

2025 COLORADO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA

A look at the Colorado School Performance Framework, state assessments, and how we observe and understand academic performance and growth

Presentation Objectives

What we would like you to take away from this presentation



Demonstrate why educators, families, elected leaders and community partners should pay careful attention to academic performance



Build a basic understanding of how academic performance is measured in Colorado



Provide an overview of academic performance in Denver Public Schools (DPS) in 2025, with a particular focus on how some student groups performed



Offer suggestions on how this data can be used to support students moving forward

Background and Overview

Colorado District and School Performance Framework

The Colorado Department of Education issues an annual District and School Performance Framework rating to all districts and schools across the state.

This framework is used as an indicator of school quality and is a key component of how the state holds districts and schools accountable.

Preliminary ratings will be available in early September and final in December.

Schools and districts receive a rating each year based on their overall performance, which includes the following categories:

- Academic Achievement**
Average scores on state assessments for all students as well as specific groups of students
- Academic Growth**
Progress students make in their achievements on assessments from one year to the next
- Postsecondary Readiness**
Graduation rates, dropout rates, average scores on the SAT college entrance exam, and matriculation into college and other postsecondary options

SCHOOL RATINGS

Performance

Improvement

Priority Improvement

Turnaround

Insufficient State Data:
Small Tested Population

Insufficient State Data:
Low Participation

DISTRICT ACCREDITATION RATINGS

Accredited With Distinction

Accredited

Improvement

Priority Improvement

Turnaround

Insufficient State Data:
Small Tested Population

Insufficient State Data:
Low Participation

Based on points assigned in each of the three categories, schools and districts receive one of the ratings listed directly above.

Academic Assessments in Colorado

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

- Administered in Grades 3–8
- Given in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math**

READ Act Assessment*

- Measures how well students are learning to read
- Administered in grades K–3
- Primarily used to identify students in need of intervention

PSAT & SAT

- Administered in grades 9–11 to all students
- Given in English-Based Reading and Writing ("EBRW") and Math

A FEW NOTES TO KEEP IN MIND

*This data is not reported publicly so is not included here.

**Select grades also are assessed in science and social studies.

Academic Proficiency

- The percent of students meeting grade-level standards on a particular assessment
- Can also look at average scores for students

Student Demographic Performance

- Disaggregated performance based on student demographics
- Can compare to same groups statewide or look at gaps within an individual district



Academic Growth

- The amount of growth students make on assessments year over year compared to their peers

Understanding Academic Growth

How is growth reported?

In Colorado, we report the growth of a school or district as a **Median Growth Percentile, or MGP.**

Median Growth Percentile

MGP is calculated by taking the **median of individual student growth percentiles** within that school or district.

Individual Student Growth

Individual student growth percentiles are calculated by:

- Looking at **how much growth a student makes on state assessments** compared to their prior performance; and
- **Comparing this growth to the growth made by other students** who **performed similarly** in prior years.



An Example of Median Growth Percentile

If we look at 100 students from across Colorado who scored the same on third grade CMAS math in 2024, we would look at their performance in 2025 and rank order them.

STUDENT A

99

The student with the highest 2025 score would have a student growth percentile of 99

STUDENT B

5

The student who had a score lower than all but five of this cohort would have a student growth percentile of 5

Summary of Denver Public Schools 2025 Academic Performance

1

Gains Year Over Year

Performance improved statewide and within DPS. DPS saw the gap with the state close in some areas.

2

Gains Across All Subgroups

Most student demographic groups within DPS and the state saw growth in 2025, both in terms of MGP and absolute proficiency.

3

Achievement Gaps Remain Large

There are large, persistent achievement gaps in DPS. Additionally, most student demographic groups in DPS are outperformed by their peers statewide.

4

White Students Still Excelling

DPS continues to see positive results for white students compared to their statewide peers, exacerbating the achievement gaps.

Context Setting



How to Use This Data

Asset-based framing

We know DPS students have unlimited potential. State test data provides valuable insight into how schools and support systems are serving students. That helps us know where to engage to hold the district accountable and identify where schools and educators need help to improve their service to students. This data can help us co-create high-quality schools that equitably meet the needs of every student.

Equitably Meeting the Needs of All Students

Keep in mind: the 2025 raw data we've gathered and shared shows us how the district is supporting students on their academic journeys. It's important we look and think more critically about the data and what it tells us about our school system.

In this case, the 2025 CMAS data tells us there is progress being made across our system yet a tremendous amount of work remains to be done to provide Denver's schools and educators with needed resources—in areas such as leader and teacher retention, professional learning, curriculum development, and in other support services—to equitably meet the needs of all students.

CMAS: Academic Proficiency

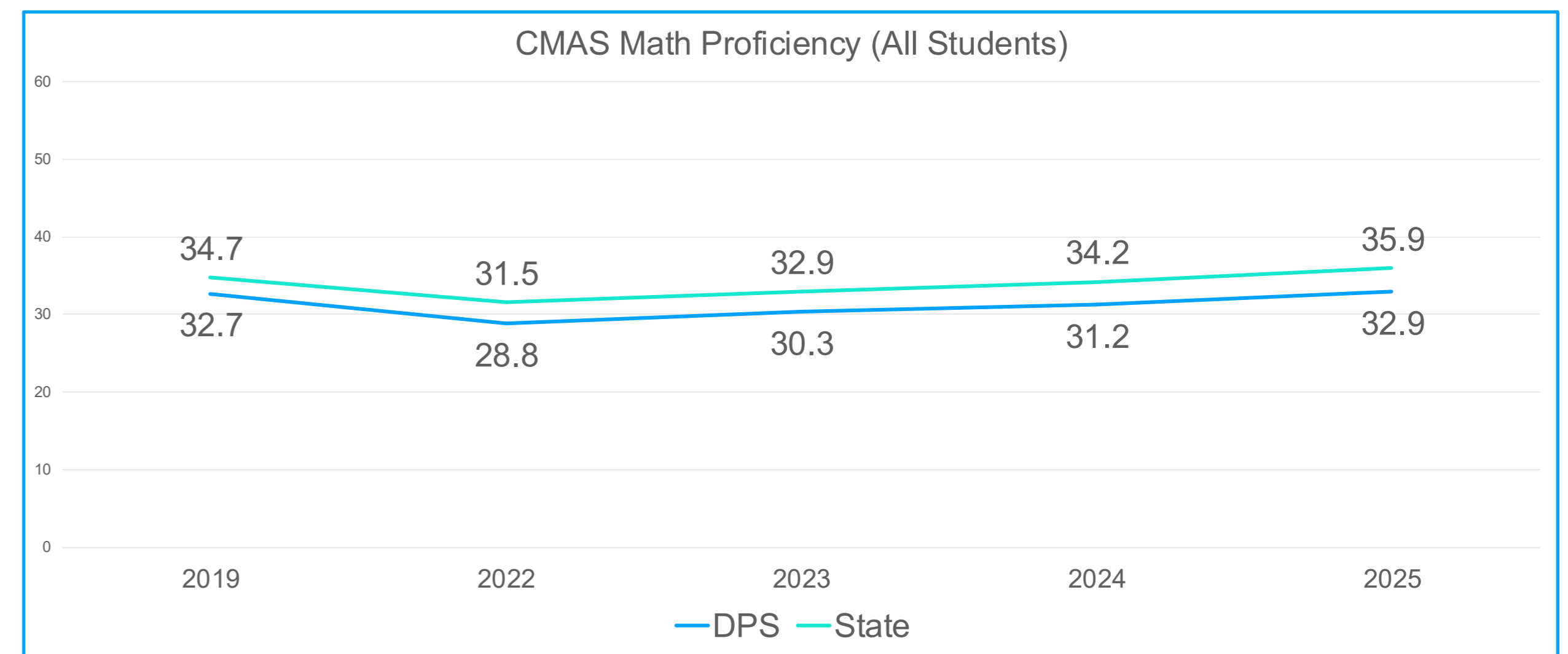
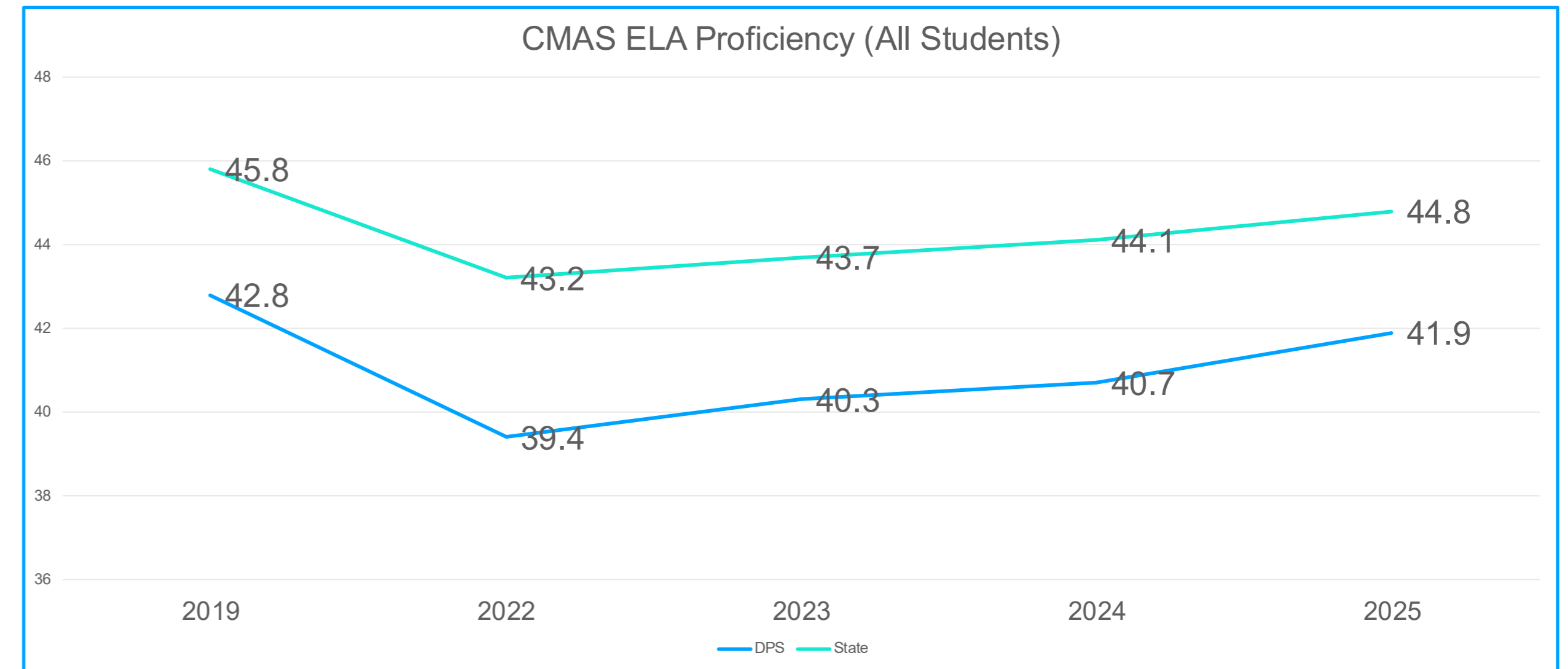
Small increases in 2025 proficiency over 2024

Proficiency rates remain below 2019 in literacy.

In 2025, DPS saw small increases in proficiency in both ELA and math on CMAS compared to 2024.

DPS proficiency rates are still below 2019 in literacy, demonstrating that students have not fully recovered from the impacts of the pandemic nearly five years later. However, they have surpassed 2019 levels in math.

These increases in 2025 were comparable to increases seen statewide in math, and slightly larger in ELA (English Language Arts). In both subjects DPS performance still lags behind the state.

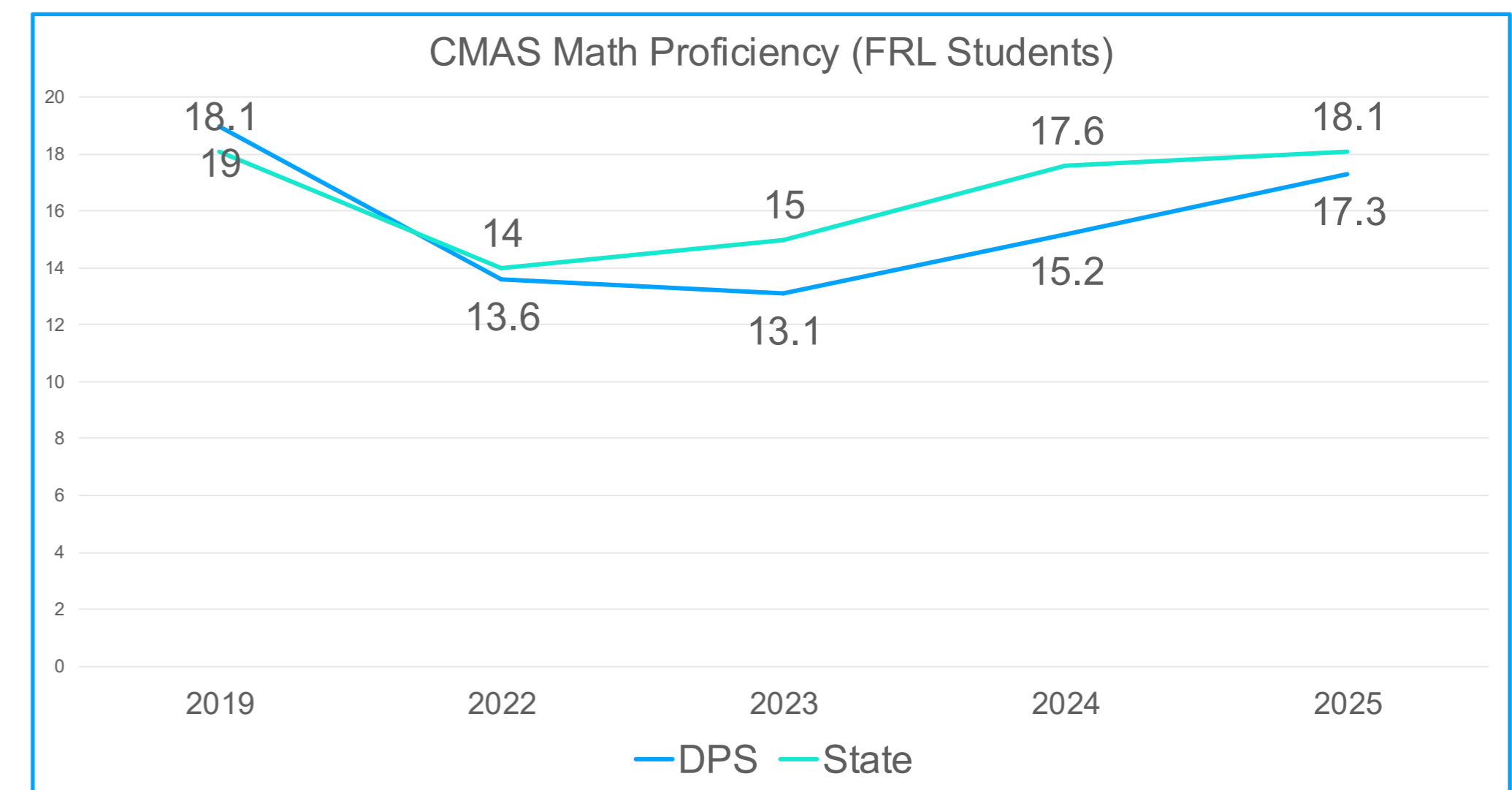
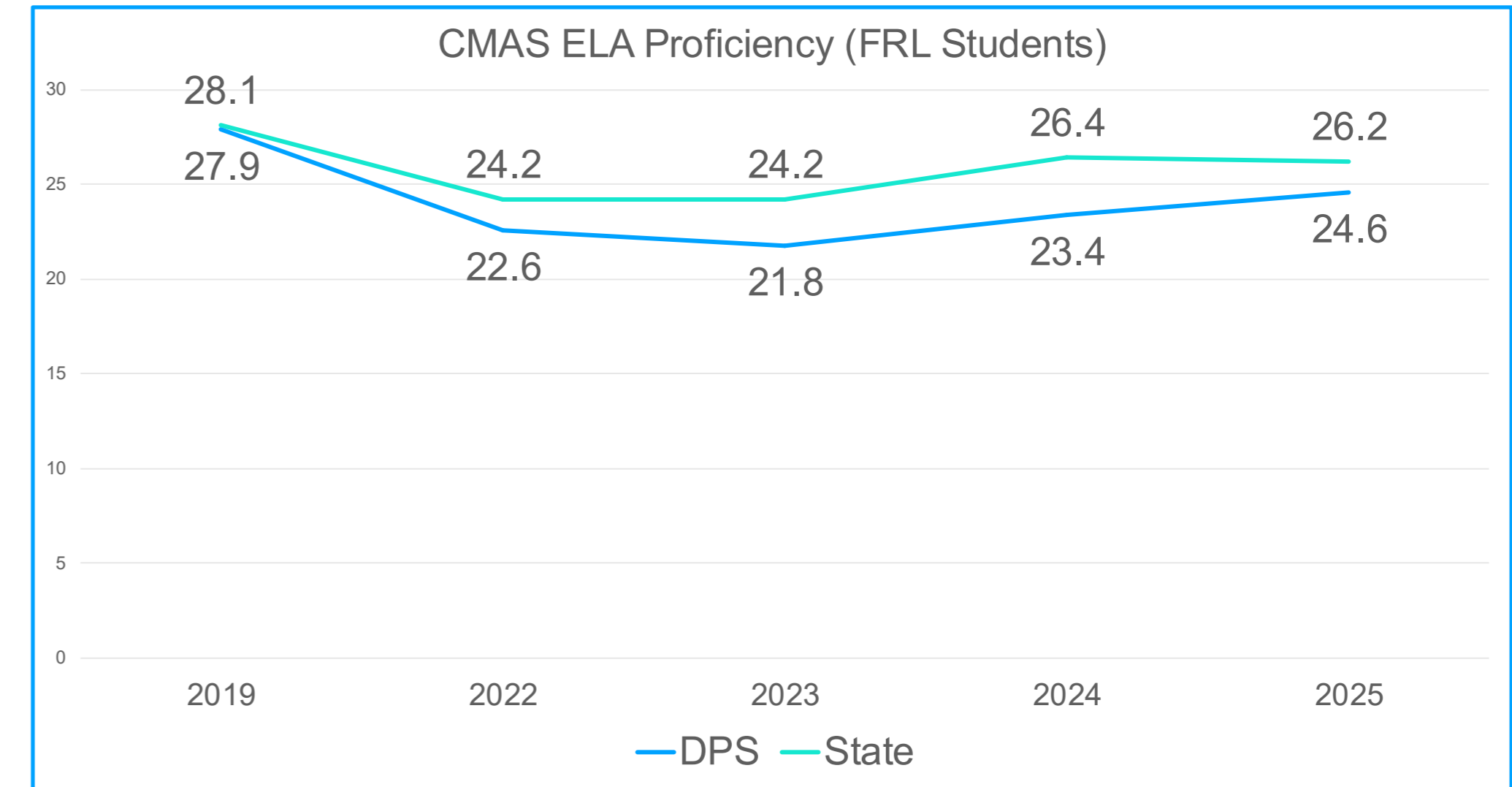


Students from low-income households show improvement, especially in math

Students from low-income households in DPS saw increases in proficiency in 2025 when compared to 2024; this increase was larger in math.

Performance in both subjects is still below 2019, though in math this is by less than one percentage point.

Students from low-income households in DPS perform below their peers statewide in both subjects but have narrowed the gap in math considerable.

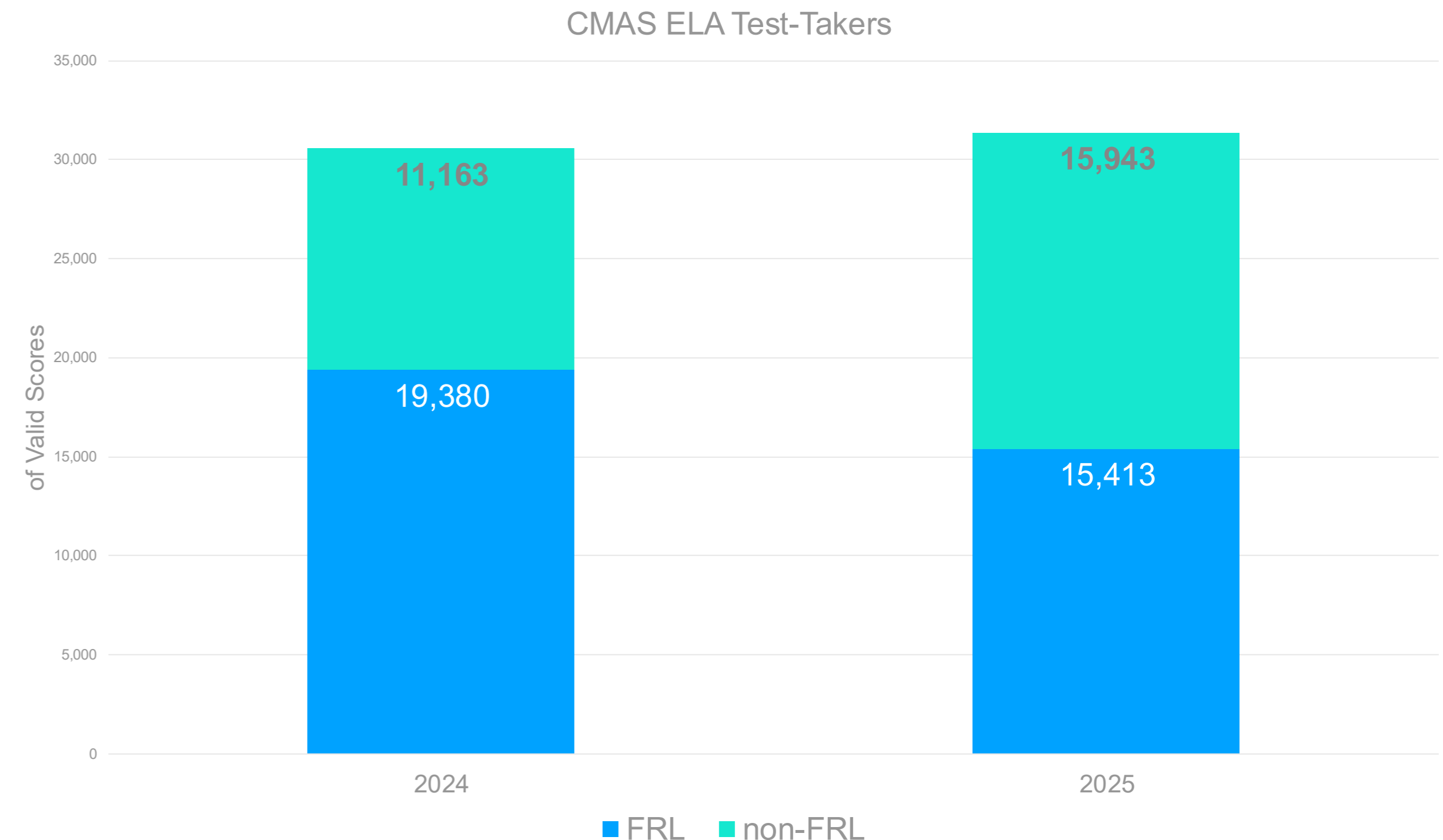


Before looking at gaps based on income, we must consider shifts in number of students in each group.

The number of non-FRL students taking state assessment in Denver increased considerably in 2025, both as an absolute number and a percentage of total test takers.

This is likely a result of the statewide Healthy School Meals for All program which provides all students in participating Colorado school districts receive free lunch, and while schools still rely on the FRL application forms for federal funding, we know many families may not be filling it out now.

Therefore, there are likely numerous students classified as non-FRL in 2025 that previously would have qualified for free or reduced-price lunch in prior years



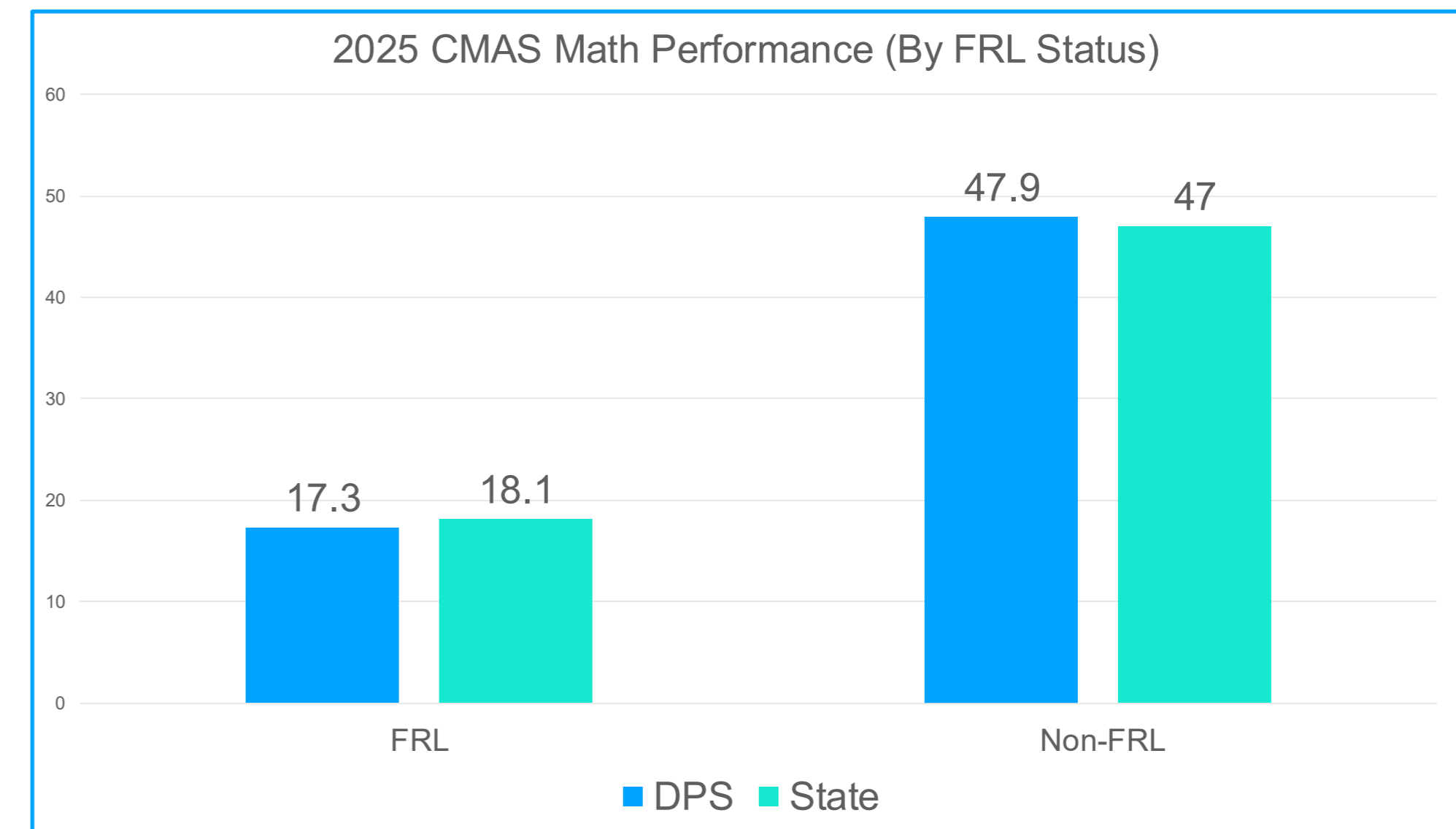
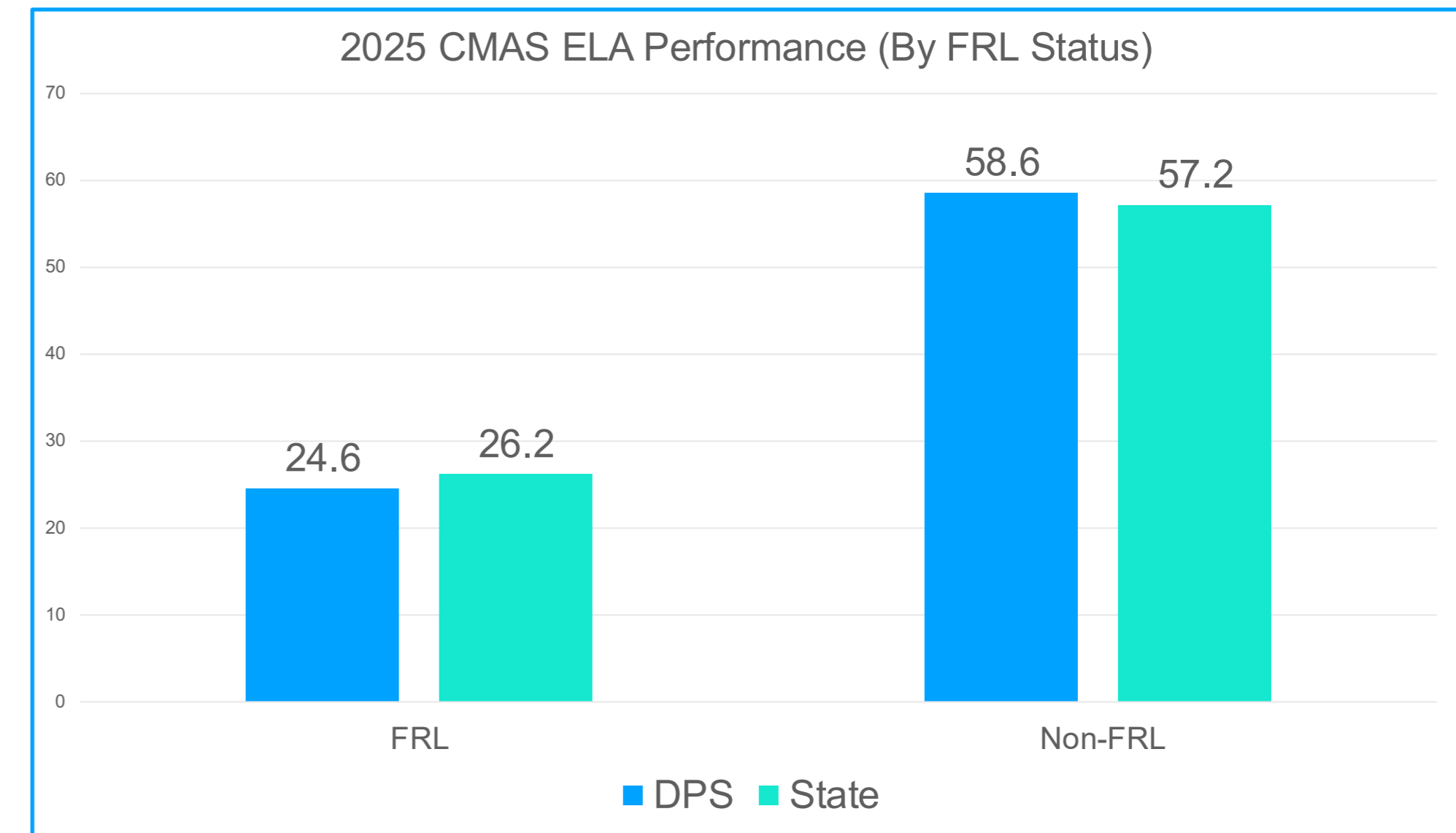
Large achievement gaps remain based on income

Gaps narrowed but this was largely due to a decline in performance amongst non low-income students, likely a result of changing identification requirements.

DPS's proficiency increases in 2025 were not equitable across all student demographic groups. Students from low-income households had small increases.

Gaps between these groups were over 40 percentage points in ELA and math. While these were smaller than in 2024 this is largely due to declines in performance for non low-income students..

Gaps by income were slightly larger in DPS than statewide, and DPS students from low-income households were outperformed by their peers statewide.

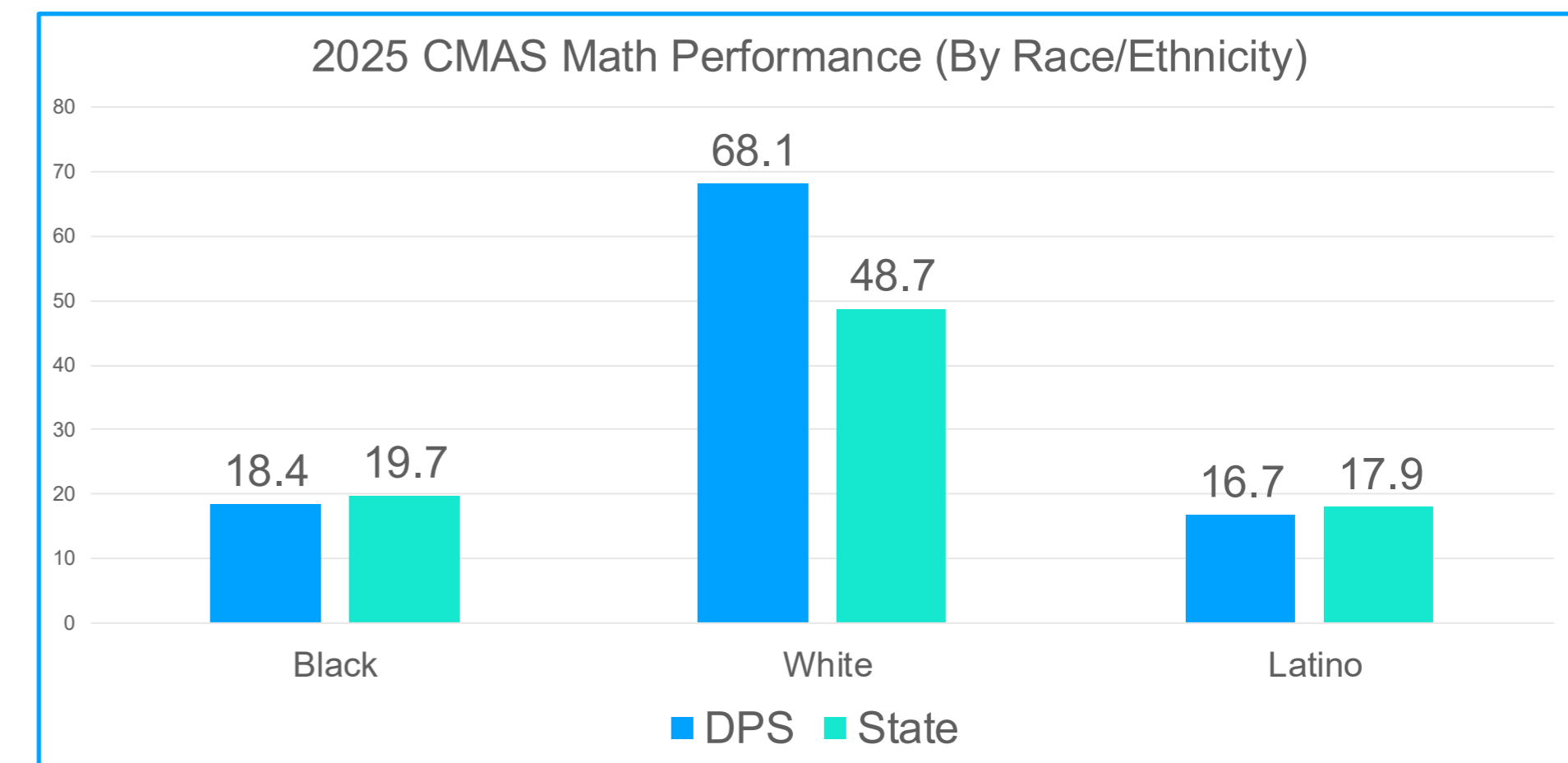
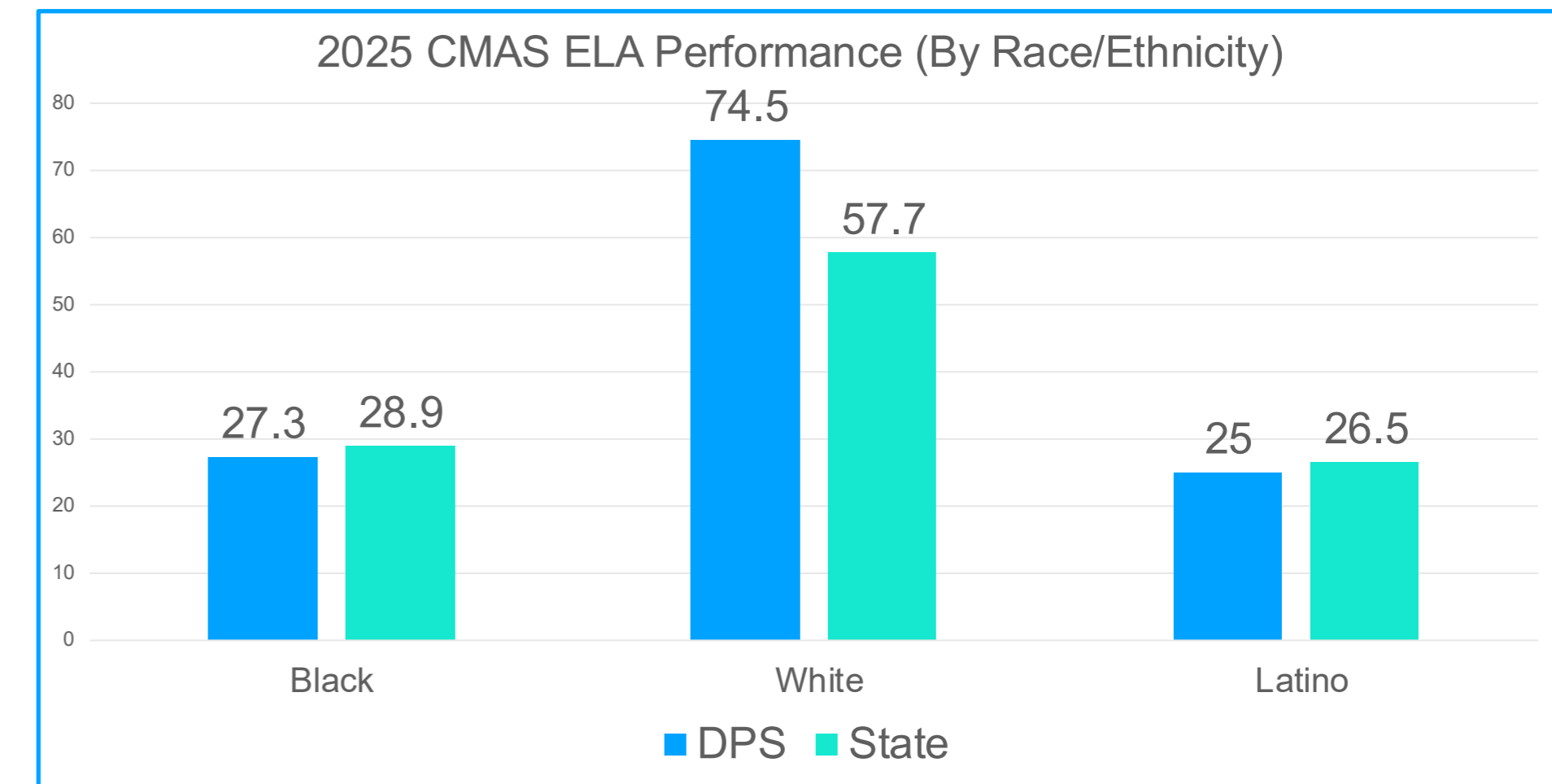


Large achievement gaps remain based on race and ethnicity

However, students from all groups saw increased performance in 2025.

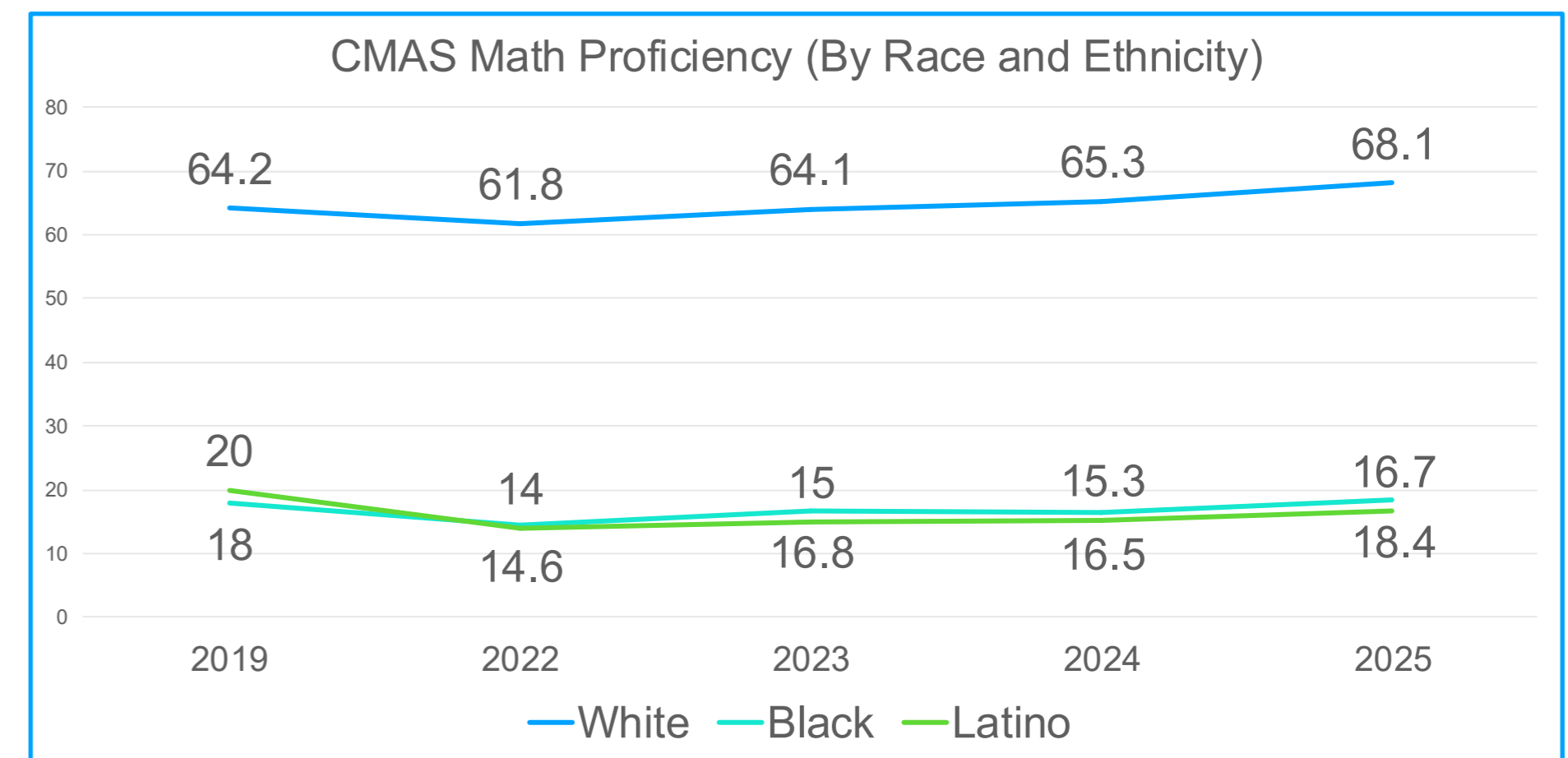
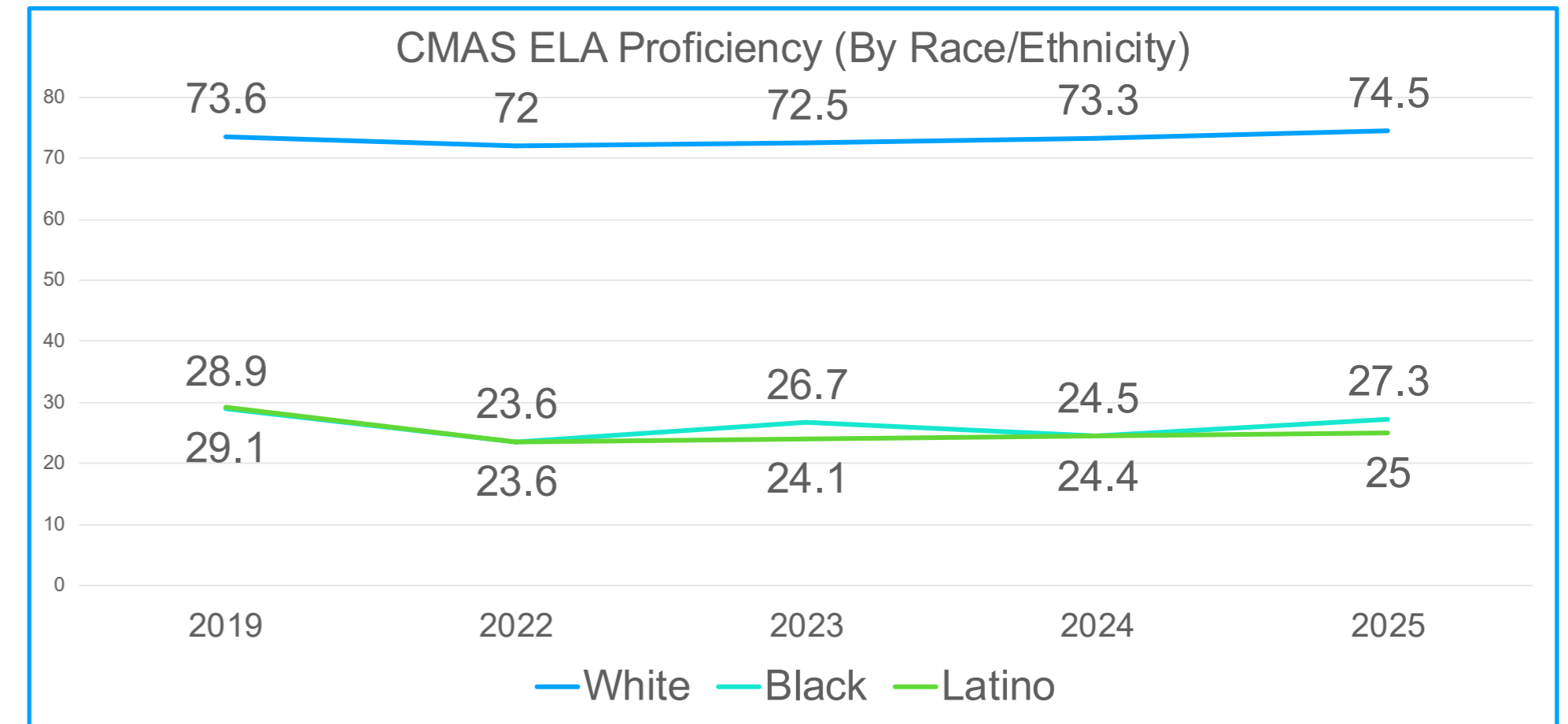
Gaps between white students and Black and Latino students were over 45 percentage points in ELA and math, similar to 2024

Gaps by race and ethnicity were larger in DPS than statewide, and Black and Latino students were outperformed by their peers statewide, while white students in DPS outperformed white students statewide.



Large achievement gaps remain based on race and ethnicity

However, students from all groups saw increased performance in 2025.



Both Black and Latino students saw increases in performance in both subjects in 2025, though still lag 2019 performance levels.

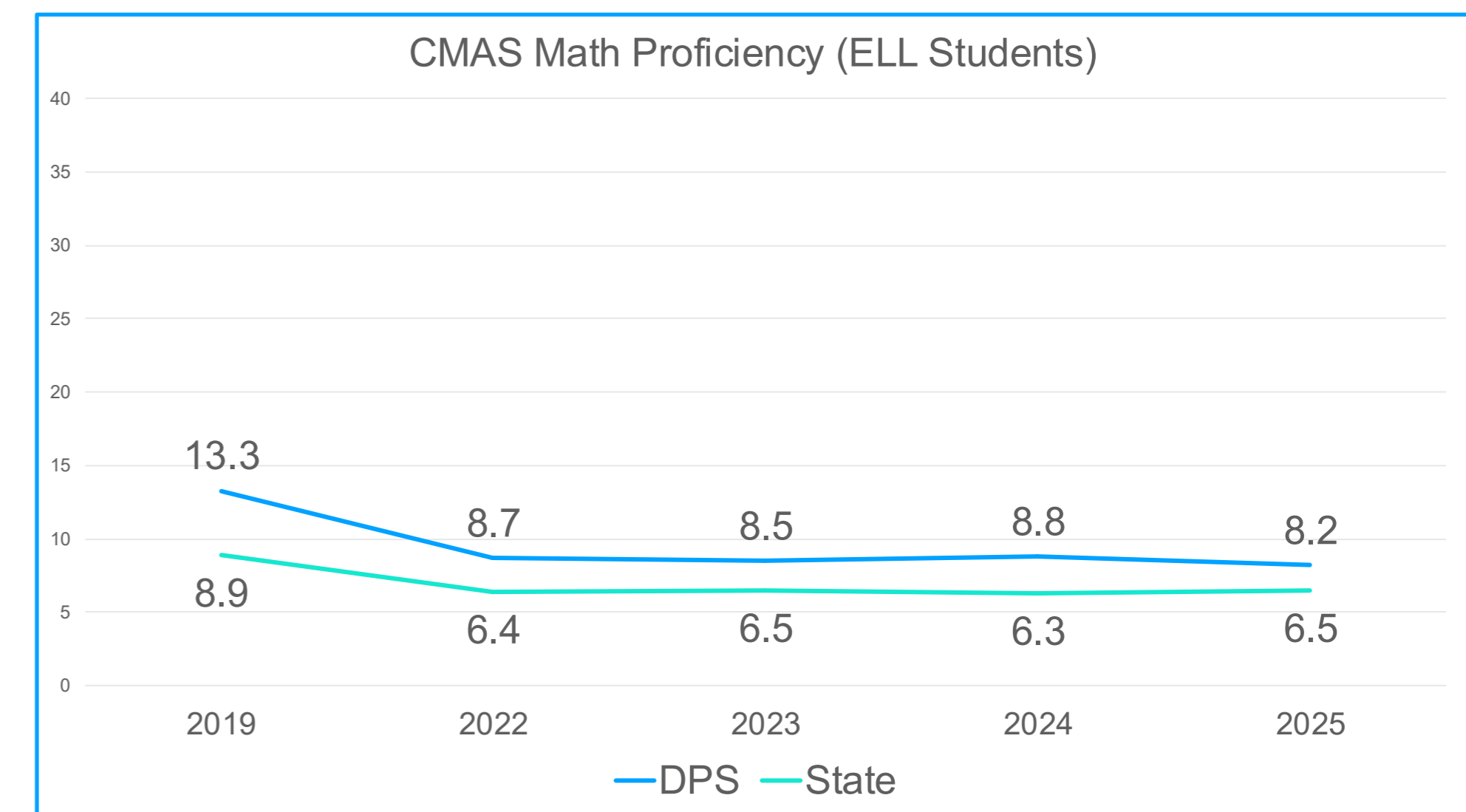
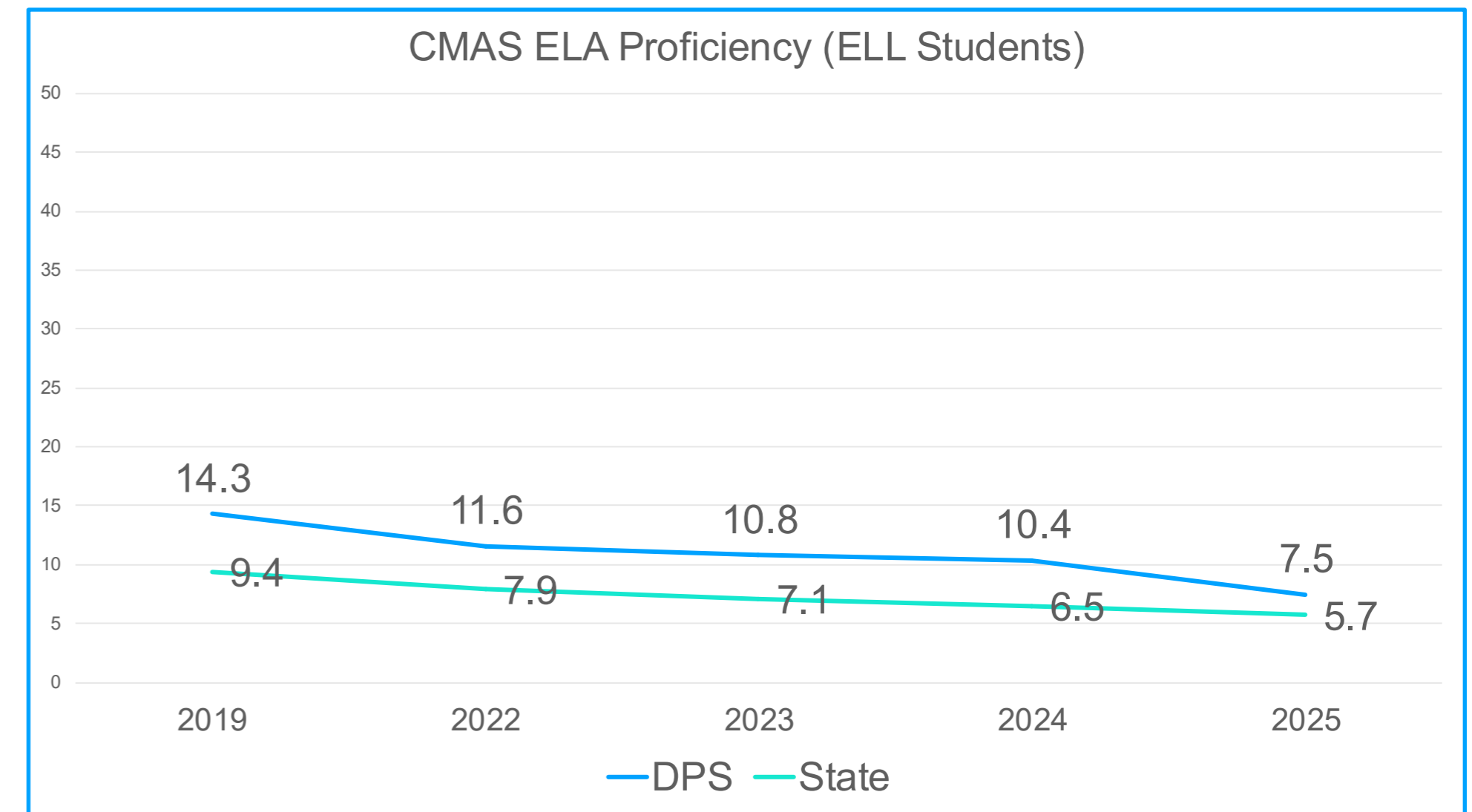
White students also saw increases and have surpassed 2019 performance levels.

English Language Learners (ELLs) in DPS outperform peers statewide

However, ELLs' academic performance continues to decline.

ELLs in DPS outperformed ELLs statewide in both ELA and math.

However, ELLs in both DPS and the state have seen consistent declines in their performance since 2019, and the gap between DPS and the state is narrowing.



CMAS: Academic Growth

DPS students showed more growth than peers statewide

In ELA and math, DPS students made more progress than students statewide.

An MGP of 50 indicates students are making the same amount of progress as comparable peers across the state.

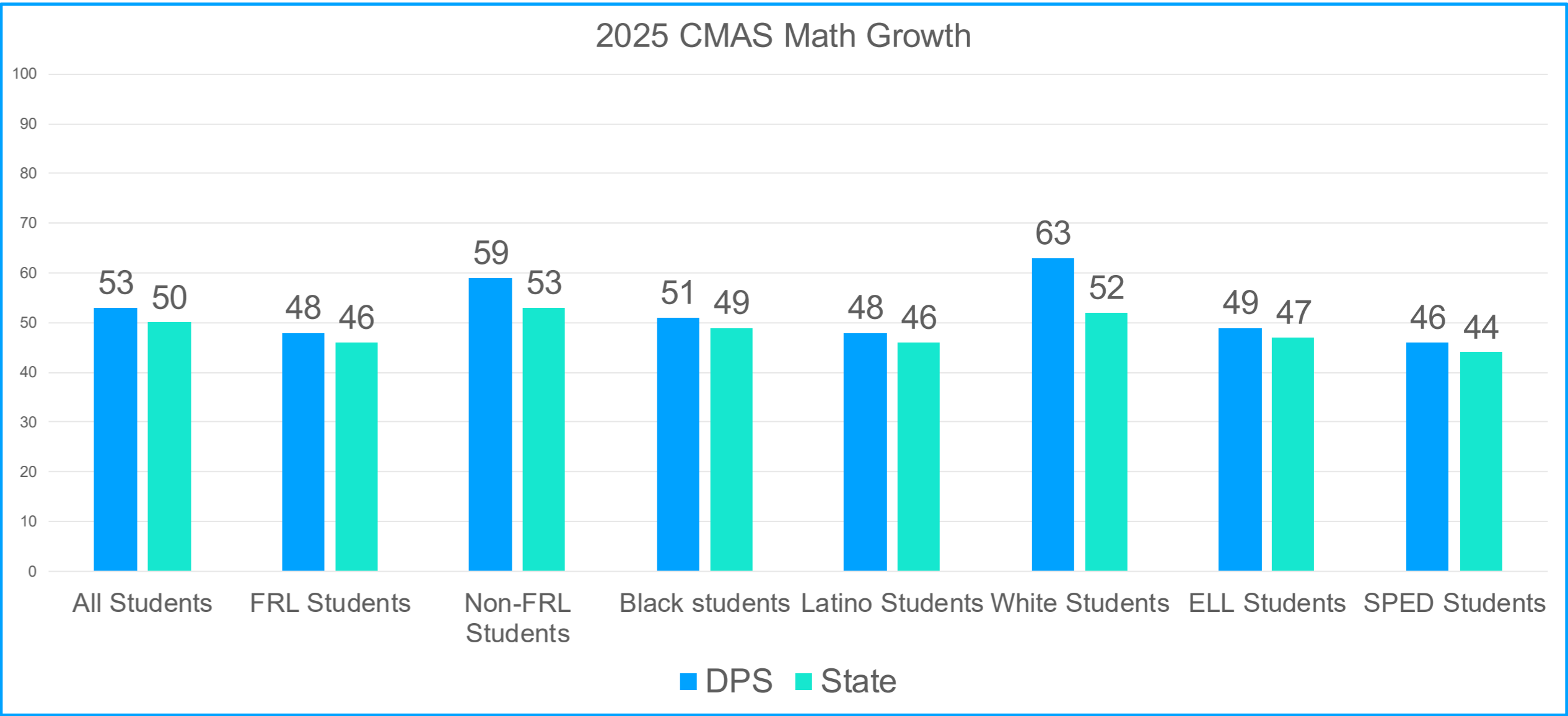
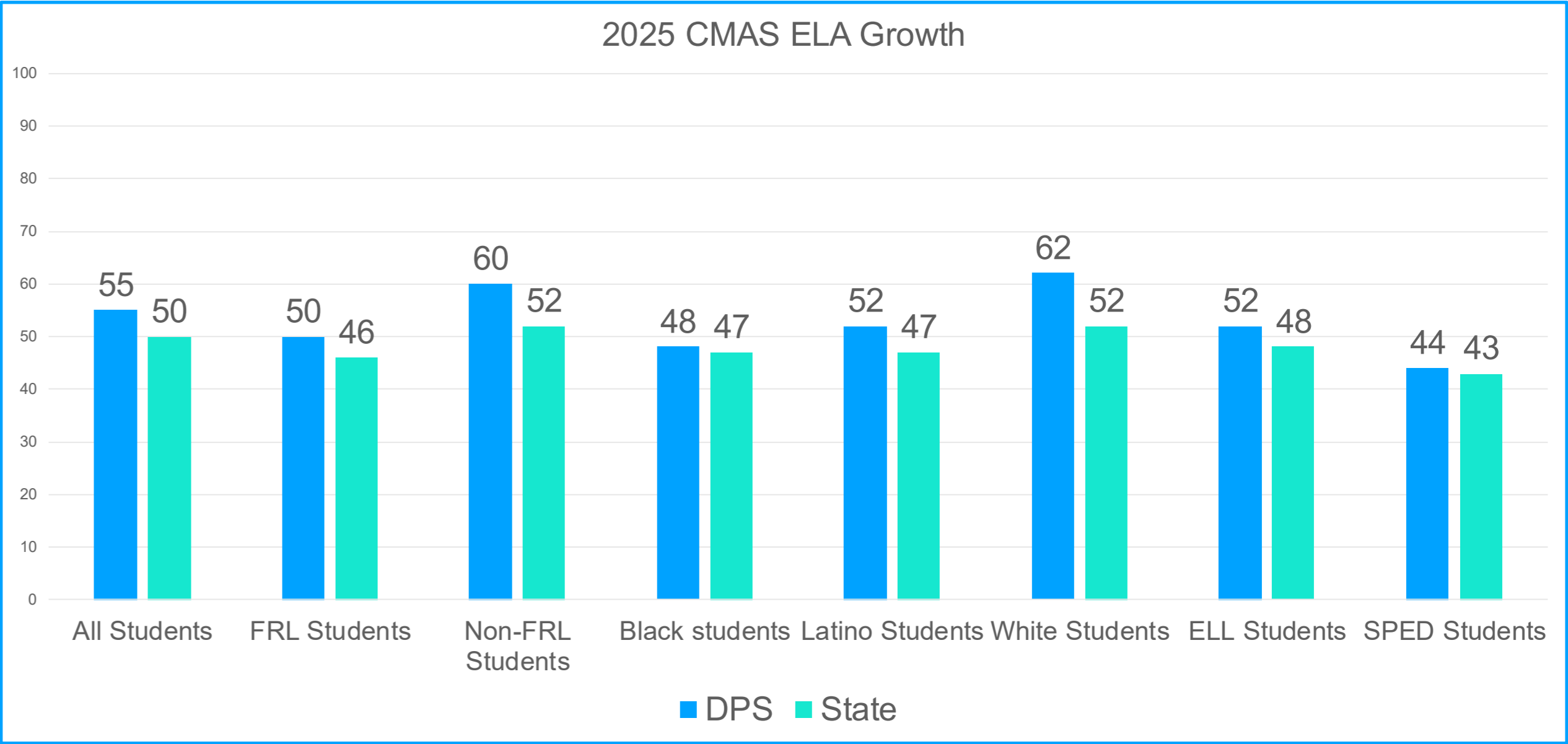
Subject	DPS Median Growth Percentile (MGP)
CMAS: English Language Arts (ELA)	55
CMAS: Math	53

Most student groups in DPS showed more growth than their peer statewide.

They were still outperformed by comparison groups within DPS.

Most DPS student demographic groups saw more growth than those same student groups statewide (i.e., DPS FRL students saw more growth than FRL students statewide).

However, most traditionally underserved groups in DPS saw less growth than their comparison groups which could lead to widening gaps over time (i.e., DPS FRL students saw less growth than DPS Non-FRL students.)



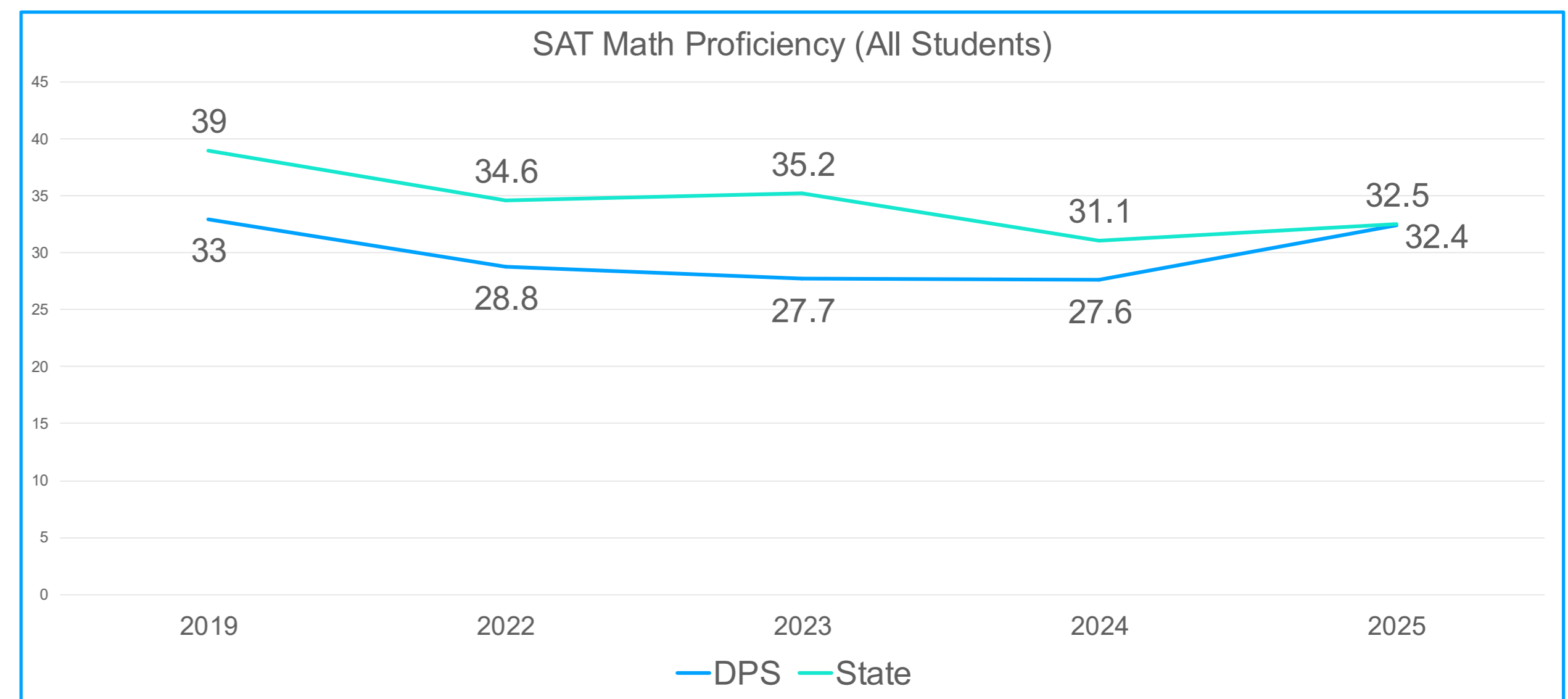
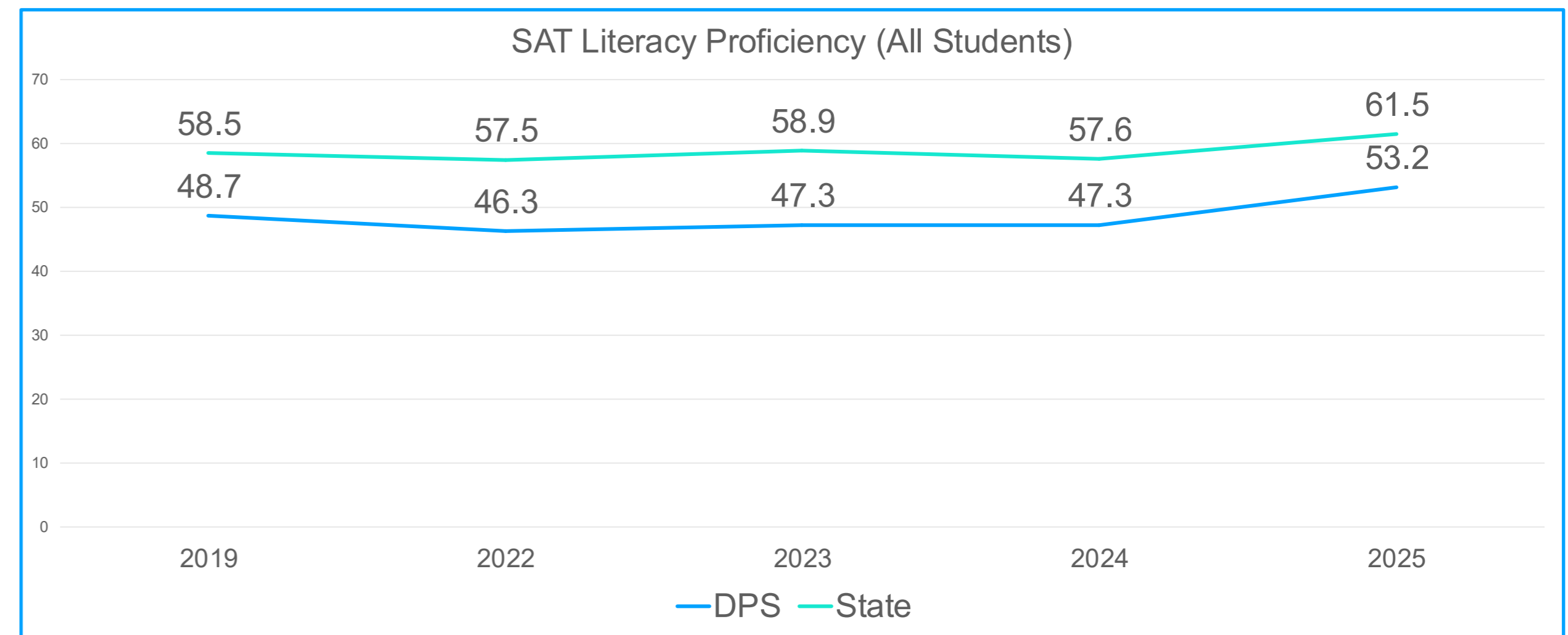
PSAT & SAT: Performance Overview

Improved proficiency rates on SAT

Proficiency rates still lag the state overall.

DPS saw substantially improved proficiency rates on the 11th grade SAT in both Literacy and math.

Performance is still below the state, but this gap closed considerable in math.



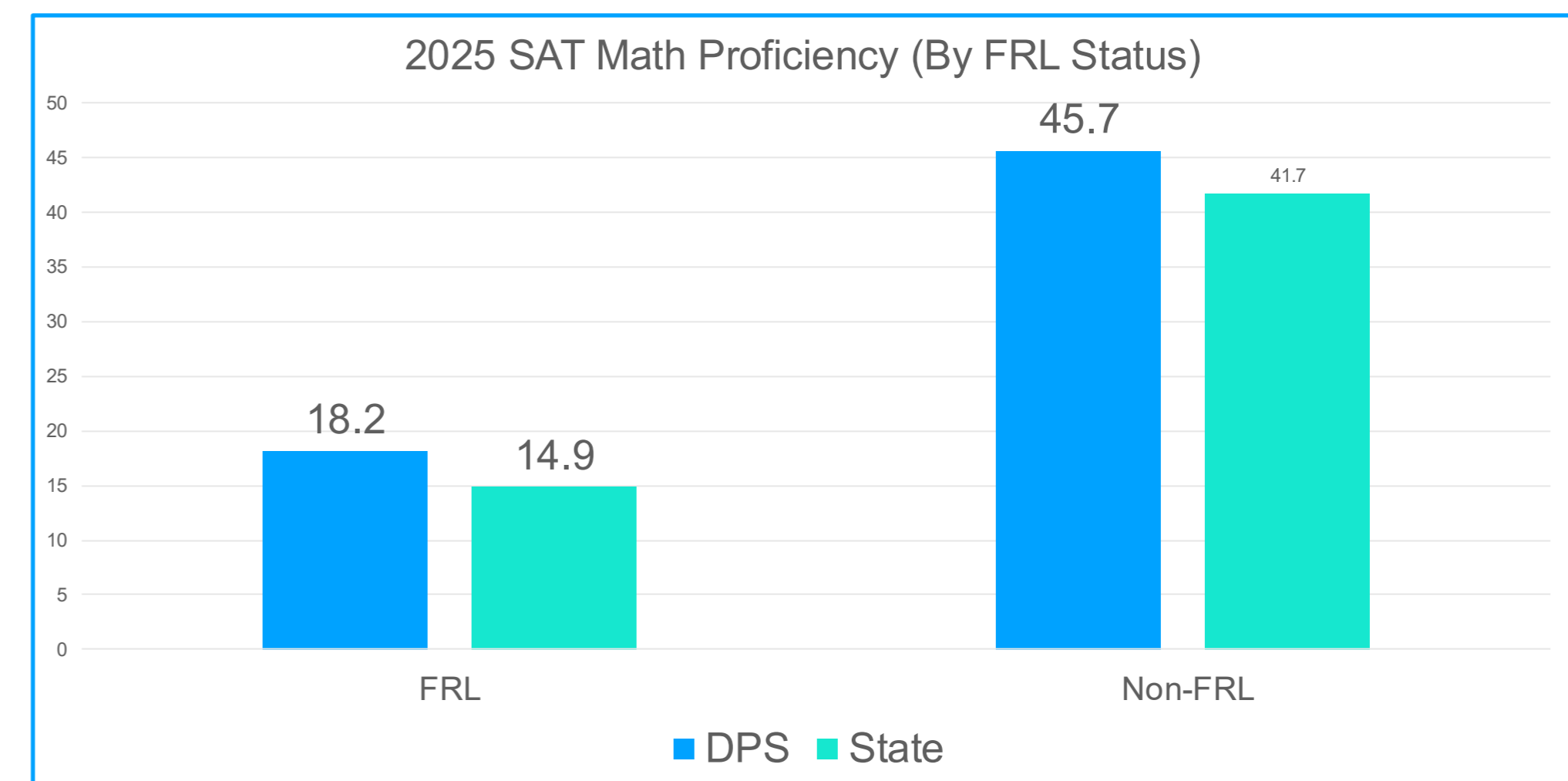
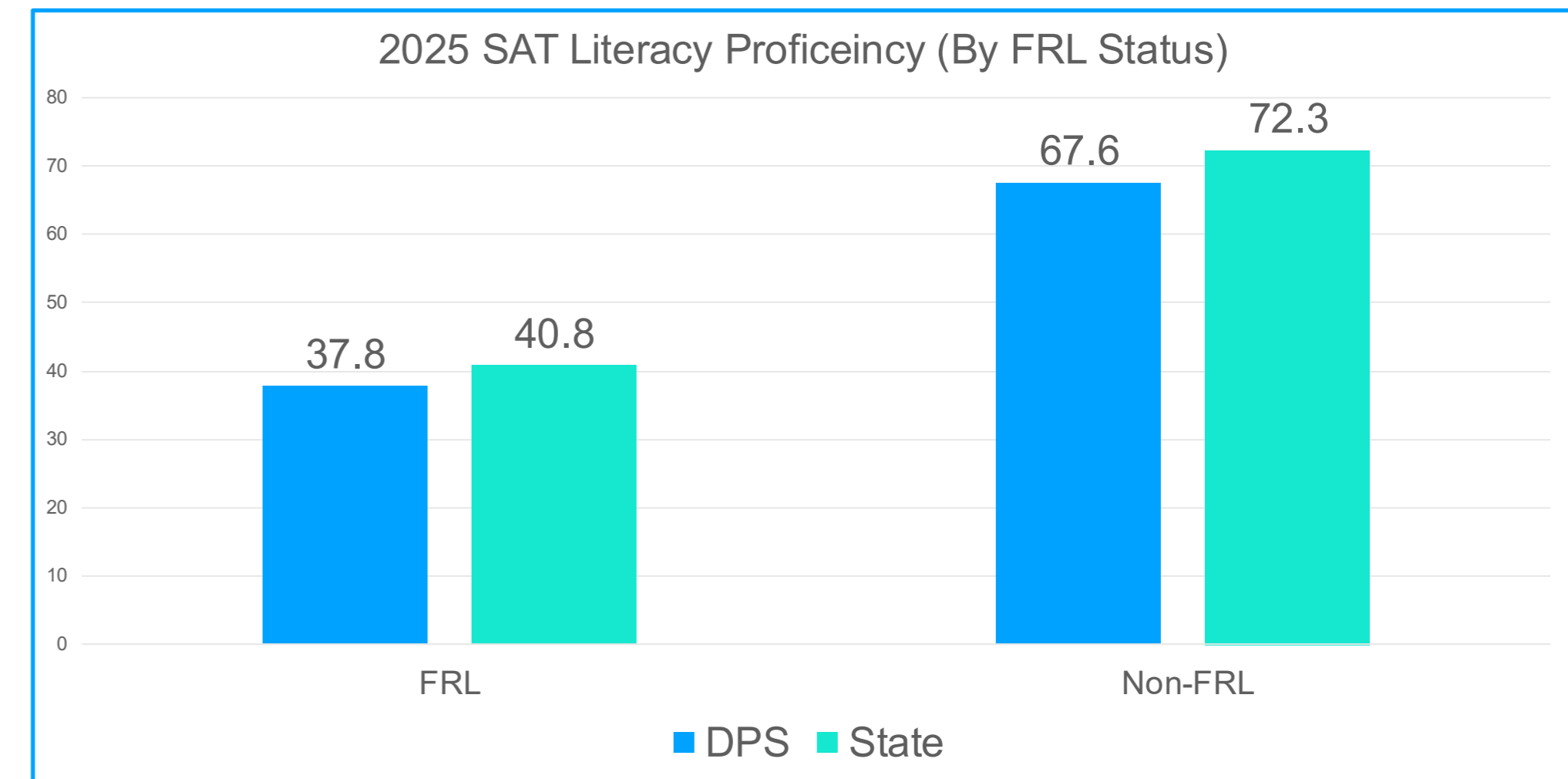
Large achievement gaps remain by income

Math performance for all groups does outpace state peers.

DPS continues to have large achievement gaps when students from low-income households to those not.

In math, despite large gaps, both groups in DPS do outpace their statewide peers.

Students from low-income households did see substantive performance increase in both subjects this year; this increase was 6 percentage points in ELA and 4 in math.



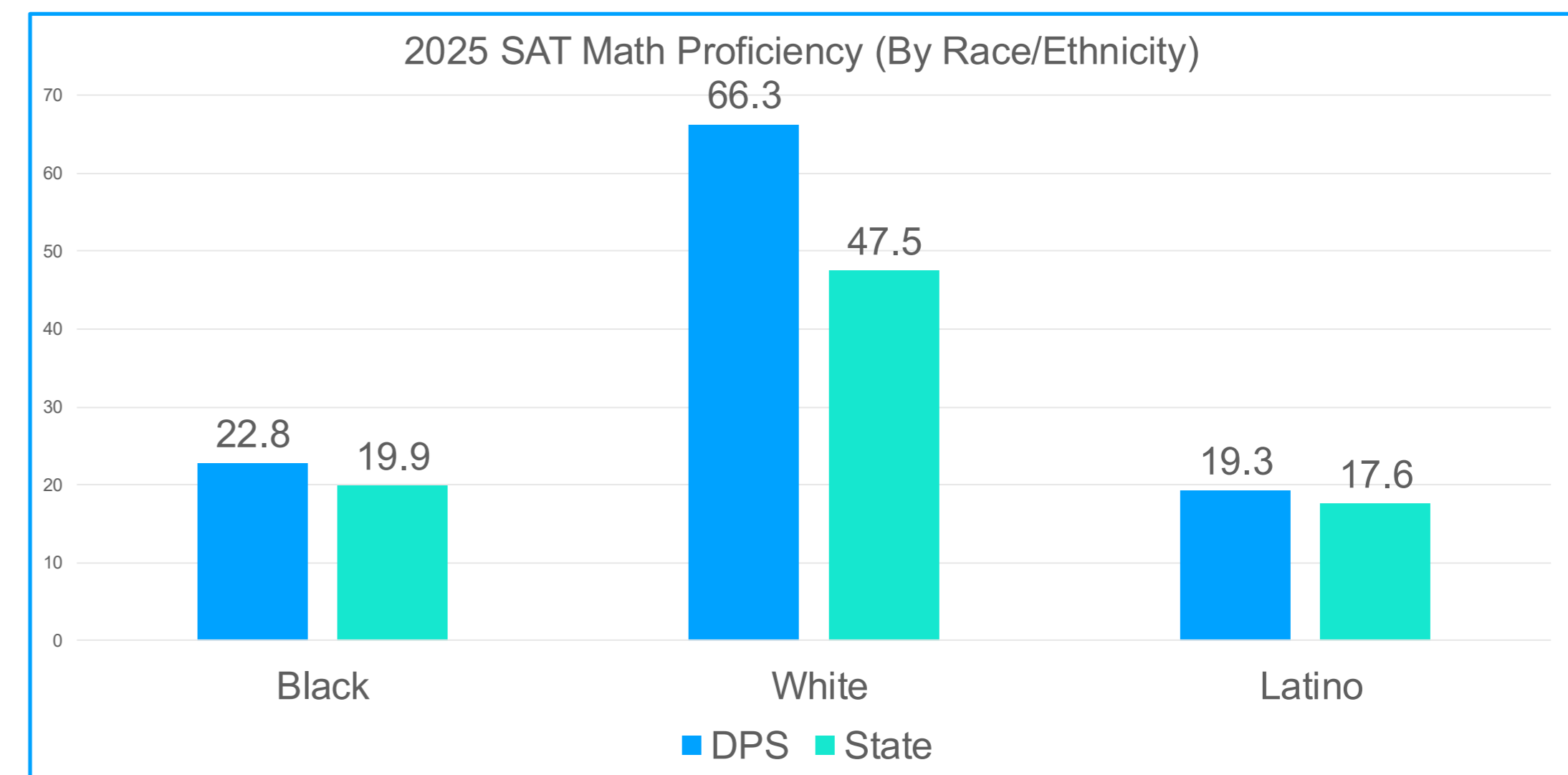
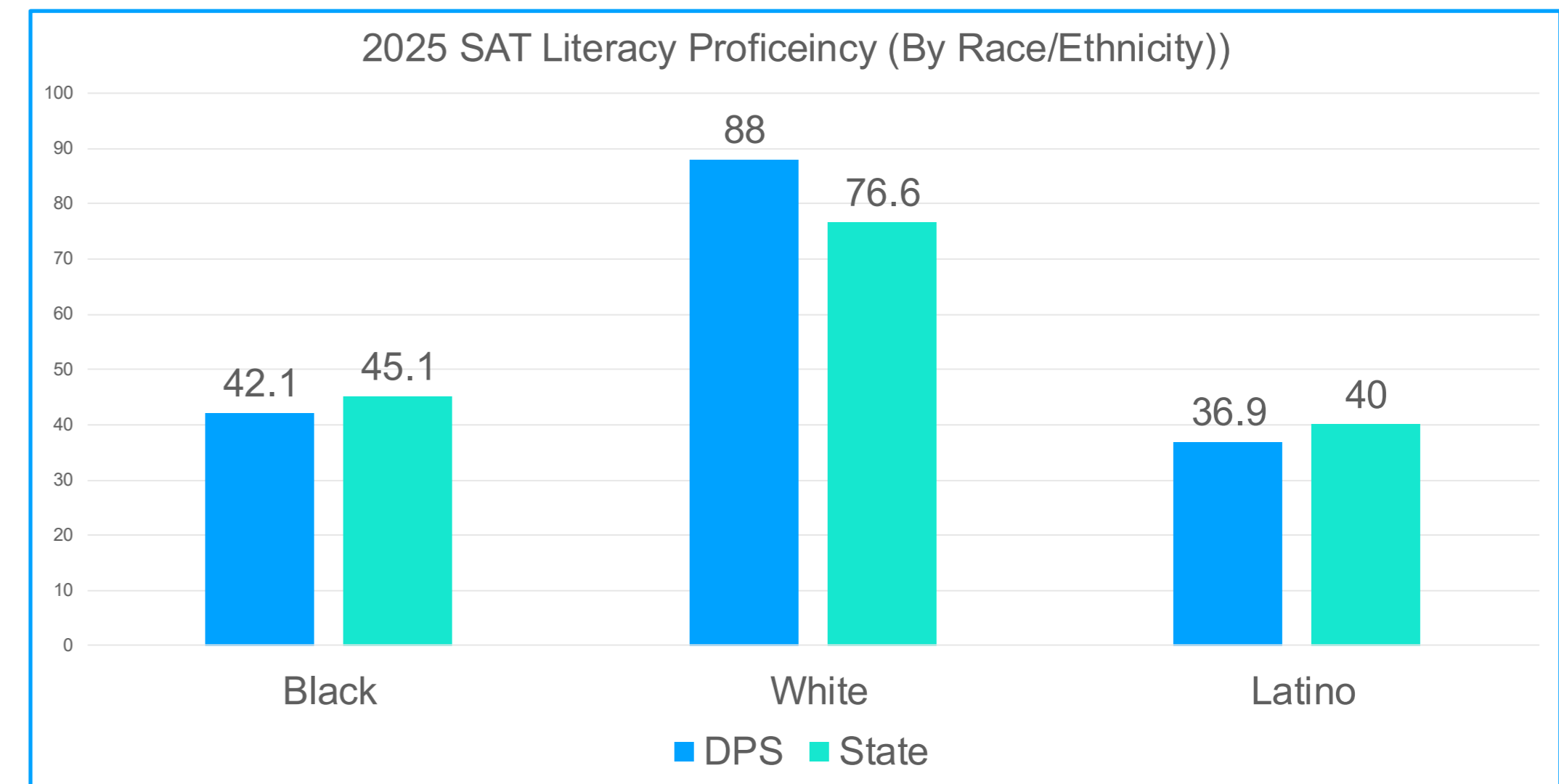
Large achievement gaps remain by race

Math performance for all groups does outpace state peers.

DPS continues to have large achievement gaps when comparing the performance of Black and Latino students to white students on the SAT. For Latino students in ELA, this gap is over 50 percentage points.

In literacy, Black and Latino students still trail their peers statewide. In math, despite large gaps, both groups in DPS do outpace their statewide peers.

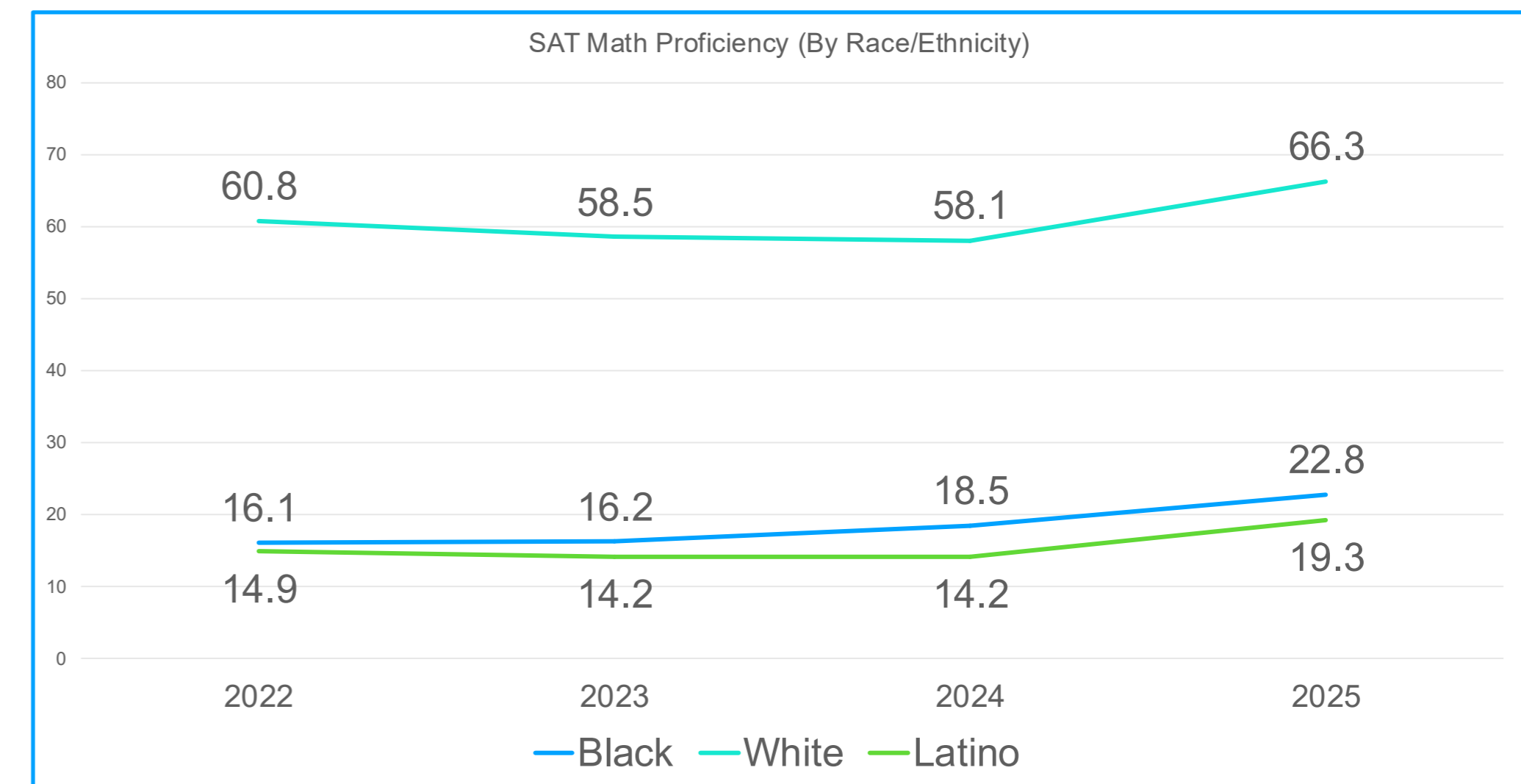
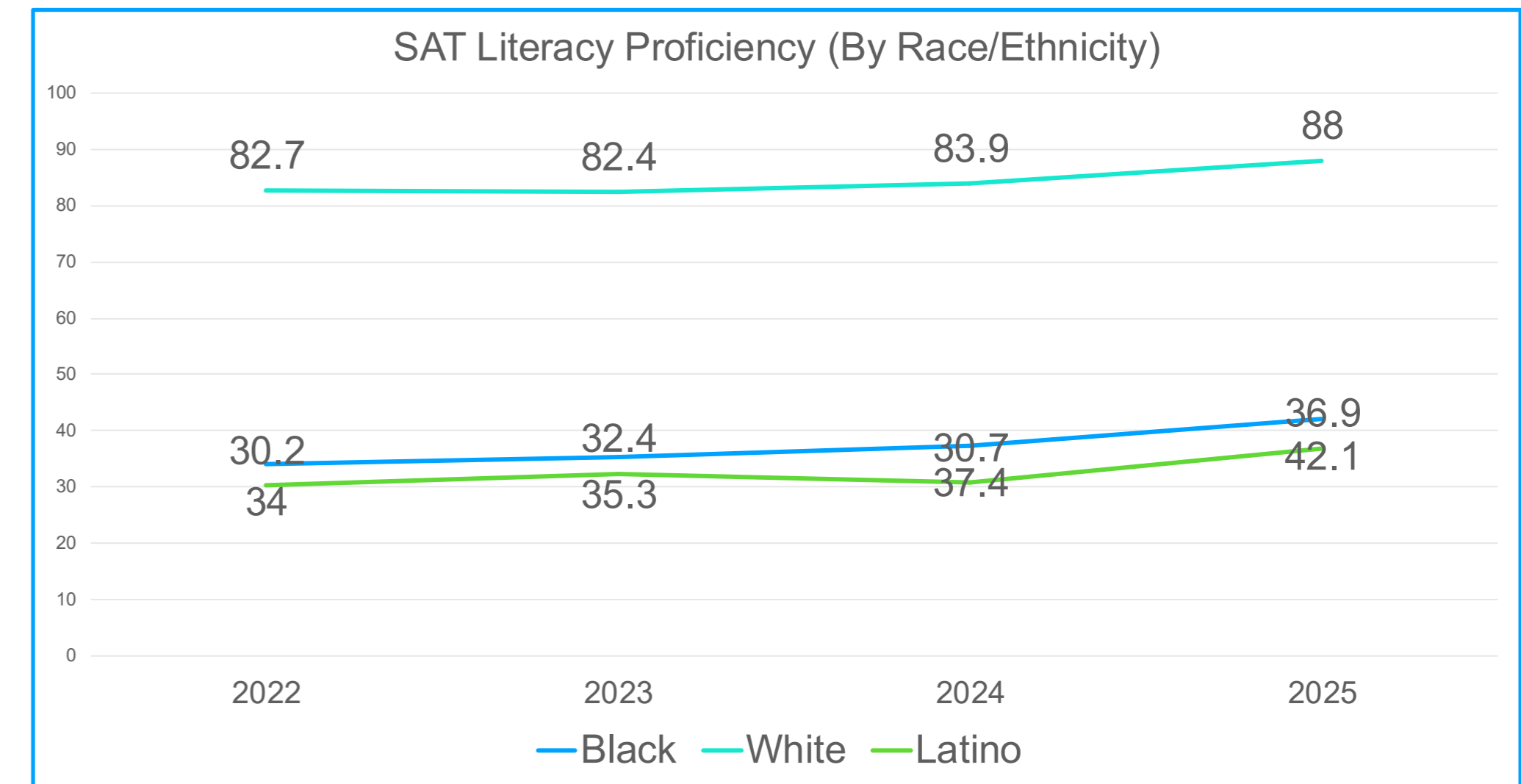
In both subjects, white students from DPS outpace white students statewide.



All groups saw some improvement in 2025

All student groups saw increases in proficiency rates in 2025.

Latino students saw the largest improvements in both subjects—4.7 percentage points in ELA and 5.1 in math.



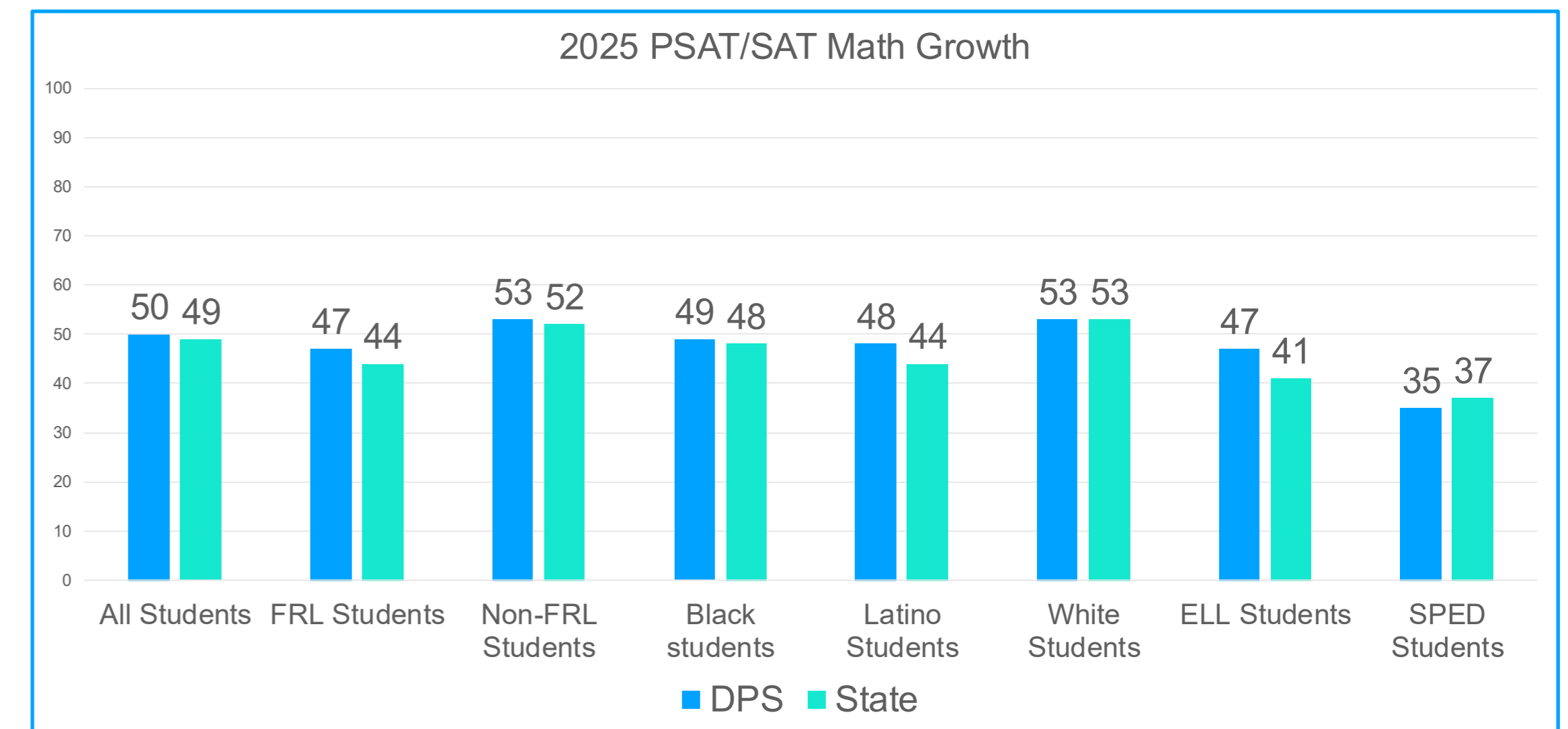
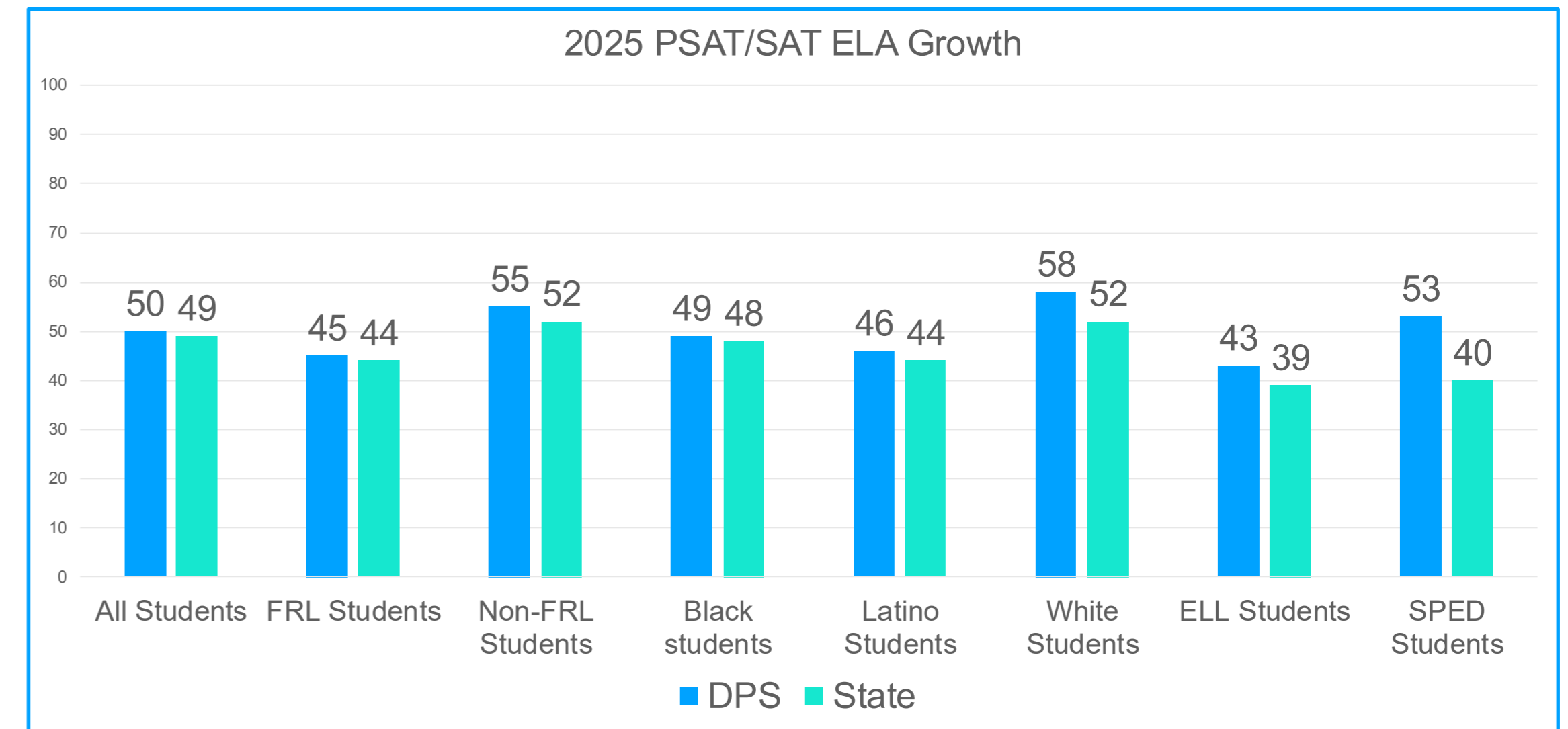
DPS high school students showed growth on par with their peers statewide

Subgroup growth varied for DPS high school students.

An MGP of 50 indicates students are making the same amount of progress as comparable peers across the state.

In PSAT and SAT literacy and math, DPS students showed growth comparable their peers statewide.

Additionally, many student demographic groups (e.g., based on income, race or ethnicity) in DPS had low growth on the PSAT and SAT, which could create widening gaps.



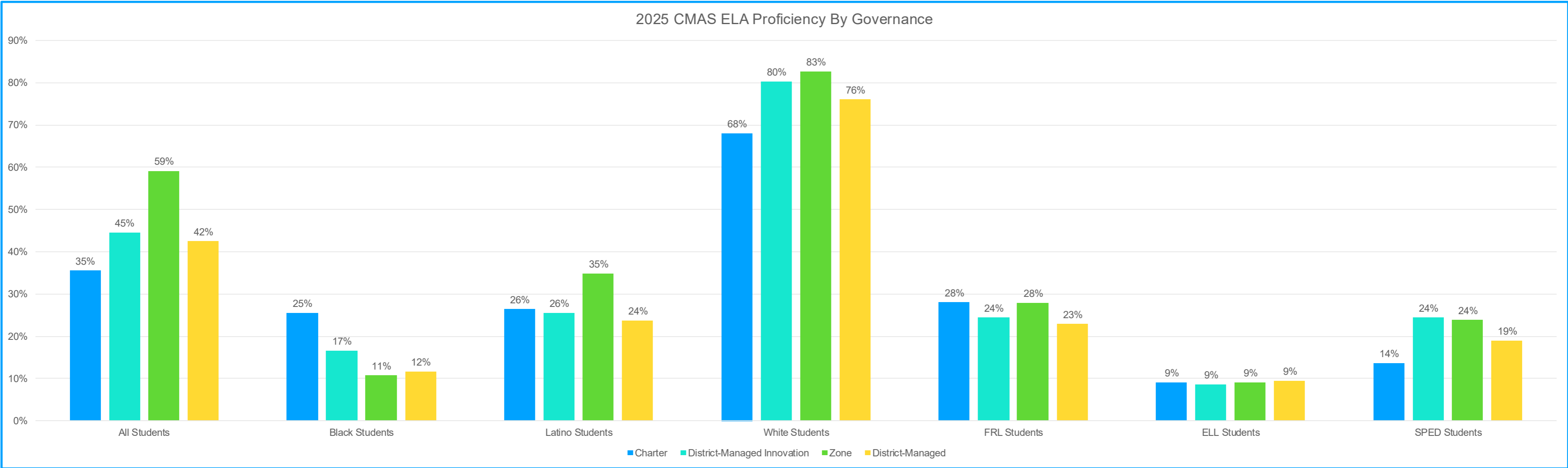
Performance By School Type

CMAS ELA scores vary by school governance type

Autonomous schools have higher proficiency rates for most traditionally underserved student groups.

When looking solely at overall proficiency rates, innovation zone schools outperform all other school governance types in ELA.

However, when looking at subgroup performance we see that this trend varies. Charter schools outperform all school types with Black students by a large margin. Innovation Zone one and charter schools outperform with Latino students and FRL students as well.

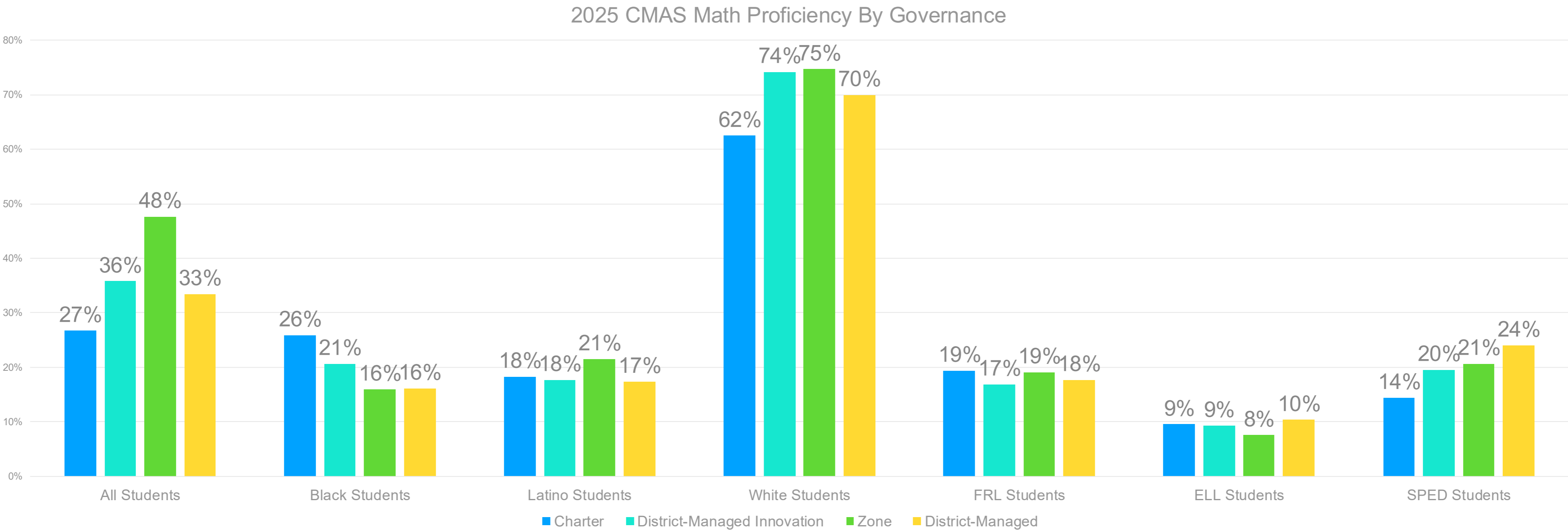


CMAS Math scores vary by school governance type

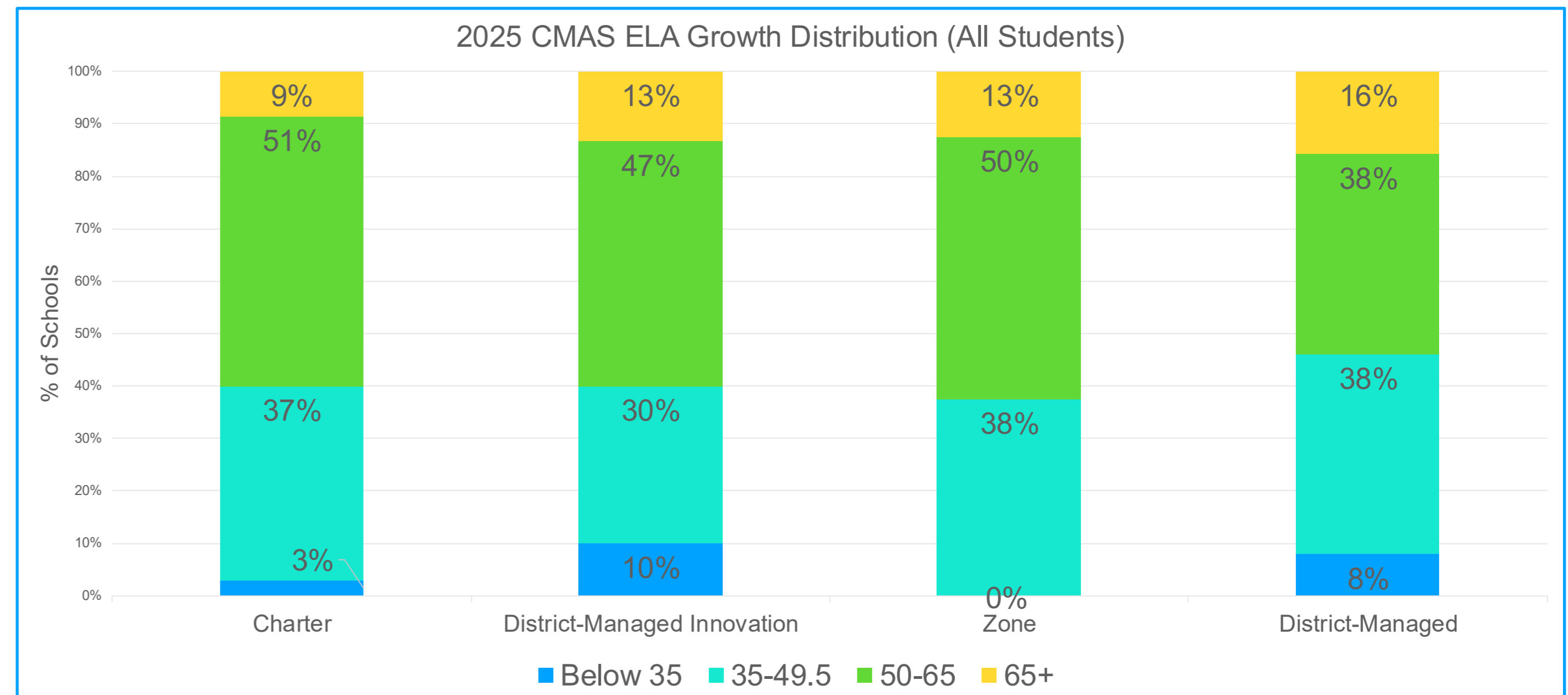
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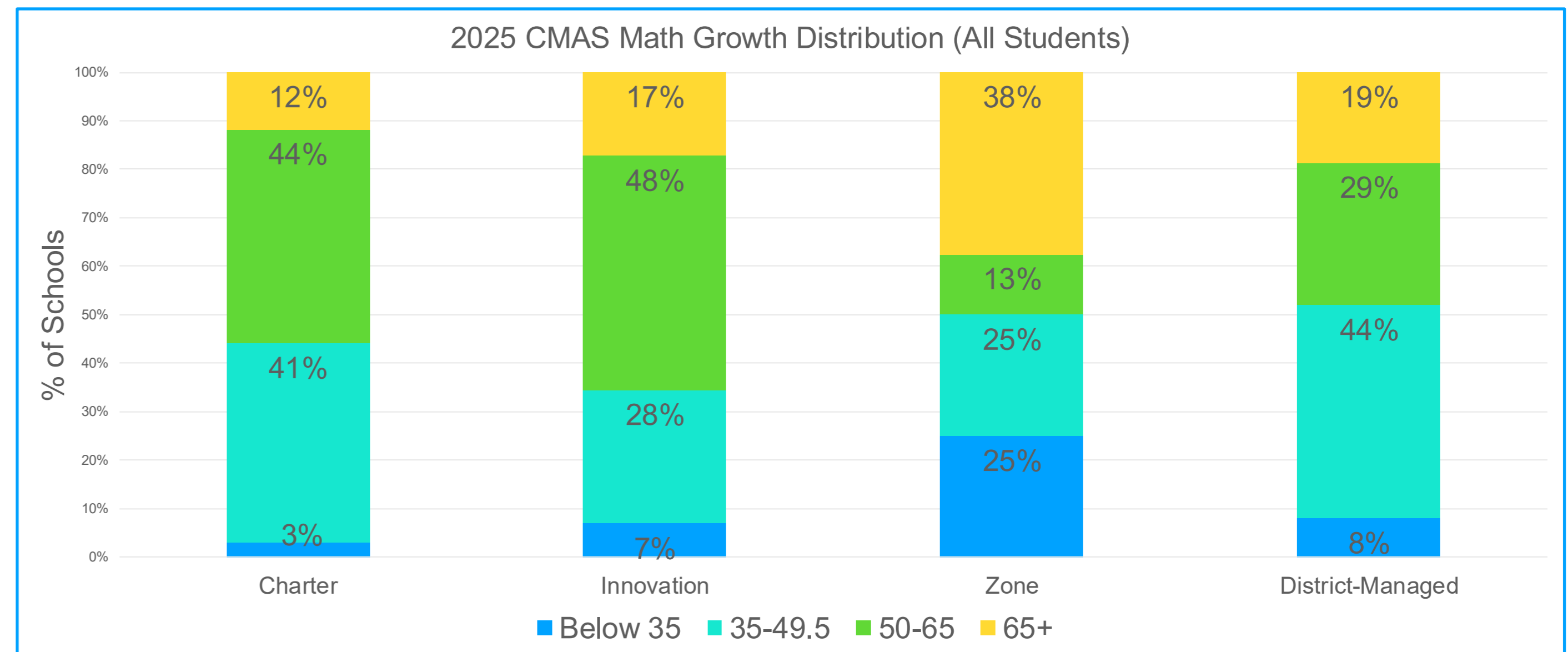


Across governance types there are schools with strong growth.



In ELA, district-managed schools had the smallest percentage of schools with MGP over 50 at 54% while innovation Zone schools had the highest at 63%.

In math, district-managed innovation schools had the highest percentage of schools with an MGP over 50 at 65%.

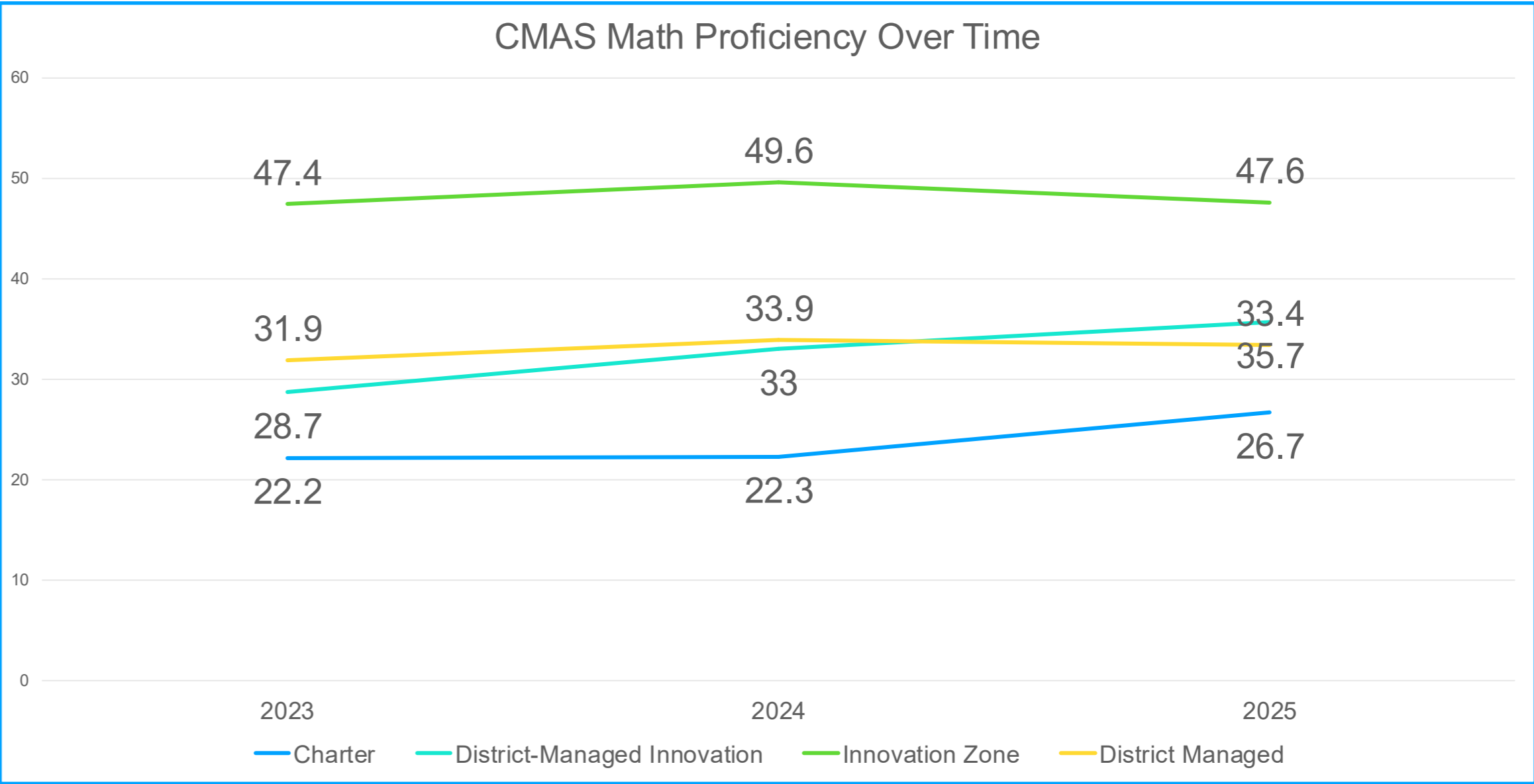
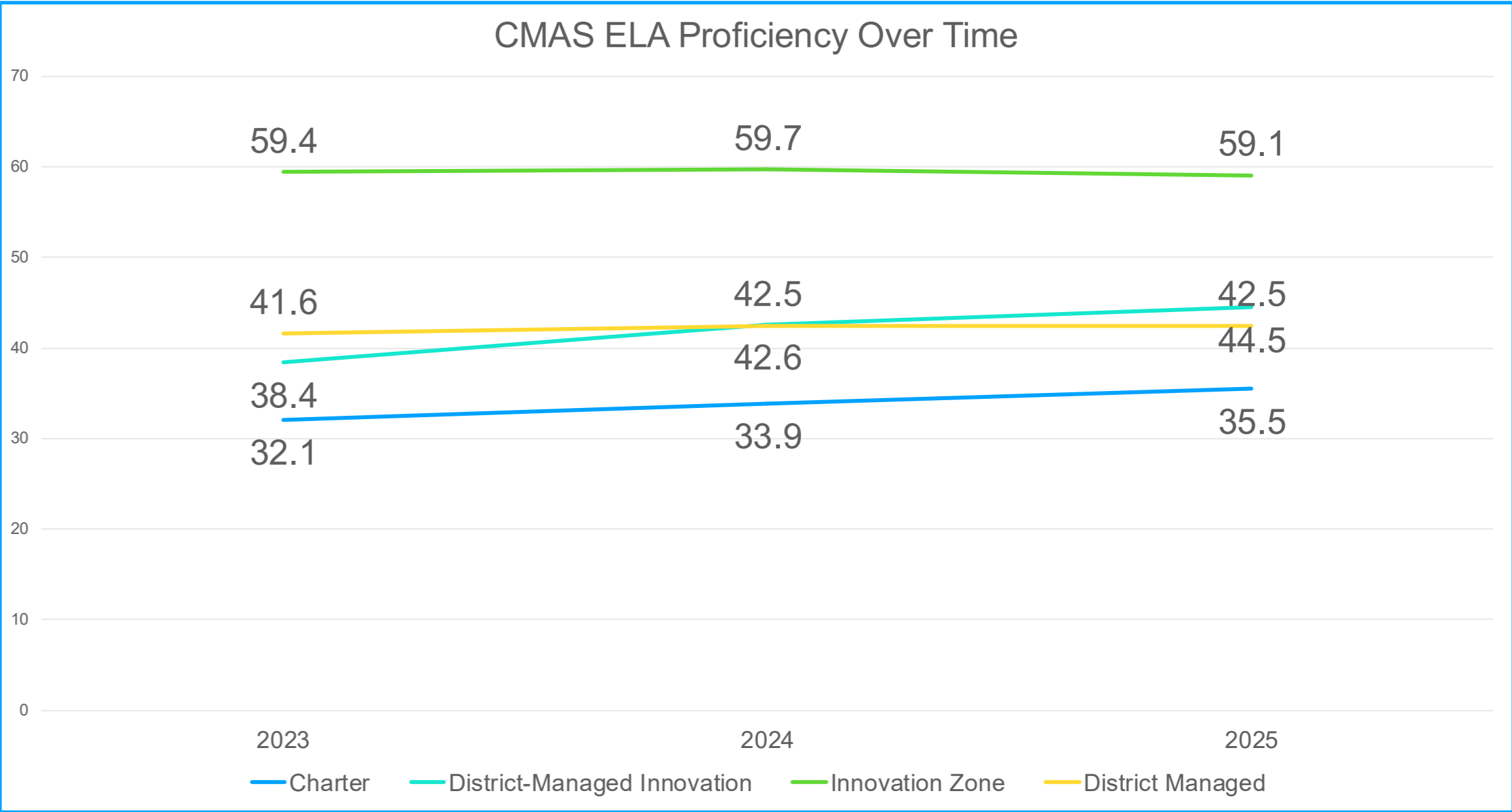


Charter school performance increased in 2025.

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In ELA, charter schools and district-managed innovation schools both saw significant increases in proficiency.

In math, charters saw an increase of over 4 percentage points.



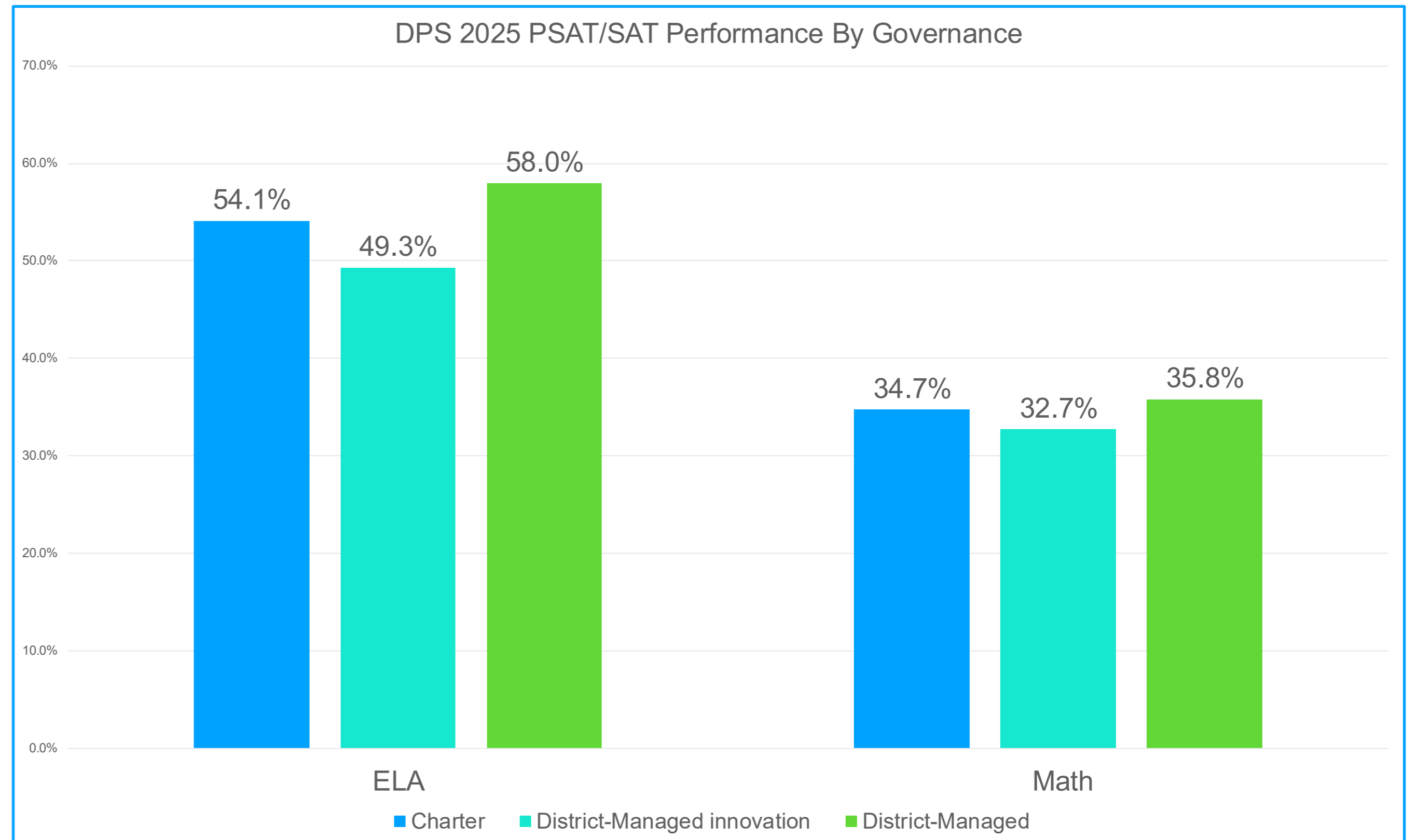
SAT performance also varies by governance.

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District-managed schools were the highest performing on PSAT and SAT. However, charter and district-managed innovation schools serve higher percentages of students from traditionally underserved groups that likely contribute to these results.

Additionally, many of the highest performing high schools are charter schools.

NOTE: There are no current innovation zone high schools.



Strong outliers exist across school governance type

There are schools across governance types serving large numbers of students from low-income households and delivering strong results for these students.

Rocky
Mountain Prep
Creekside

DCIS Baker

Gust

Holm

DSST GVR
MS

DSST CG HS

Preliminary SPF Ratings

Based on these data points and others, DPS earned a “Green” Rating on the District Performance Framework

- Two-thirds of Colorado’s 1,700 schools and 55% of its 180 school districts earned green or higher ratings from the state this year
- DPS’s Green rating was an **improvement over last year’s yellow rating** and is the second highest rating possible for Districts.
- Within DPS, **62% of students** attend a “Green School.”
- However, this means that there are still **over 30,000 students not in Performing Schools** as defined by the SPF.

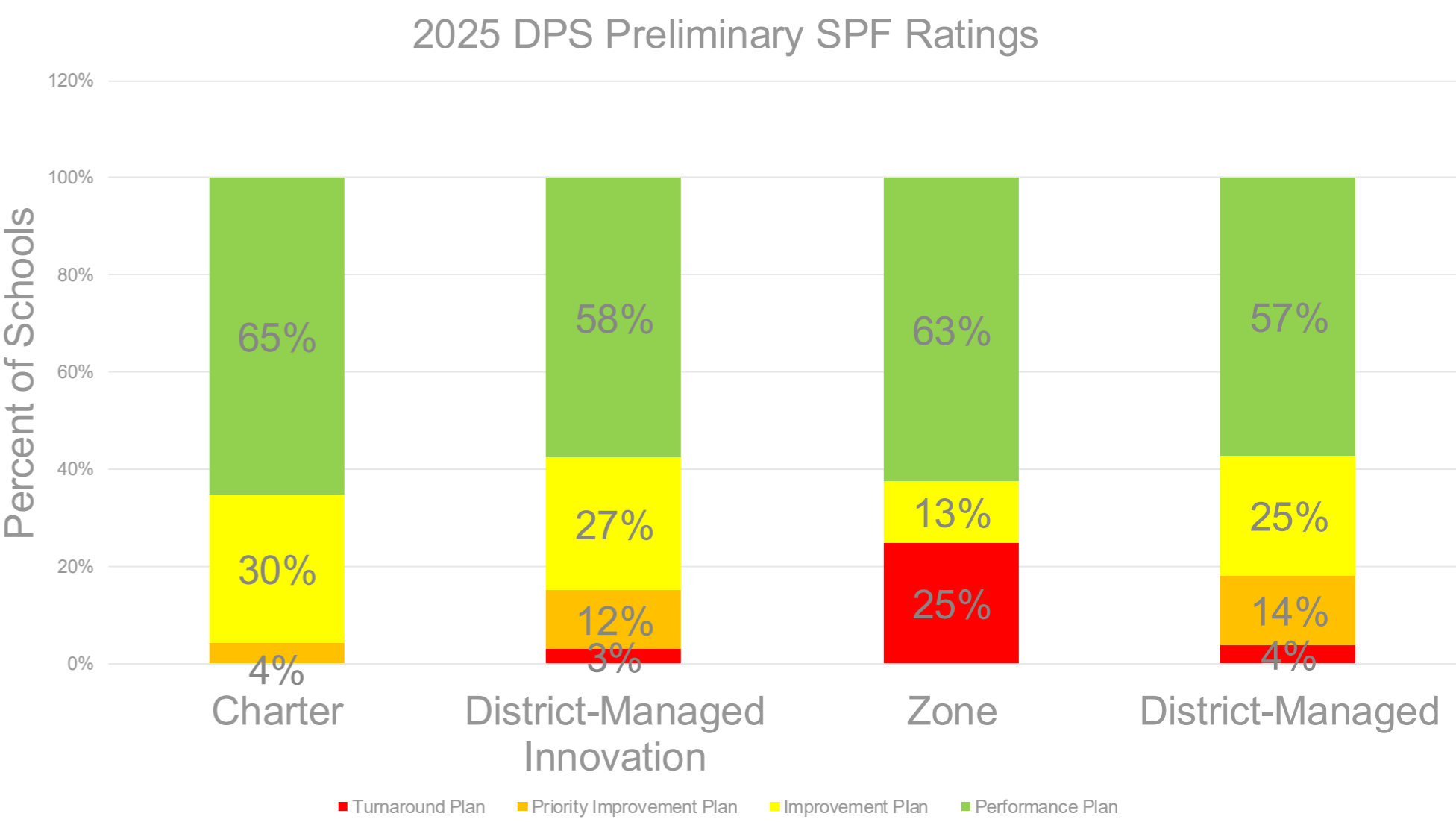
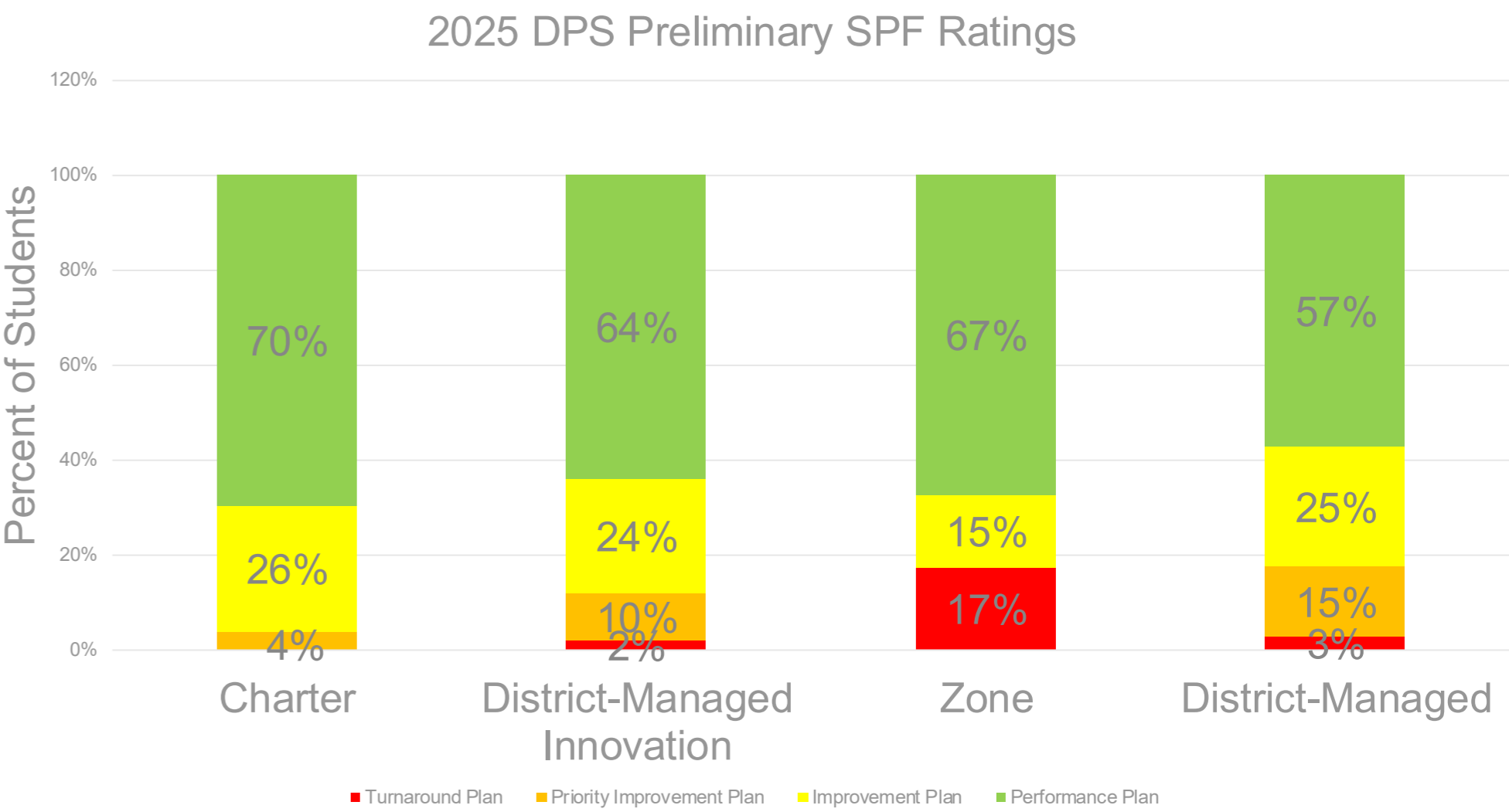
Source: [Colorado Department of Education Performance Framework Data](#)

SPF performance varies by governance type.

Preliminary SPF ratings (excludes ASEC) show variation in the performance of DPS schools by governance type.

Charter schools see the highest percentage of schools with the highest rating of “Performance” and no schools rated as turnaround. They also saw the highest percentage of students in green schools.

District Managed Schools saw the fewest percentage of green schools and students in green schools. Zone schools saw the highest percentage of students in turnaround rated schools.



The background of the slide is a photograph of a brick wall. The wall is covered in several large, colorful murals. One mural at the top features abstract shapes in red, orange, blue, and yellow. Another mural on the right shows a stylized face with a wide, toothy grin. A third mural at the bottom depicts a hand holding a green plant. The wall is made of red bricks, and there are some windows visible on the right side. A white, rounded rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text "Questions?".

Questions?