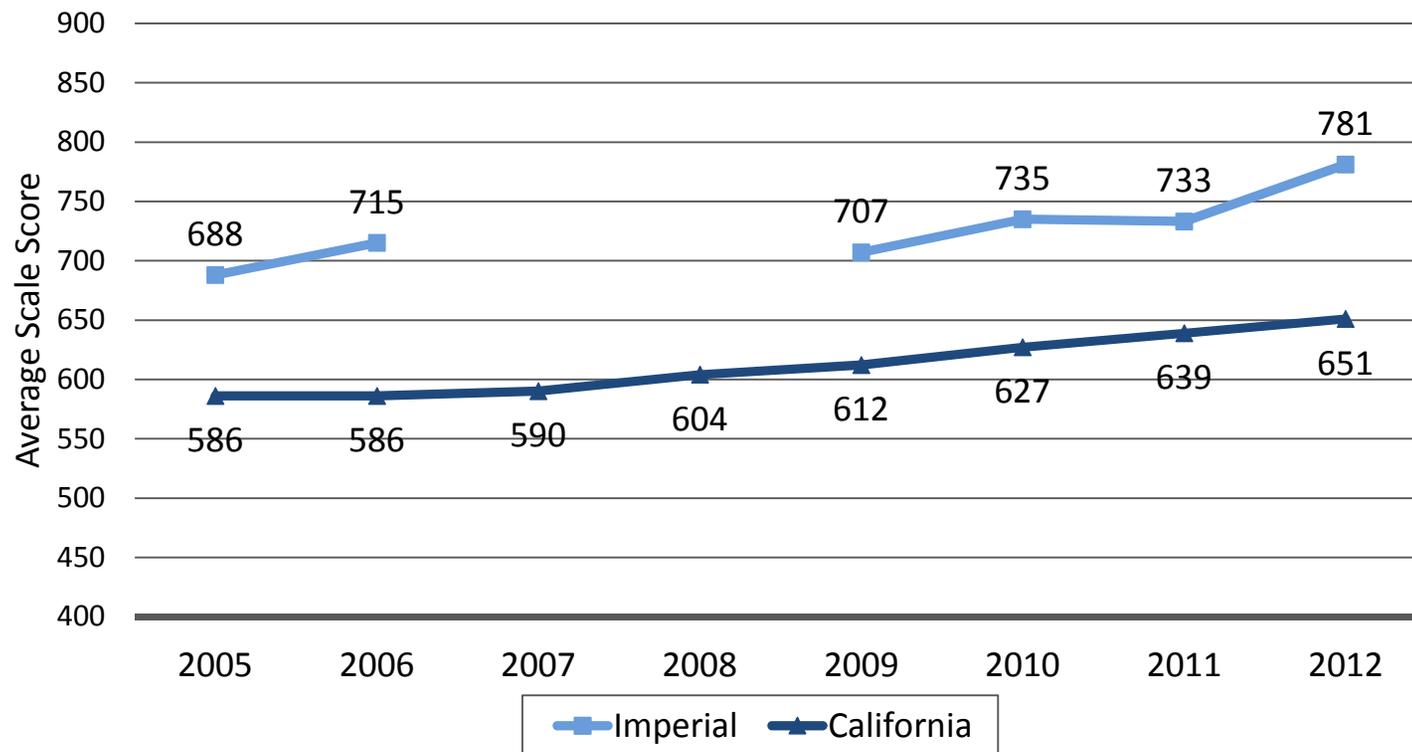
- 1,024 students in grades 9 – 12
 - 77% Latino
 - 18% White
- 43% Low Income
- 32% Limited English Proficient



Note: Data are for 2012-13 school year. LEP counts are based on the NCLB definition.
Source: California Department of Education

Outperforming the state at Imperial High School

Base API – English Learners



Note: English learners are defined as those currently identified as and English learner based on the results of the California English Language Development Test, or a reclassified fluent-English-proficient student who has not scored at the proficient level or above on the CST or CMA in English Language Arts three times after being reclassified. In 2012, 237 students were included in Imperial's English learner subgroup for the API, representing about 33% of students included in the school's API. In 2007 and 2008, API for English learners was not reported for Imperial High School. California data reflect English learners in grades 9-12 only.

Source: California Department of Education





Others are in states and districts that have experienced rapid growth in their English learner population...

De Queen Elementary School

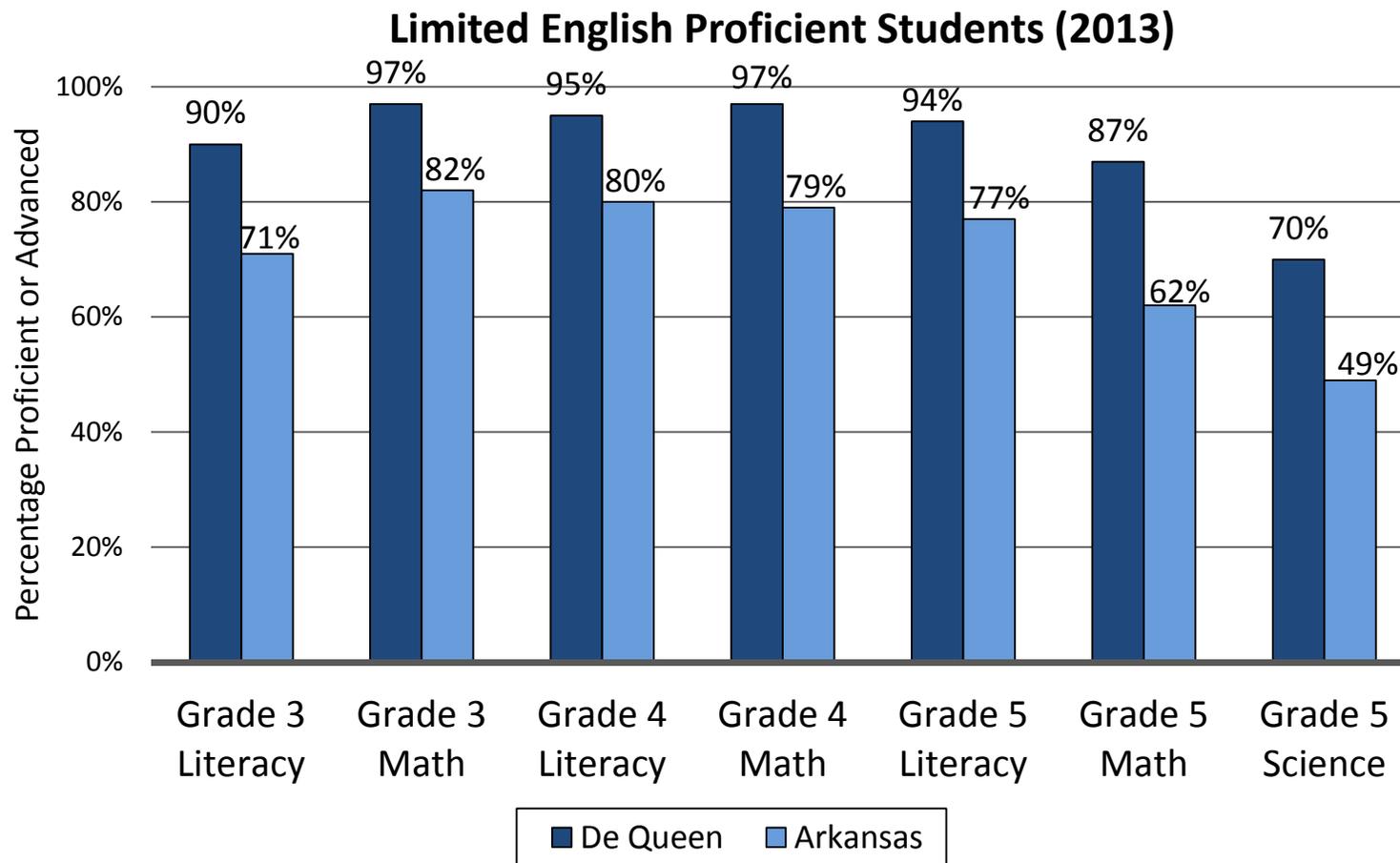
De Queen, Arkansas

- 555 students in grades 3 – 5
- 67% Latino
- 27% White
- 77% Low Income
- 59% Limited English Proficient



Source: Arkansas Department of Education

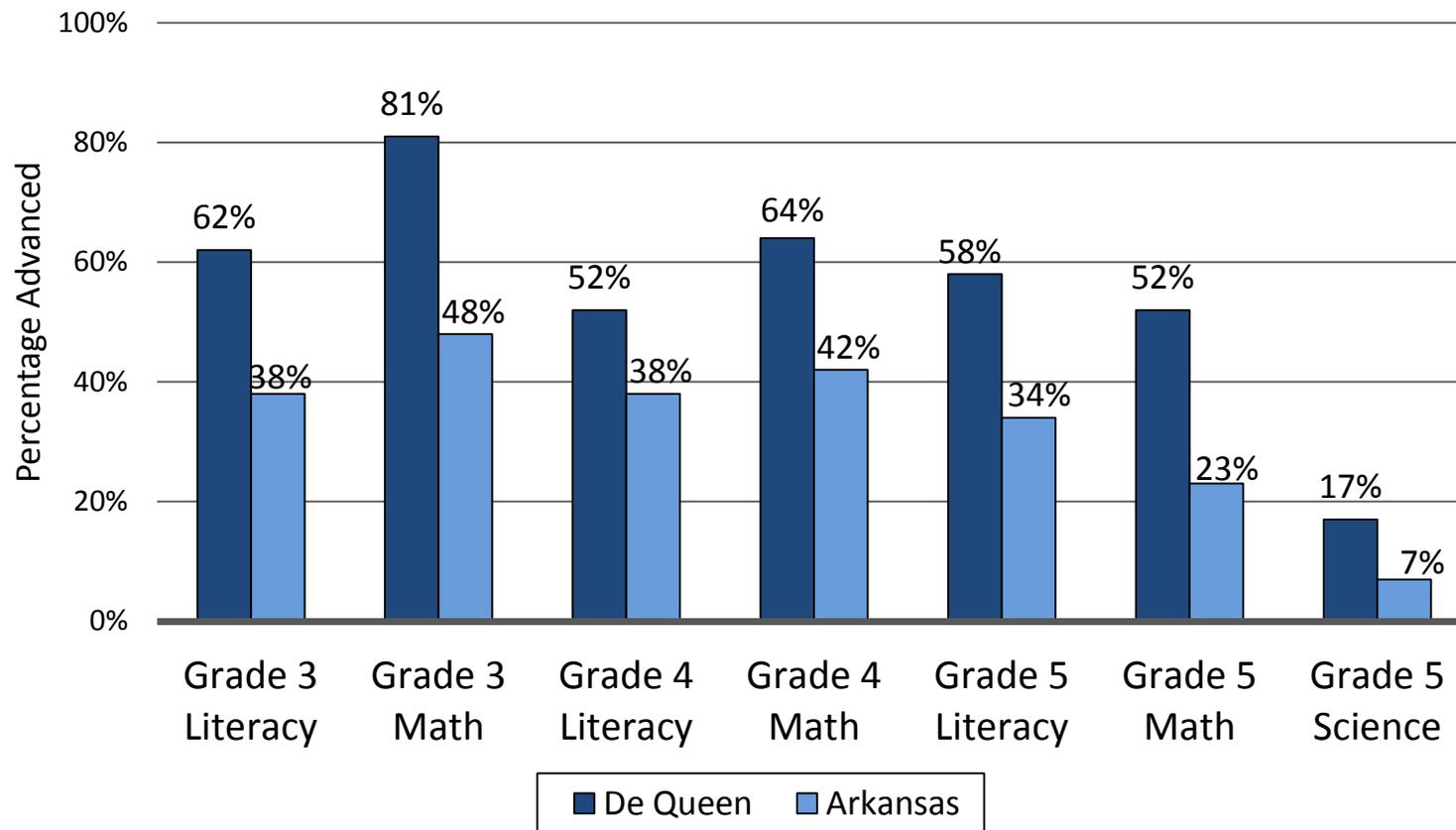
Exceeding the State at De Queen Elementary



Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Advanced performance at De Queen Elementary

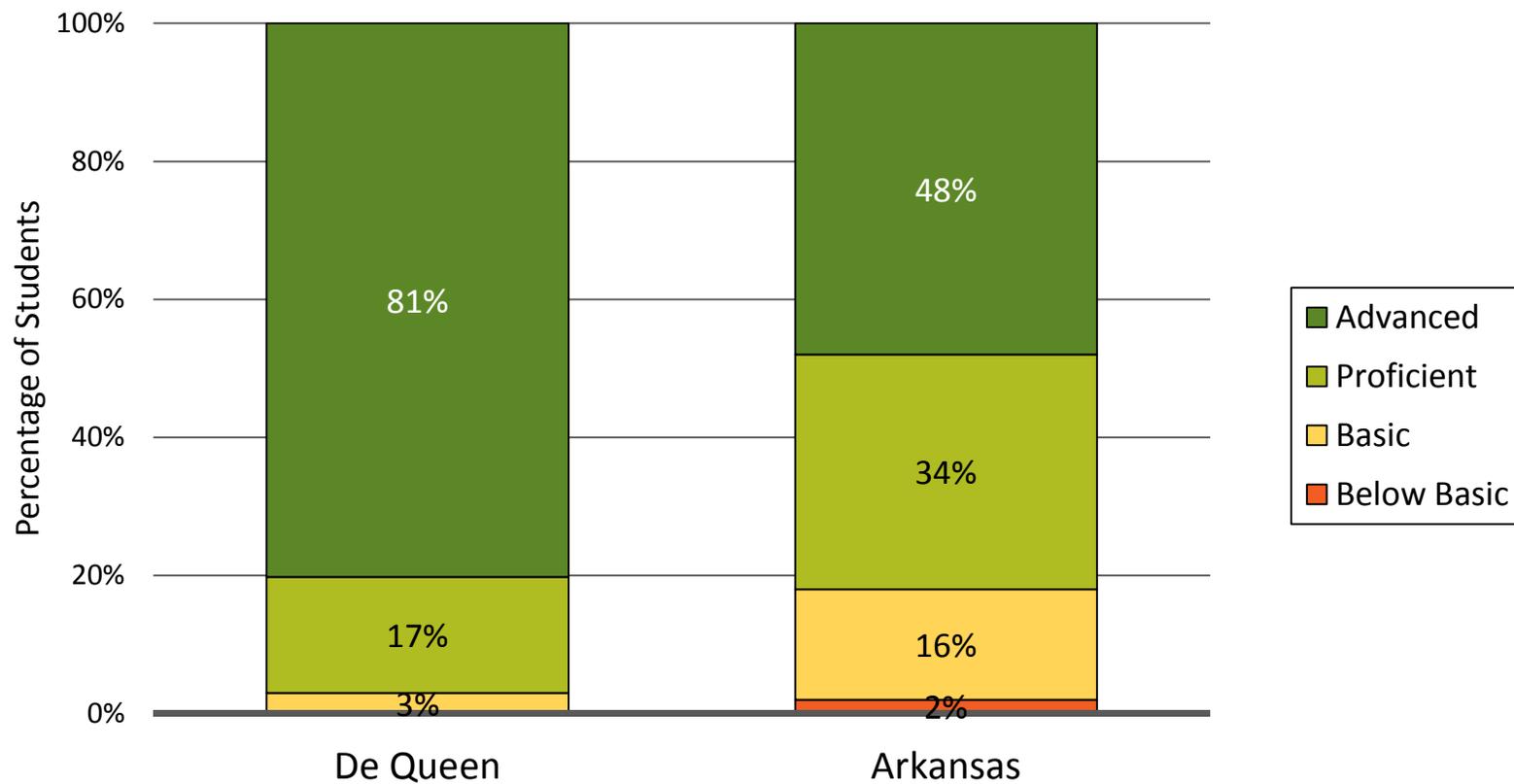
Limited English Proficient Students (2013)



Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Exceeding Standards at De Queen Elementary

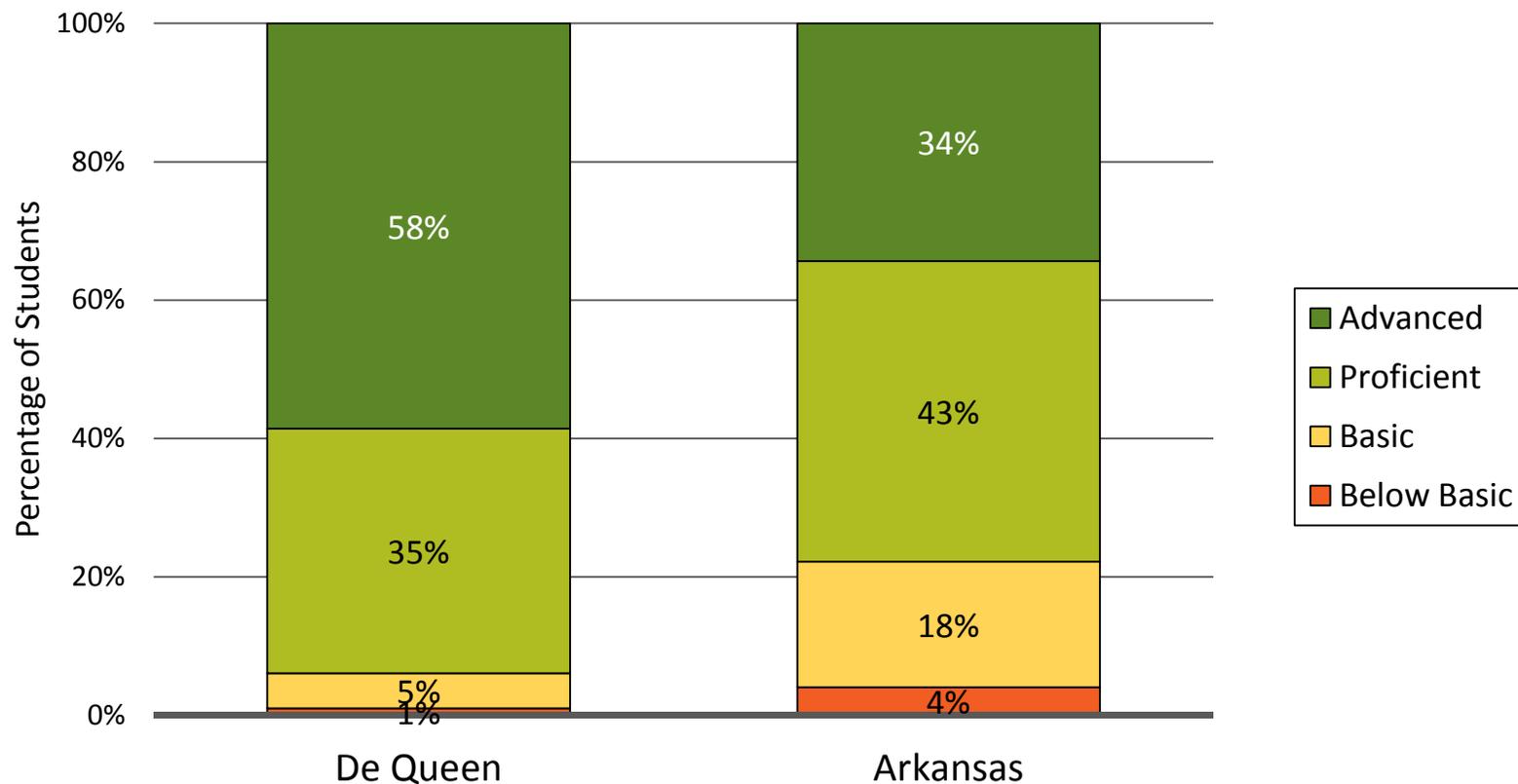
English Learners – Grade 3 Math (2013)



Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Exceeding Standards at De Queen Elementary

English Learners – Grade 5 Literacy (2013)



Source: Arkansas Department of Education





These schools differ dramatically in their size, location, and the students they serve.

But when it comes to educating ELs, they have certain things in common.

• Emphasis on vocabulary and writing

- “We focus a lot on **academic vocabulary**...even if they can communicate with their peers, they need to be able to participate in the classroom.” – Principal, Laurel Street Elementary School (Compton, CA)
- “We find vocabulary they may not know to help them understand the story – pictures, **kid-friendly explanations...**” – Principal, De Queen Elementary School (De Queen, AR)
- “We have a comprehensive approach to **writing that begins in kindergarten**. How to incorporate academic language, how to structure writing, how to flow from sections, how to engage the reader. Now we’re shifting from narrative into expository and persuasive writing under Common Core.” – Principal, Laurel Street Elementary School (Compton, CA)

• Extra time and additional supports

- “For low-level ELL students, experts came in to help students. They **pulled some students out before or after school to give additional language sessions** for a chance to develop more.” – Principal, Halle Hewetson Elementary School (Las Vegas, NV)
- “**Extended time** really helped.” – Principal, Graham Road Elementary School (Falls Church, VA)
- “In their regular classroom, they receive regular support. They have **additional time, a Spanish-English dictionary.** We coordinate with classroom teachers.” – Principal, De Queen Elementary School (De Queen, AR)
- “We specifically target our ELLs at the beginning of the year...they get **the first wave of tutoring.**” – Principal, Laurel Street Elementary School (Compton, CA)



These elements are in addition to what other successful schools are also doing:

- Clear/shared focus
- High standards and expectations for students and teachers
- Collaboration
- Aligned curriculum and assessments
- Careful monitoring of student performance

So, what is getting in the way?

**Do English learners have adequate
opportunities to learn?**

Quality Teachers?

The most critical resource of all

Truth is, we don't know nearly enough.

While most teachers will, at some point, have English learners in their classroom, not all are prepared...

- The National Council on Teaching Quality says that 3 in 4 elementary education programs fail to adequately instruct teaching candidates on early reading strategies for ELLs.
- And only 1 in 20 elementary education program adequately covers both early reading strategies for ELLs *and* the five essential components of effective reading instruction generally.
- Only about 1 in 4 teachers have participated in professional development on teaching LEP or ELL students in the past year.
- In 2010, 33 states reported providing *some* professional development for mainstream teachers of English learners.
 - These opportunities ranged from invitations to participate in state professional development for EL teachers to collaborating with universities to offer appropriate coursework.

Adequate Funding?

Because English learners are often concentrated in high-poverty and high-minority districts, they're likely to be found in states and districts with lower per pupil spending.

Funding Gaps *Between States*

	Gap
High-Poverty versus Low-Poverty States	-\$2,278 per student
High-Minority versus Low-Minority States	-\$2,330 per student

Source: Education Trust analyses of U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Census Bureau data for the 2005-06 school year.

Funding Gaps ***Between Districts***: National inequities in state and local revenue per student

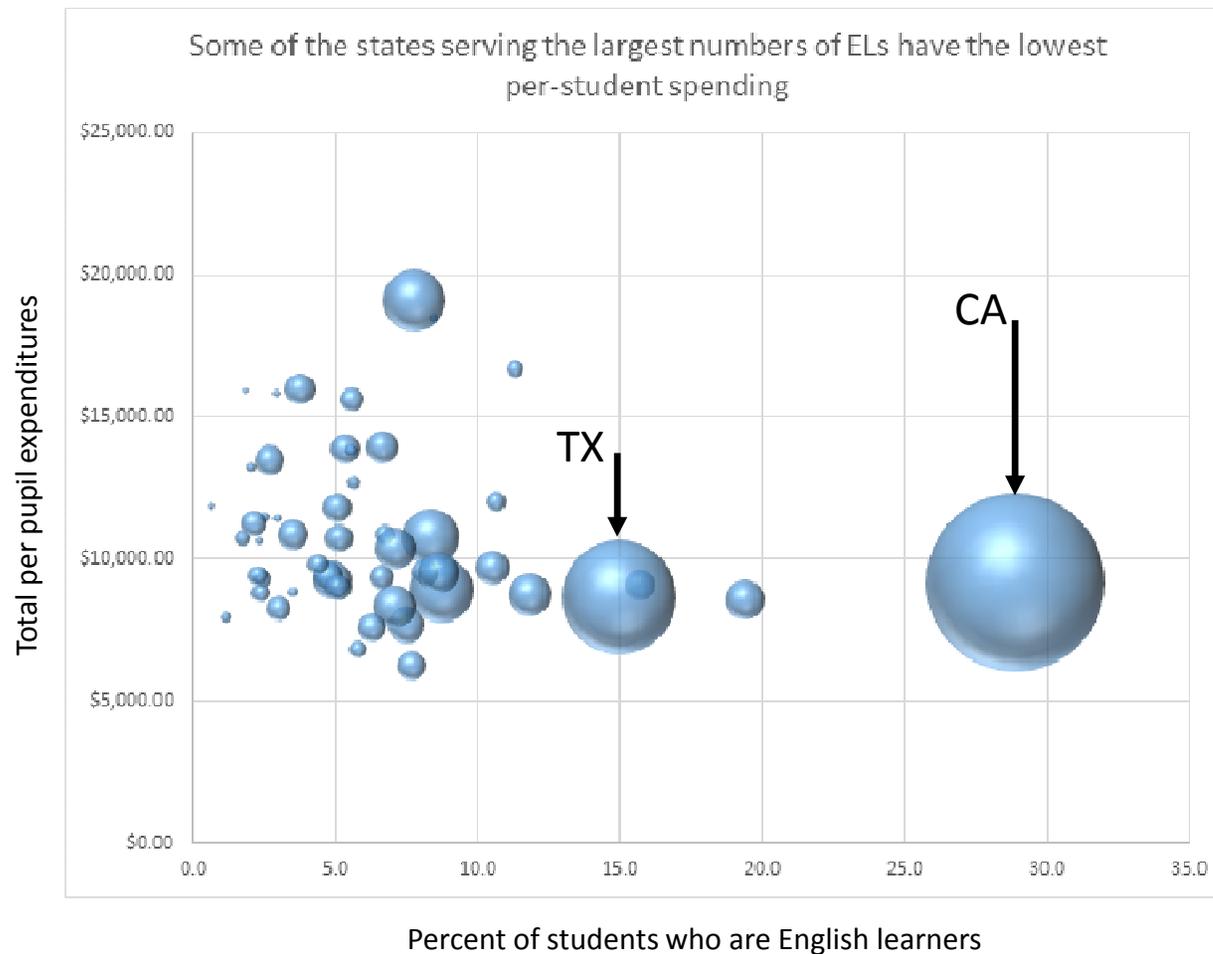
	Gap
High-Poverty versus Low-Poverty Districts	-\$773 per student
High-Minority versus Low-Minority Districts	-\$1,122 per student

Source: Education Trust analyses of U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Census Bureau data for the 2005-06 school year.



And, in fact, English learners are concentrated in states with lower per pupil spending.

States with the largest concentrations of English learners are among the lowest-spending states



Source:

Course-taking opportunities?



Few students are still categorized as English learners by the time they graduate from high school.

Only 2% of graduates in the High School Transcript Study are classified as ELLs.

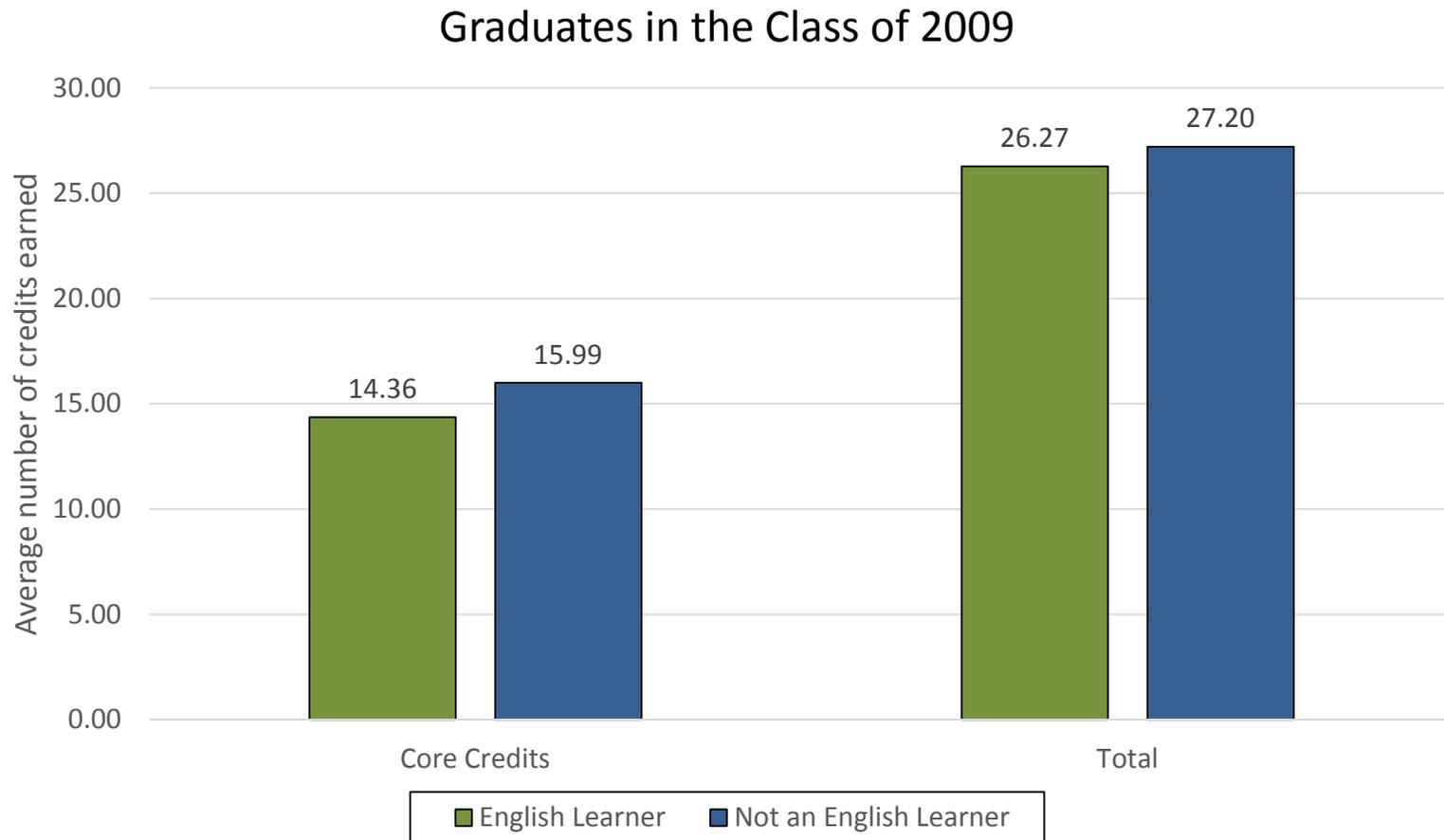


But these students differ notably
from non-ELL graduates.



They earn fewer credits overall...

By high school graduation, English learners have accumulated fewer credits.

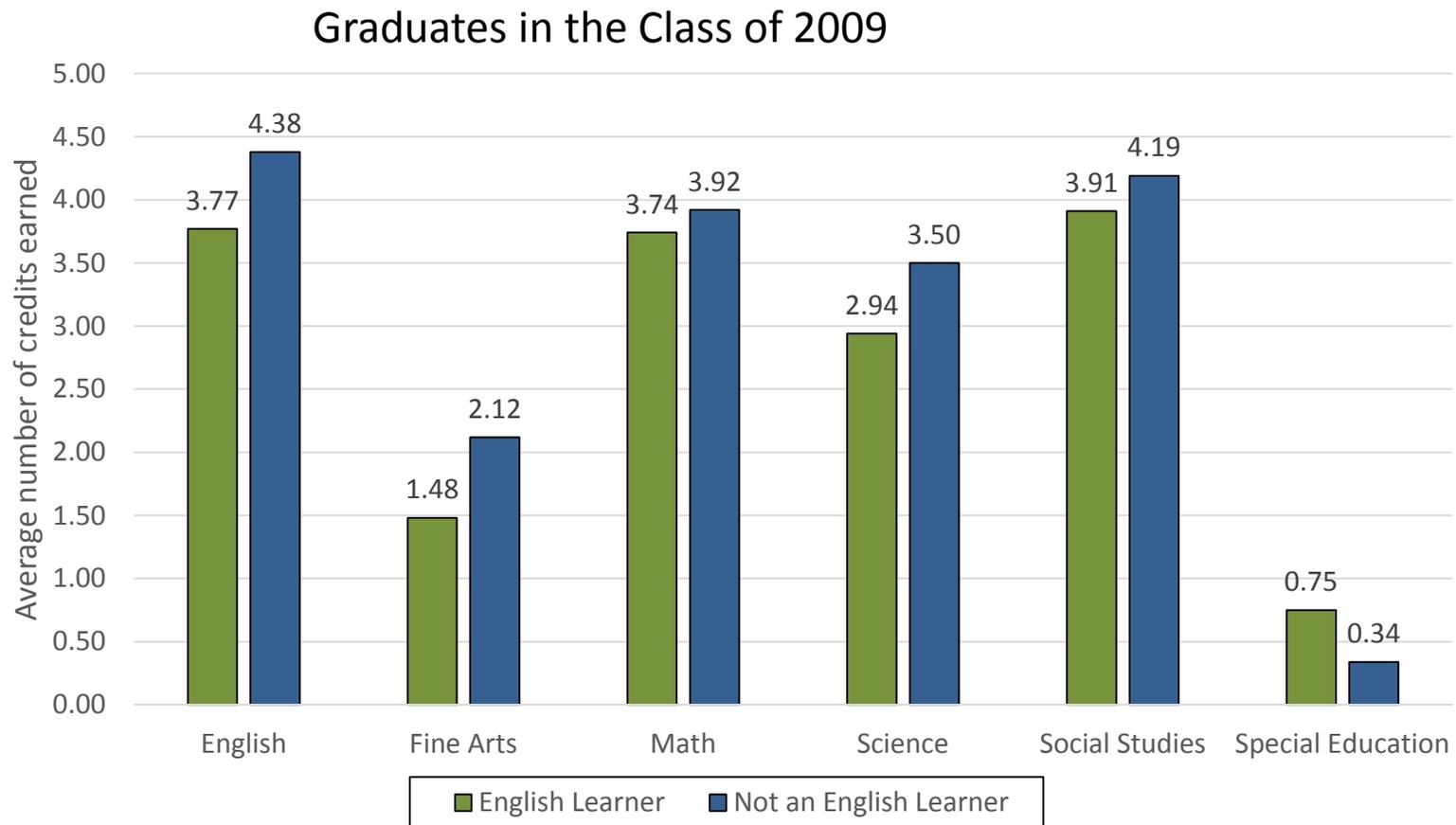


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, High School Transcript Study Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/hstsdata/>.



Fewer credits in most core subjects...

By the time they graduate, ELLs have earned fewer credits in nearly all subjects



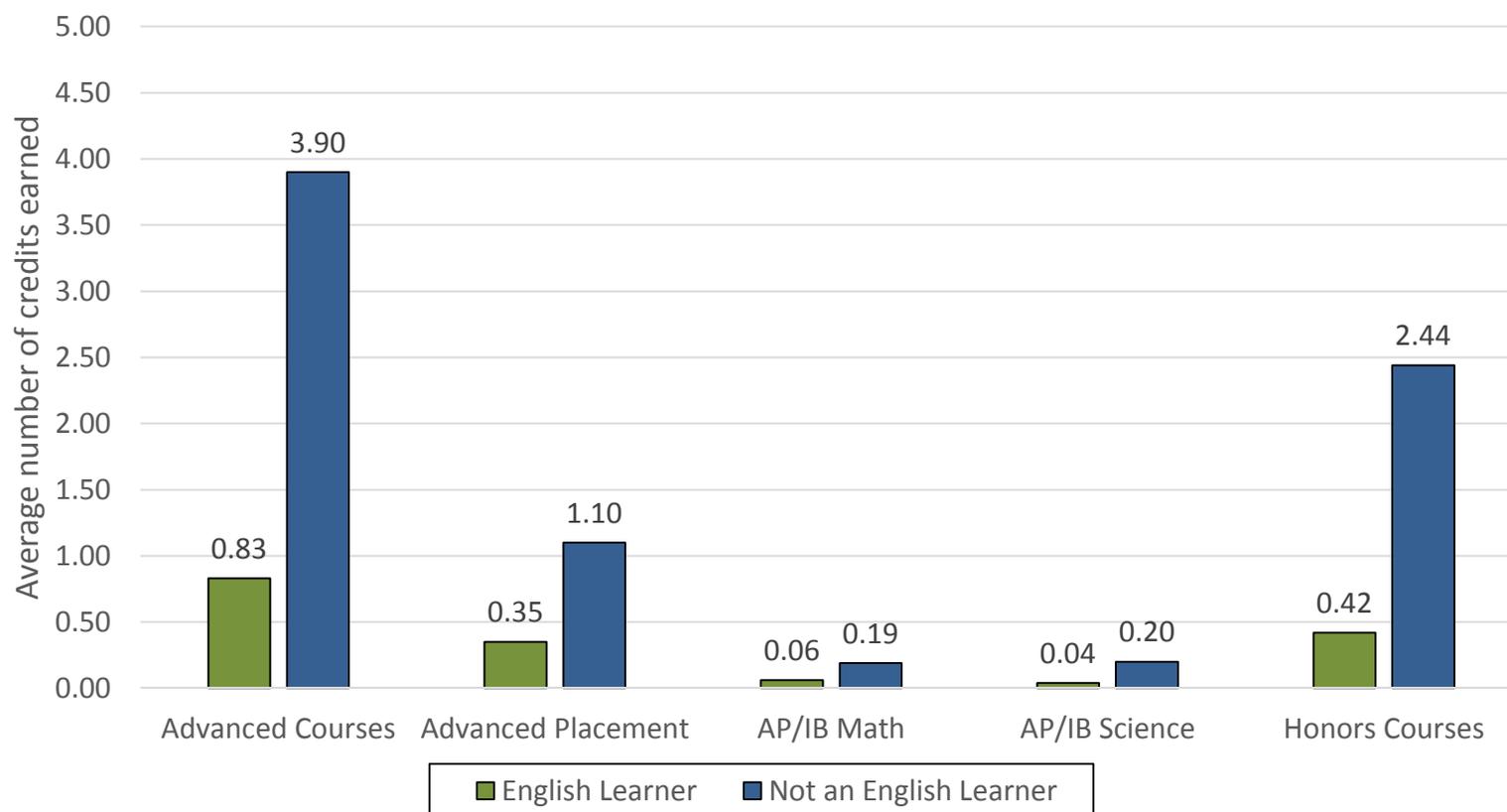
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, High School Transcript Study Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/hstsdata/>.



And fewer credits in high-level
courses.

By graduation, English learners have also earned far fewer credits in high-level courses

Graduates in the Class of 2009



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, High School Transcript Study Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/hstsdata/>.



Moving Forward:

Key Questions States Need to Answer about English Learners

- Who are my EL's? How many; what languages and what levels? How long in US schools?
- Where are they? Numbers growing?
- Do they have adequate opportunities to learn? How do you know?
- How are they performing?
- What do reclassification rates look like? What happens post reclassification?

Source:

EL experts have identified at least distinct four categories of English learners in the secondary grades:

- High school students who arrive in the U.S. **proficient in their native language** but with limited or no English skills
- High school students who were born in the U.S. or who arrived as young children – who **have been educated in U.S. schools** but continue to be designated as ELLs
- Students who arrive in the U.S. in the middle school years with **limited literacy in their native language**
- High school students who arrive in the U.S. with **limited literacy in their native language**, limited exposure to academic skills, and little or **no proficiency in English**

Source:

Policy issues states need to consider regarding English Learners?

- Criteria for identification and reclassification;
- Standards and assessments, including ELP exams;
- Supports for ELs and their teachers;
- Weighting EL subgroup performance in accountability;
- Teacher preparation and certification;
- Communication with parents and families.

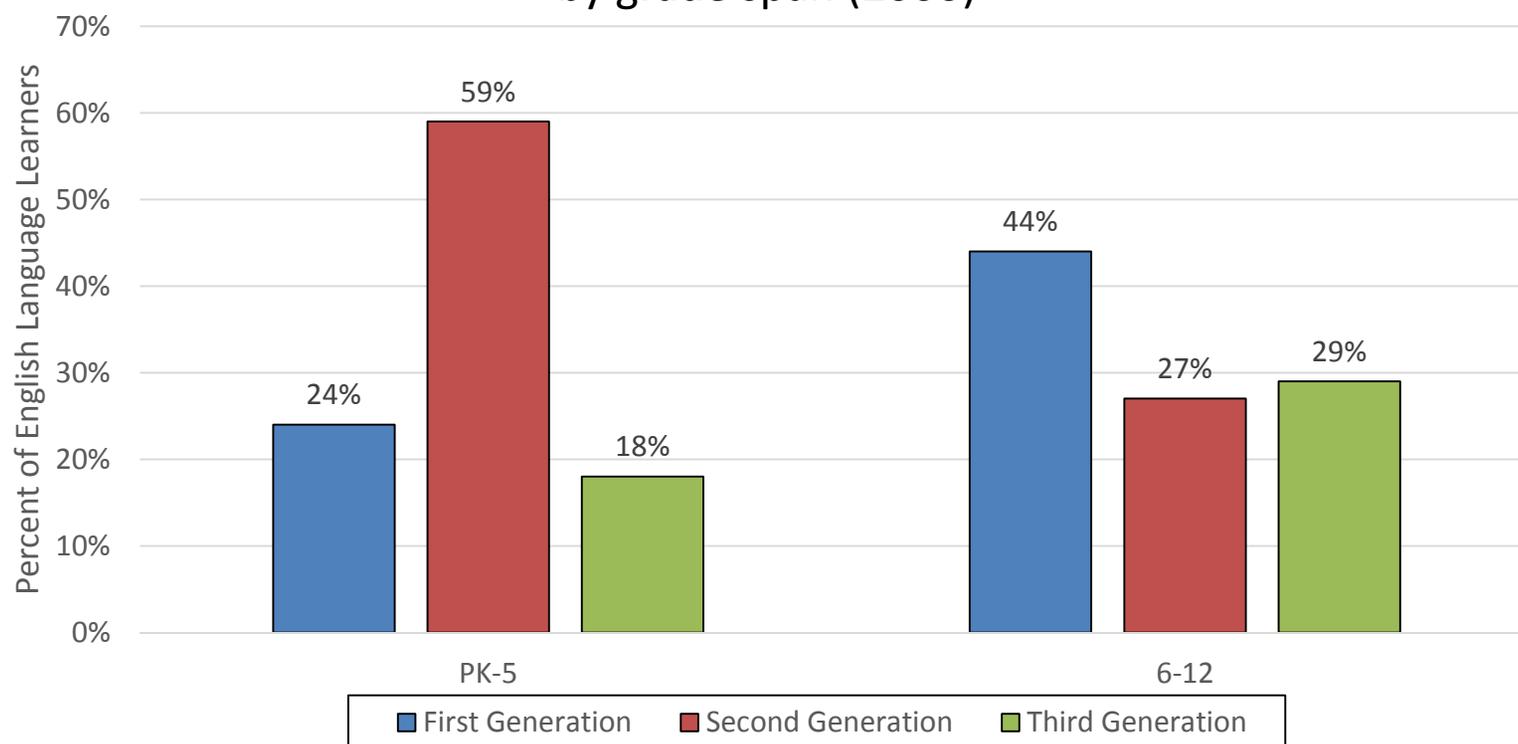
Source:

One final thought

Data on generations and language
generally encouraging, but...

Far more secondary-grade ELLs were born outside of the U.S. – but in both elementary and secondary schools, most are native born

Nativity and Generation of English Language Learners, by grade span (2000)



Note: First-generation students were born outside of the U.S., second-generation students were born in the U.S. but have parents who were born outside the U.S.; and third-generation students were born in the U.S. and have parents who were born in the U.S.

Source: Capps, R., et al., *The new demography of America's schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act*, 2005, The Urban Institute.

**Download this presentation and learn more about the
Education Trust.**

www.edtrust.org



The Education Trust

**Washington, D.C.
202/293-1217**

**Metro Detroit, MI
734/619-8009**

**Oakland, CA
510/465-6444**