

Report to
EDUCATION FUNDING AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
By Greg Gallagher
Department of Public Instruction
October 18, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Education Funding and Taxation Committee:

I am Greg Gallagher, Director of Standards and Achievement, within the Department of Public Instruction.

Pursuant to NDCC 15.1-21-10, I submit the following report regarding the administration of the 2011-12 North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) and the various accountability reports generated from these assessments. This report provides an overview of the testing procedures employed, the summative data generated, and the technical documentation provided to confirm the validity and reliability of the 2011-12 NDSA. This report also presents a variety of statewide academic achievement data that provide insight on the current performance of our students.

I. Administration of North Dakota State Assessment System

The Department of Public Instruction administers a collection of 72 separate assessments, which comprise the North Dakota State Assessment system, including 24 general assessments (the North Dakota State Assessment, or NDSA), 24 assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities (the North Dakota Alternate Assessment based on alternate achievement standards, or NDAA1), and 24 assessments for students with persistent learning difficulties (the North Dakota Alternate Assessment based on modified achievement standards, or NDAA2). The NDSA, NDAA1, and NDAA2 are each comprised of reading, language arts, and mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11 and science in grades 4, 8, and 11. Each of these grade- and subject-specific assessments must meet certain rigorous specifications in design and administration in order to be considered valid and reliable assessments of their subject matter. The U.S. Department of Education (ED), through its ongoing peer review process, independently reviews the technical specifications of the North Dakota State Assessment system to verify all claims for validity and reliability. The state's assessment system has operated in full compliance with the operational rules and guidance of the ED peer review process.

The NDSA is administered in part under a contract with CTB/McGraw-Hill, LLC, a private, long-standing publishing and assessment company, which specializes in large-scale student achievement assessments. The NDAA1 and NDAA2 are administered in part under a separate grant with the assistance of North Dakota State University. The State is supported by an array of external technical advisors to ensure that the system meets tightly defined psychometric functions. The Department of Public Instruction stipulates that the state's assessment system provides valid and reliable information regarding student achievement in terms of the state's academic content and achievement standards.

The 2011-12 technical manual for the NDSA provides extensive documentation regarding the design and performance of all of the various assessments administered within the state's assessment system. The NDSA *technical manual* can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/11final.pdf>). The technical manual provides supporting evidence that the state's various assessments do perform according to design and that these assessments are valid and reliable.

The cut scores that define these achievement levels on a given assessment's scoring scale are determined by committees of state educators through a reputable standard-setting process. The NDSA reading and mathematics achievement standards are specified in the NDSA *standard-setting technical manual*, which can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/standard/secA-E.pdf>). The recently completed NDSA language arts achievement standards are specified in the NDSA *standard-setting technical manual*, which can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/tech-report2011.pdf>). The NDSA science *achievement standards cut scores*, which followed the same standard-setting process, can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/cut.pdf>). The NDAA2 *achievement standards* are reported within a Department-issued press release (http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/news/press%20release/press_release_3_22_2010.pdf). The NDAA1 achievement standards remained stable during 2011-12.

Approximately 49,870 students participated in the administration of the state's various academic achievement assessments during 2011-12. Approximately 1679 students participated in either the NDAA1 or NDAA2 during 2011-12, based on each student's individualized education program. The participation rates of students with disabilities in the NDSA, NDAA1, and NDAA2 can be accessed at the Department's

website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/1112/99999.htm>). Overall, approximately 98.7% of all eligible students participated in the NDSA, NDAA1, and NDAA2.

The administration of each of the assessments is standardized according to established rules to ensure systemic reliability. The Department of Public Instruction stipulates that, according to established indicators, the 2011-12 administration of the state's various assessments successfully met established measures for standardization, thereby supporting the reliability of all test results.

II. Academic Achievement Results

The state's education system uses a variety of measures to assess overall student academic achievement. These measures include graduation rates, general proficiency rates and specific standards-level performance on the North Dakota State Assessments (including the NDSA, NDAA1, and NDAA2), junior and senior college readiness on the ACT and SAT, state-level performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various reading and language proficiency assessments, and district-defined interim and formative assessments. School personnel have various student achievement data upon which to assess individual student achievement and growth patterns and overall curricular and school improvement efforts.

Among these various measures, the North Dakota State Assessments (NDSA, NDAA1, and NDAA2) represent the primary measures for assessing overall student achievement in terms of the state's challenging content and achievement standards as specified within state and federal law. It is the state's expressed instructional goal that all students progress steadily to achieve a proficient or advanced standing on the North Dakota State Assessments by the 2013-14 school year.

Overall student achievement data indicate that North Dakota students have evidenced generally stable reading results and general improvements in mathematics. The Department issues an extensive annual summary of student performance on the state's assessments. The 2011-12 profile reports for every public school, public school district, and the state can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/index.shtm>); the statewide and district profile reports are in the final phases of validation and will be posted shortly. Student academic achievement summary charts are provided at the end of this testimony.

III. School and school district institutional performance

Student academic achievement results form the basis for measuring the overall performance of schools and school districts, specifically as defined by the operational rules for generating annual adequate yearly progress reports for every public school, school district, and the state. For these reports, a school is defined as a public school plant organized within a designated grade span as determined by a local public school district.

In May 2012, the Department of Public Instruction released final adequate yearly progress reports that present the level of relative achievement among our state's public schools according to established regulations specified within the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. These adequate yearly progress reports were reviewed for accuracy by public school districts prior to their final certification and release by the Department of Public Instruction. All adequate yearly progress reports follow the rules established within the federally approved North Dakota Accountability Plan, which can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/grants/proposal2011.pdf>). An instructional guide that explains the state's accountability rules can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/account/AYP1112.pdf>).

The 2011-12 *Annual Adequate Yearly Progress* report for every reportable public school, public school district, and the state can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/profile/index.shtm>). The Department issued a general press release on May 30, 2012 that summarized a variety of information related to this annual report, which can be accessed at the Department's website (http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/news/2012/press_release20120525.pdf). The Department provided an amended summary on July 31, 2012, which updated the report based on special appeals by six school districts and can be accessed at the Department's website (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/news/2012/073112.shtm>). Adequate yearly progress summary charts are provided at the end of this testimony.

Mr. Chairman, this completes my presentation regarding the current status of the state's assessment and accountability system.

**ND Public Schools' Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
Identification Status
(Number of Schools)***

	2002- 03	2003- 04	2004- 05	2005- 06	2006- 07	2007- 08	2008- 09	2009- 10	2010- 11	2011- 12
Met AYP	451	442	444	436	437	301	350	338	215	204
Did not meet AYP	46	46	42	41	41	169	115	122	242	251
Total	497	488	486	477	478	470	465	460	457	455

*Variances in the number of schools are the result of school reorganizations.

**Reasons Leading to Identification of Not Making
Adequate Yearly Progress (n= 257 schools)***

Indicators	Primary Indicators: Achievement and Participation				Secondary Indicator:
	Reading		Math		
	Achievement	Participation	Achievement	Participation	Graduation
Overall	196	0	89	0	1
White	152	0	48	0	0
Native American	64	0	49	0	3
Black	18	1	11	1	0
Hispanic	18	1	12	1	0
Asian	6	0	5	0	0
Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	34	0	27	0	0
Low Income	148	0	84	0	2
Students with Disabilities (IEP)	111	0	71	0	3
Total	747	2	396	2	9
	Secondary Indicator: Attendance				
Attendance Rate	0				

*Schools may be identified for more than one reason.

For a complete listing of the public schools that did not make adequate yearly progress and the reasons for this identification, refer to the following web address:

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/1112/ProfileDistrict/PlantAchieve.pdf>.

**ND Public School District Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
Identification Status
(Number of Districts)***

	2002 -03	2003 -04	2004 -05	2005 -06	2006 -07	2007 -08	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011- 12
Met AYP	178	174	181	176	169	114	141	131	77	67
Did not meet AYP	33	33	21	21	26	73	42	50	102	111
Total	211	207	202	197	195	187	183	181	179	178

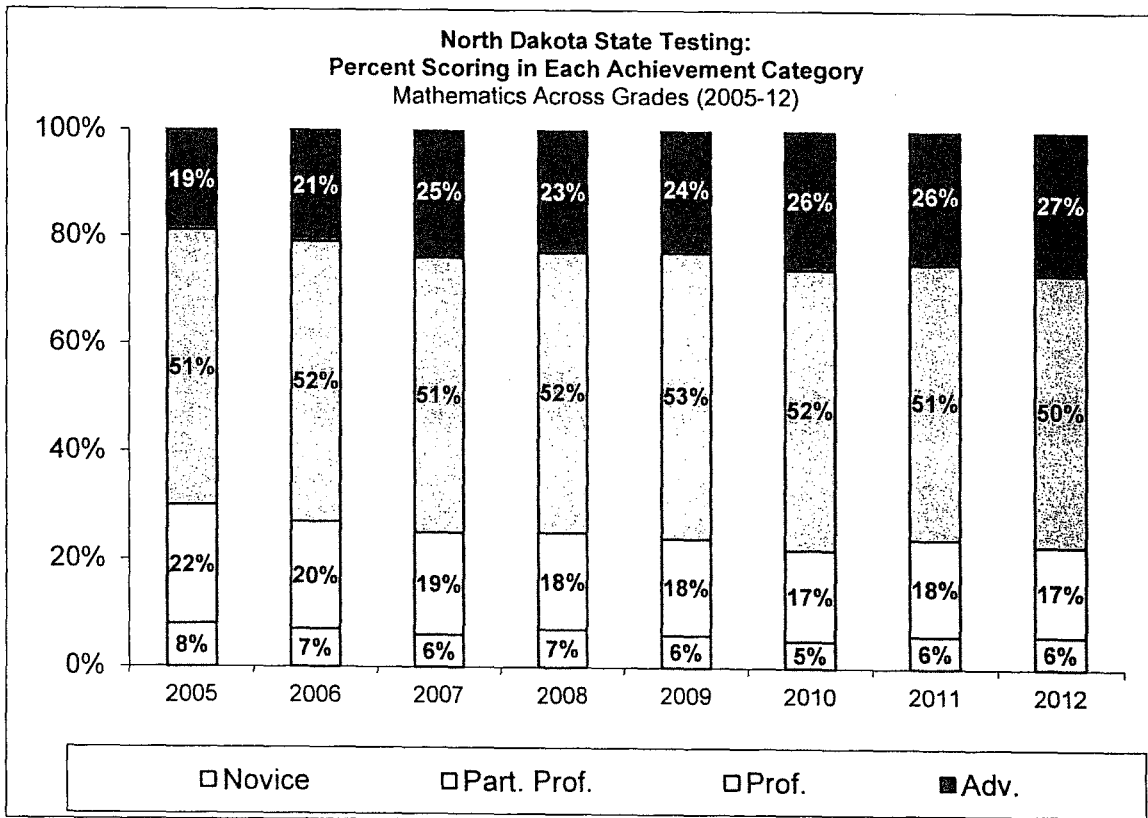
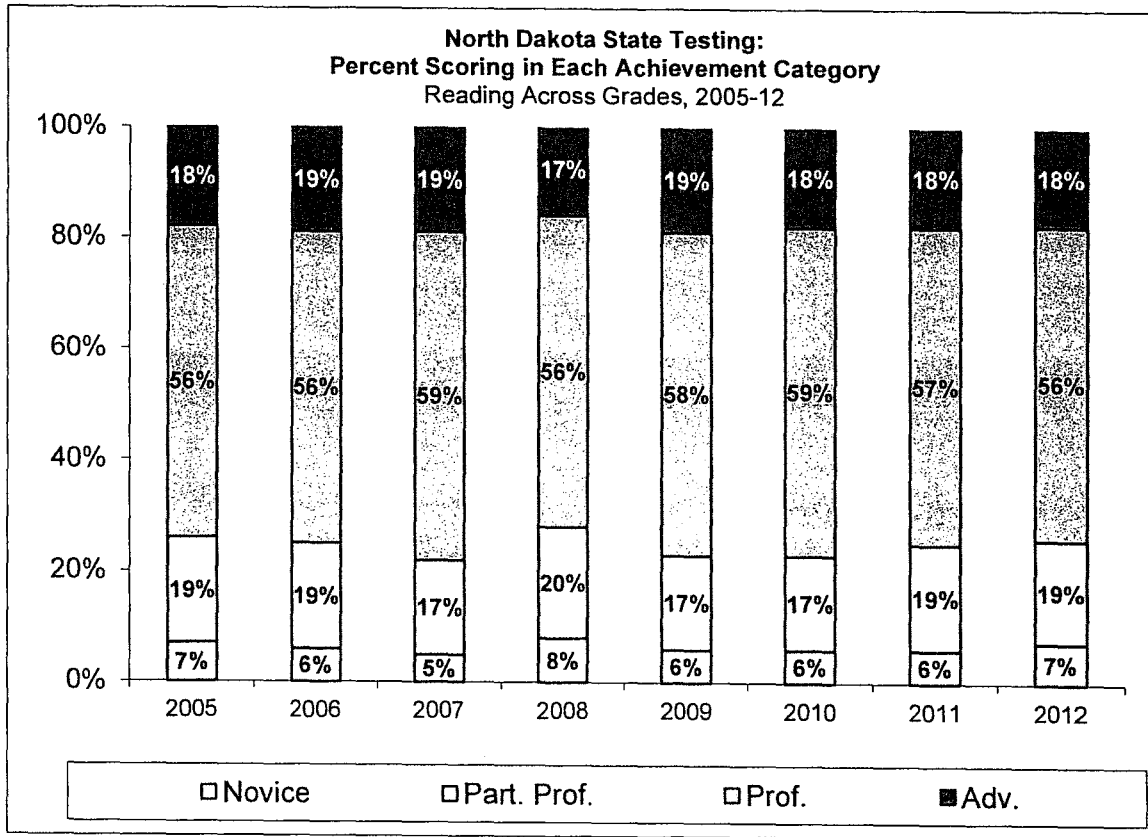
*Variances in the number of school districts are the result of school district reorganizations.

**Reasons Leading to Identification of Not Making
Adequate Yearly Progress (n=111 districts)***

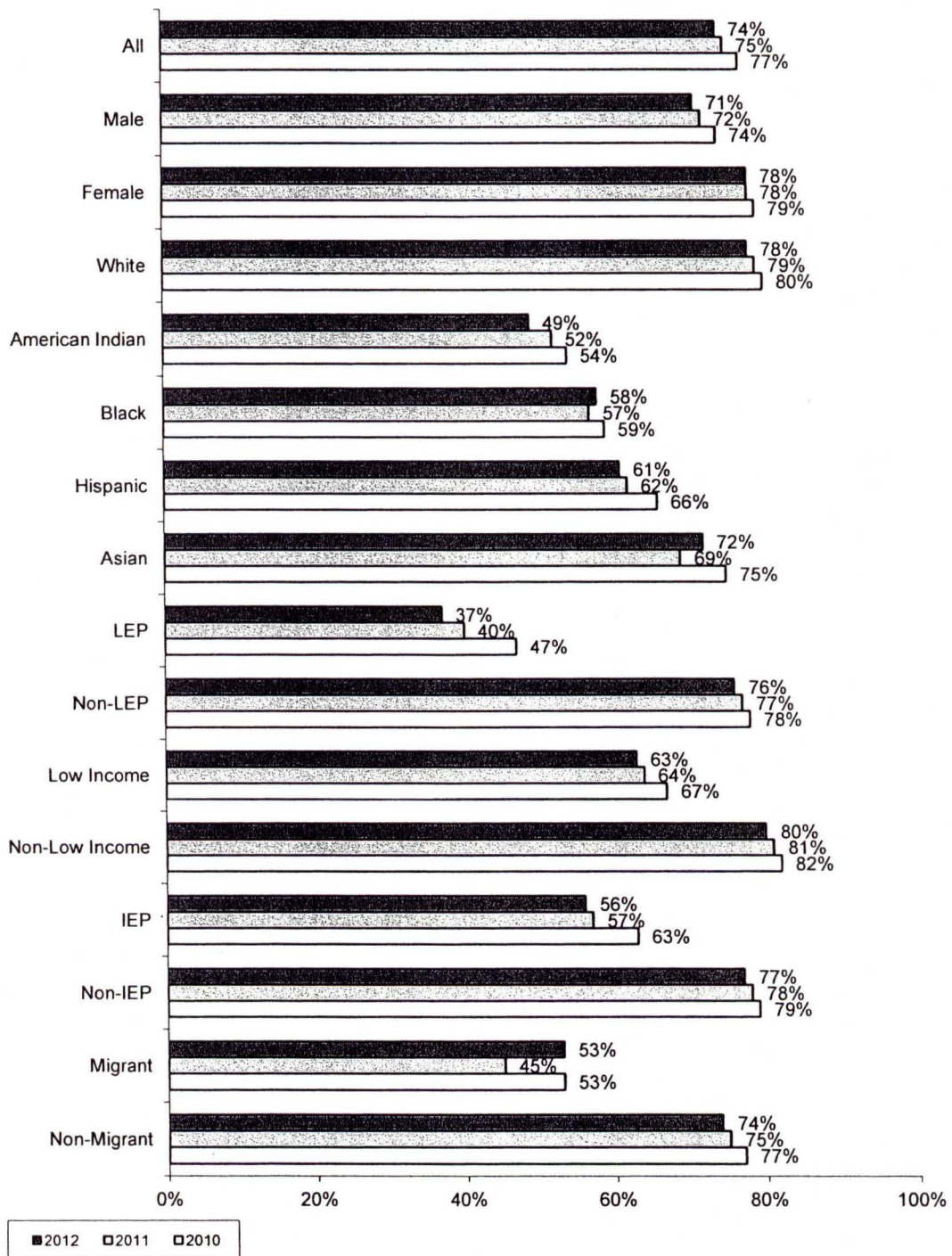
Indicators	Primary Indicators: Achievement and Participation				Secondary Indicator: Graduation
	Reading		Math		
	Achievement	Participation	Achievement	Participation	
Overall	83	0	38	0	2
White	72	0	21	0	0
Native American	30	0	19	0	6
Black	6	0	6	0	0
Hispanic	13	0	6	0	1
Asian	5	0	1	0	0
Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	16	0	13	0	1
Low Income	67	0	30	0	3
Students with Disabilities (IEP)	62	0	41	0	3
Total	354	0	175	0	16
	Secondary Indicator: Attendance				
Attendance Rate	0				

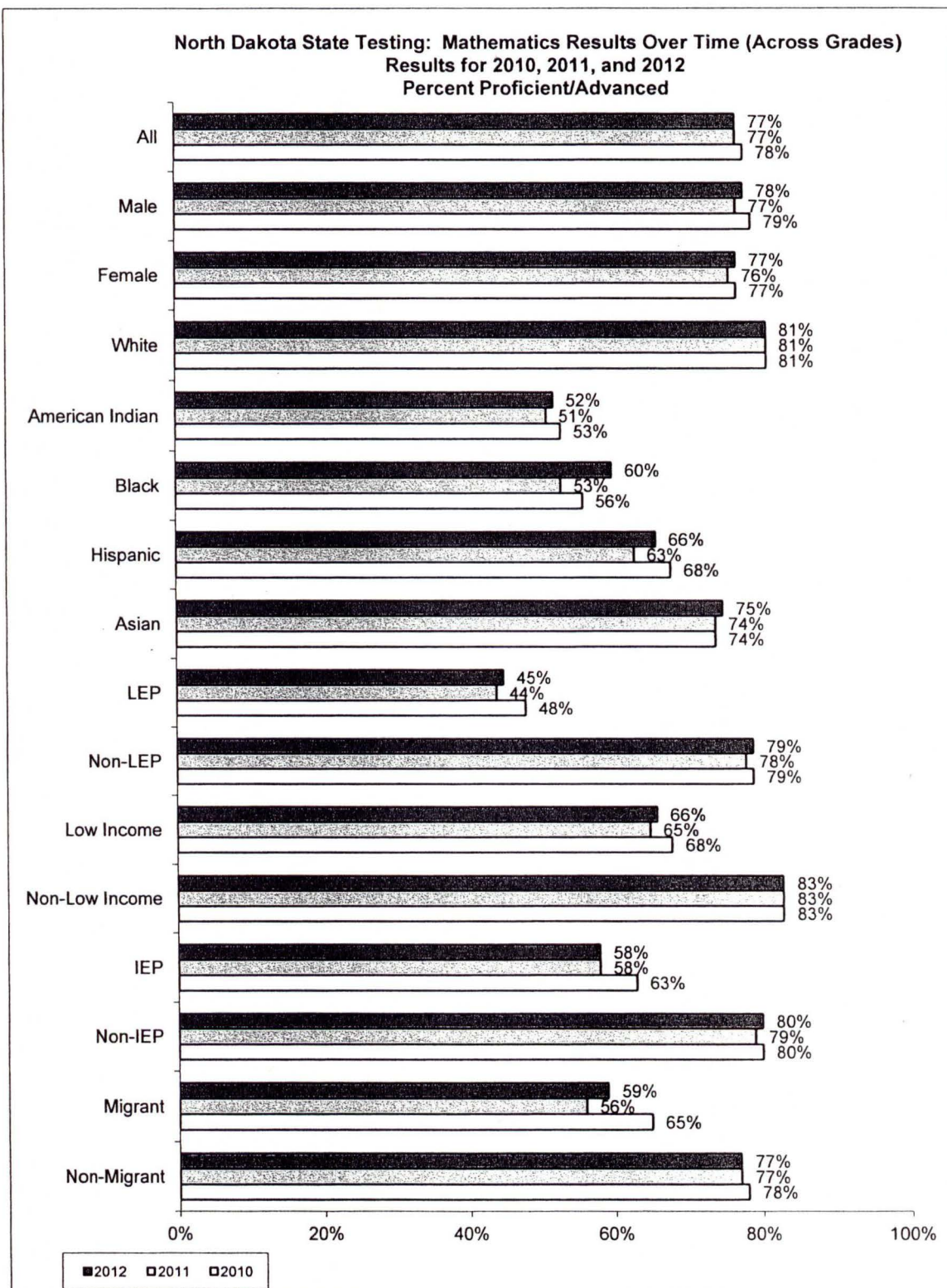
*School districts may be identified for more than one reason.

For a complete listing of the public school districts that did not make adequate yearly progress and the reasons for this identification, refer to the following web address:
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/1112/ProfileDistrict/DistrictAchieve.pdf>.

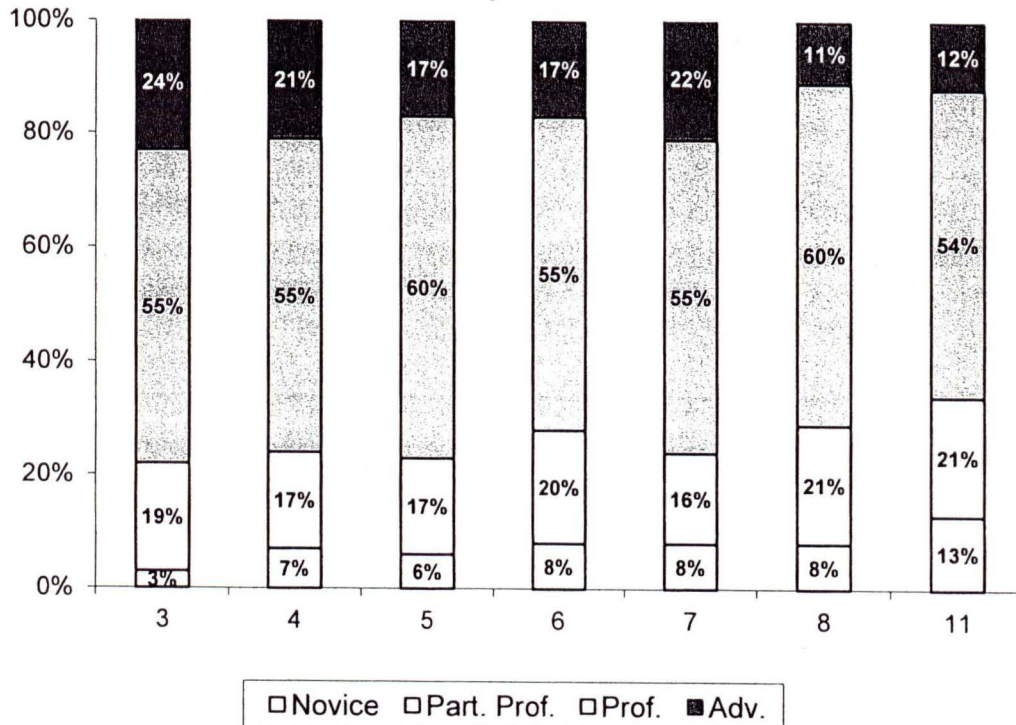


North Dakota State Testing: Reading Results Over Time (Across Grades)
Results for 2010, 2011, and 2012
Percent Proficient/Advanced





North Dakota State Testing: Reading Results in 2012
Percent Scoring in Each Achievement Category
By Grade



North Dakota State Testing: Mathematics Results in 2012
Percent Scoring in Each Achievement Category
By Grade

