

**BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**DATE:** December 20, 2011

**TO:** **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**FROM:** Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent

**SUBJECT:** **COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

**ORIGINATOR:** Edward Newsome, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Middle Schools

**RESOURCE**  
**PERSON(S):** Penelope Martin, Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent, Middle Schools

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board of Education receives the Comprehensive Report on Middle Schools. This report garners the understanding of what is happening in middle schools under the new organization.

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Attachment I – Executive Summary  
Attachment II – PowerPoint Presentation

## **Comprehensive Report on Middle Schools Executive Summary**

The *Blueprint for Progress* provides the direction and guidance for the school system in ensuring that all students perform at high academic levels. The *Blueprint for Progress* is built on the foundation of clear standards, quality instruction, and individual accountability to address the learning needs for a diverse student population in preparation for college and workforce readiness.

Approximately 22,445 students are currently attending middle schools throughout Baltimore County. Of the 27 middle schools, one is identified as a magnet school, one serves as an alternative placement center, and one serves students who are new to the school system which functions as a conduit to the child's home school. Six middle schools have a comprehensive program and magnet programs, and twenty serve only their zoned students. Four middle schools hold state Blue Ribbon status.

Trend data show that as minority enrollment steadily rises, Caucasian enrollment continues to decrease. This demographic inversion mirrors Baltimore County's census data. Increases in poverty also mirror the local economic condition, with increases in student eligibility for receiving free and reduced-priced meals rising over thirteen percentage points from 2003 to 2010.

Student achievement results continue to indicate overall improvement; however, there are areas where focused acceleration is needed. There is an opportunity gap evident for African American students, which is more prevalent in the area of mathematics. Vertical teaming initiatives identifying interventions in elementary school, for implementation in middle school, as we prepare students for high school while providing more information about students' strengths and needs to address the opportunity gap.

Students receiving special education services have demonstrated improvement over the past five years but continue to lag behind their non-disabled peers. The use of teaching strategies such as co-teaching and providing students with access to the regular curriculum is believed to have impact on their progress. Students identified as receiving services under LEP continue to demonstrate improvement in reading but not as great as improvements in the area of mathematics.

The middle school program is designed to provide students with opportunities in order to prepare for high school. Infusion of critical reading and writing has been implemented as a strategy to increase rigor in all classes and support the twenty-first century skills. School staff are working to backmap skills needed to be successful in order to prepare more students for the opportunity to take college-level courses in high school. There has been an increased emphasis on writing that is supported with a systemic writing process and required writing assignments in all grades.

The middle school mathematics curriculum includes Algebraic Foundations, Algebraic Thinking I & II, Algebra I & II, and geometry courses as needed for students enrolled in the head and shoulders program.

The science curriculum includes content in the areas of biology, chemistry, physics, earth science, and environmental science. Two middle schools offer high school earth/space science to magnet students in Grade 8 in addition to the regular Grade 8 science curriculum. There are four middle schools that offer high school environmental science to magnet students in addition to the regular science curriculum. Depending on the school, students can take environmental science across all three grades, in Grades 7 and 8, or only in Grade 8.

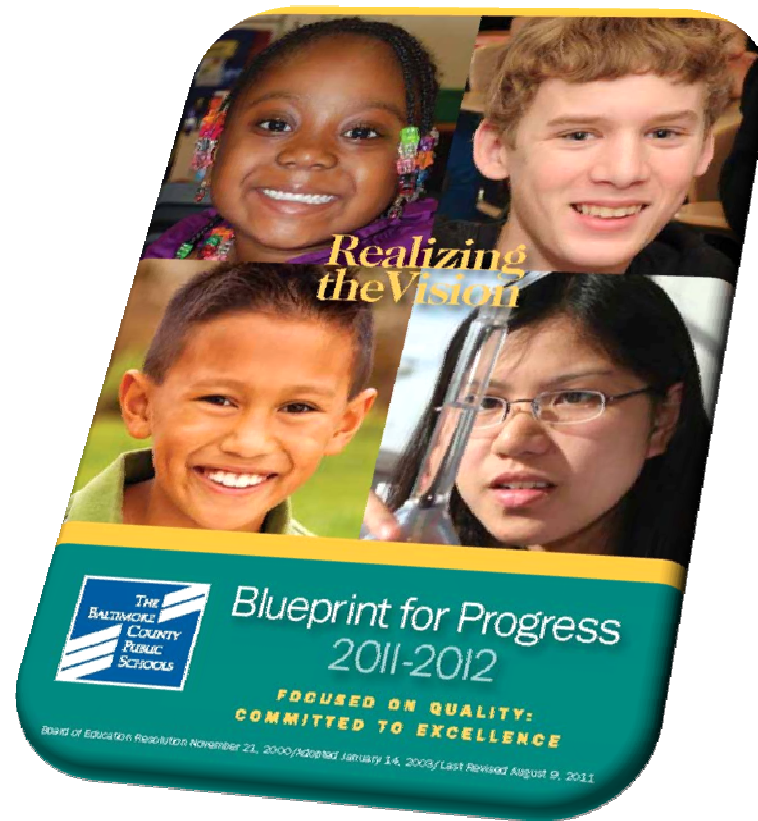
English/Language Arts is designed to improve student achievement through the implementation of a curriculum that is aligned with the Maryland Content Standards. Students develop an appreciation of language that is the basis of all culture, the primary means of communication with others, and the tool with which most of us work. Students enroll in the *Language!* program, to aid in accelerating reading and writing in the middle school.

Social studies courses include World Cultures for students enrolled in Grades 6-7, and social studies in the eighth grade. Gifted and talented courses are offered at each grade level. The program is designed to encourage identification with the American people, their aspirations, their ideals, and their experiences at various points in time in our country's history.

Middle school educators continue to work on differentiation and interventions to help all students learn and be prepared for more rigorous courses. The goal is that every student who enters BCPS will graduate being college and workforce ready.

# Comprehensive Report on Middle Schools

Presented to the Board of Education  
Baltimore County Public Schools



December 20, 2011



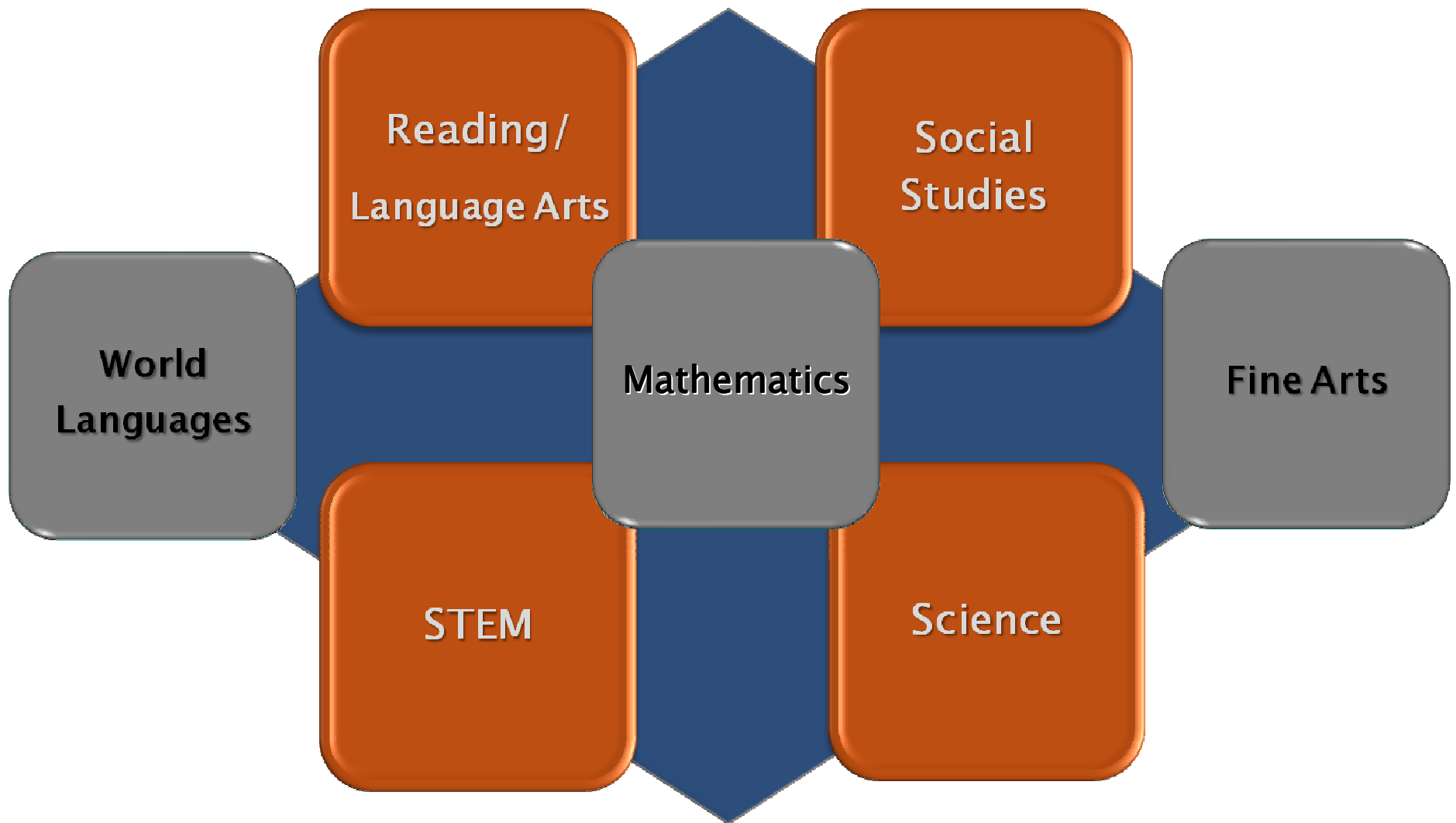


# Middle Schools

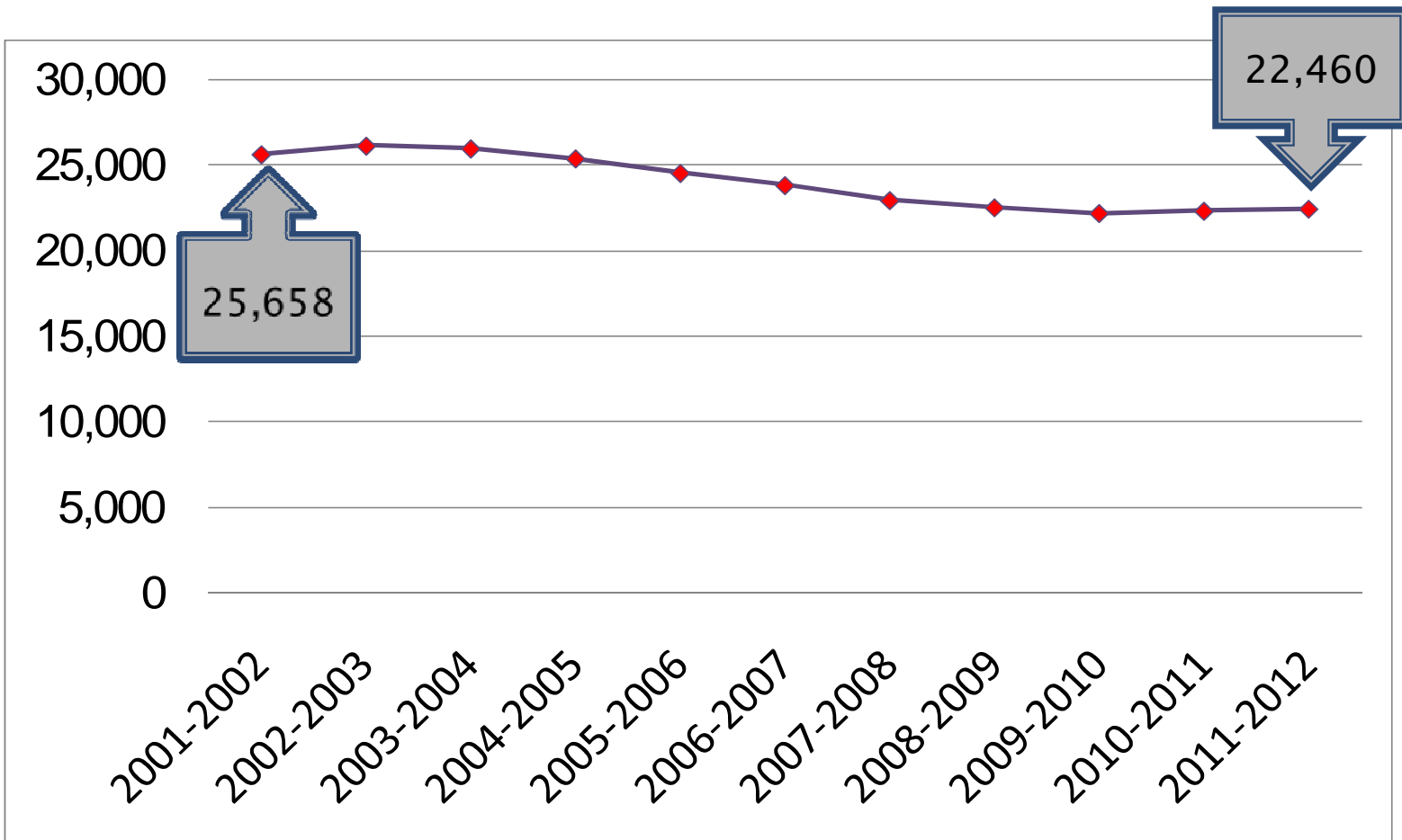
- 27 Middle Schools
- 2 Education Centers
- 1 Magnet School
- 1 Title I School
- 4 State Blue Ribbon Award Schools
- 2 National Blue Ribbon Award Schools
- State Teacher of the Year
- 2011 NASSP State Principal of the Year



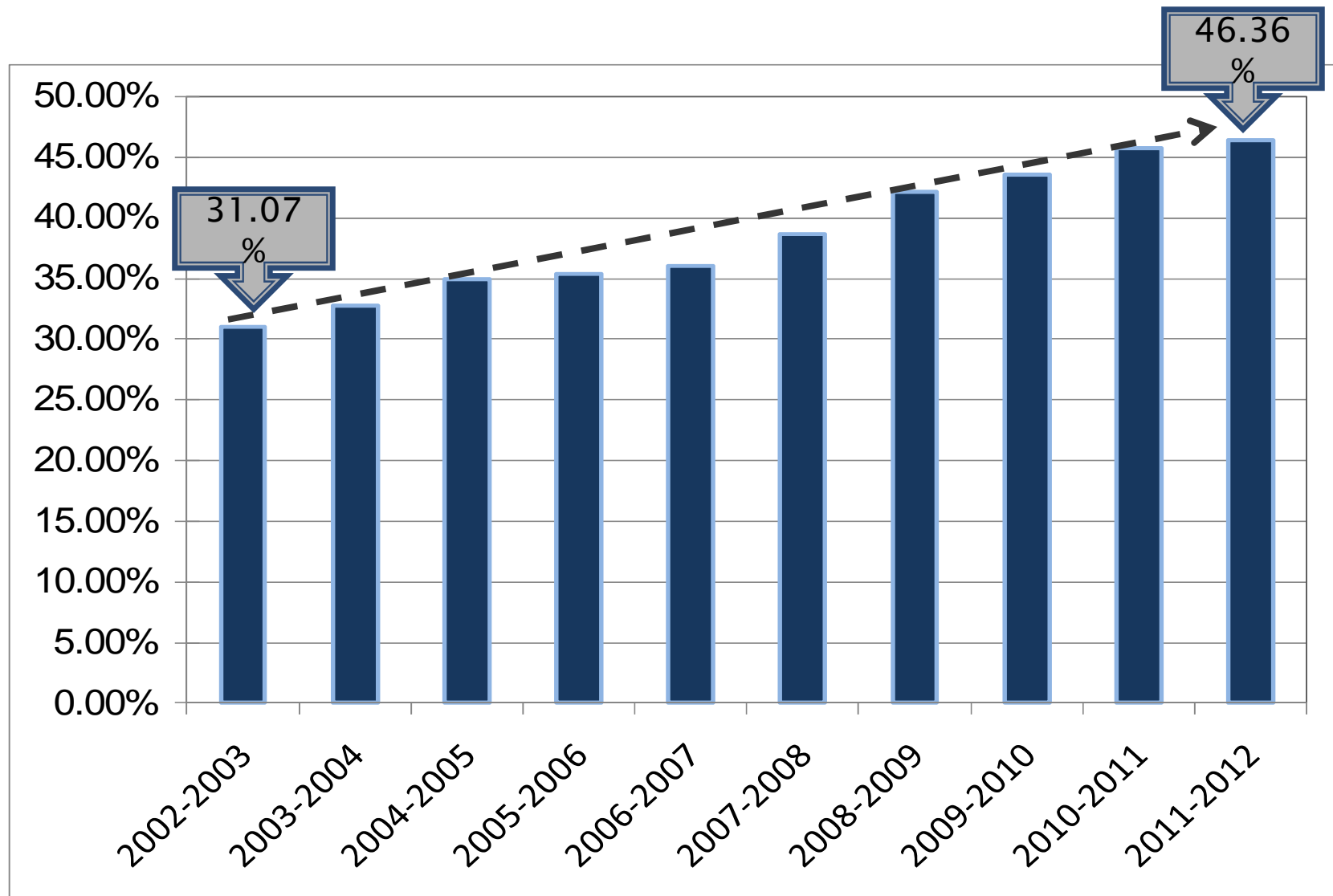
# Comprehensive Middle School Curriculum



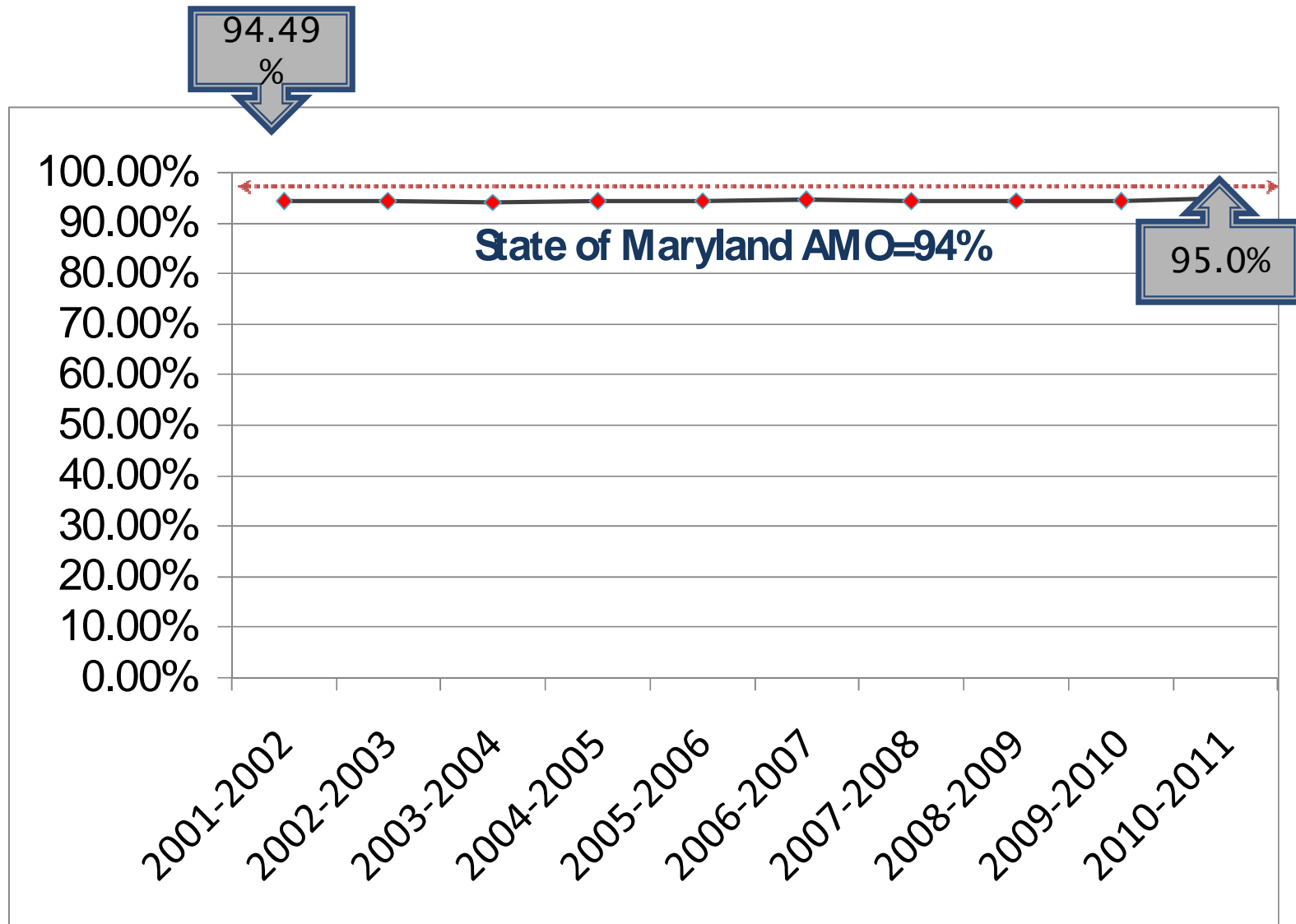
# Middle School Enrollment



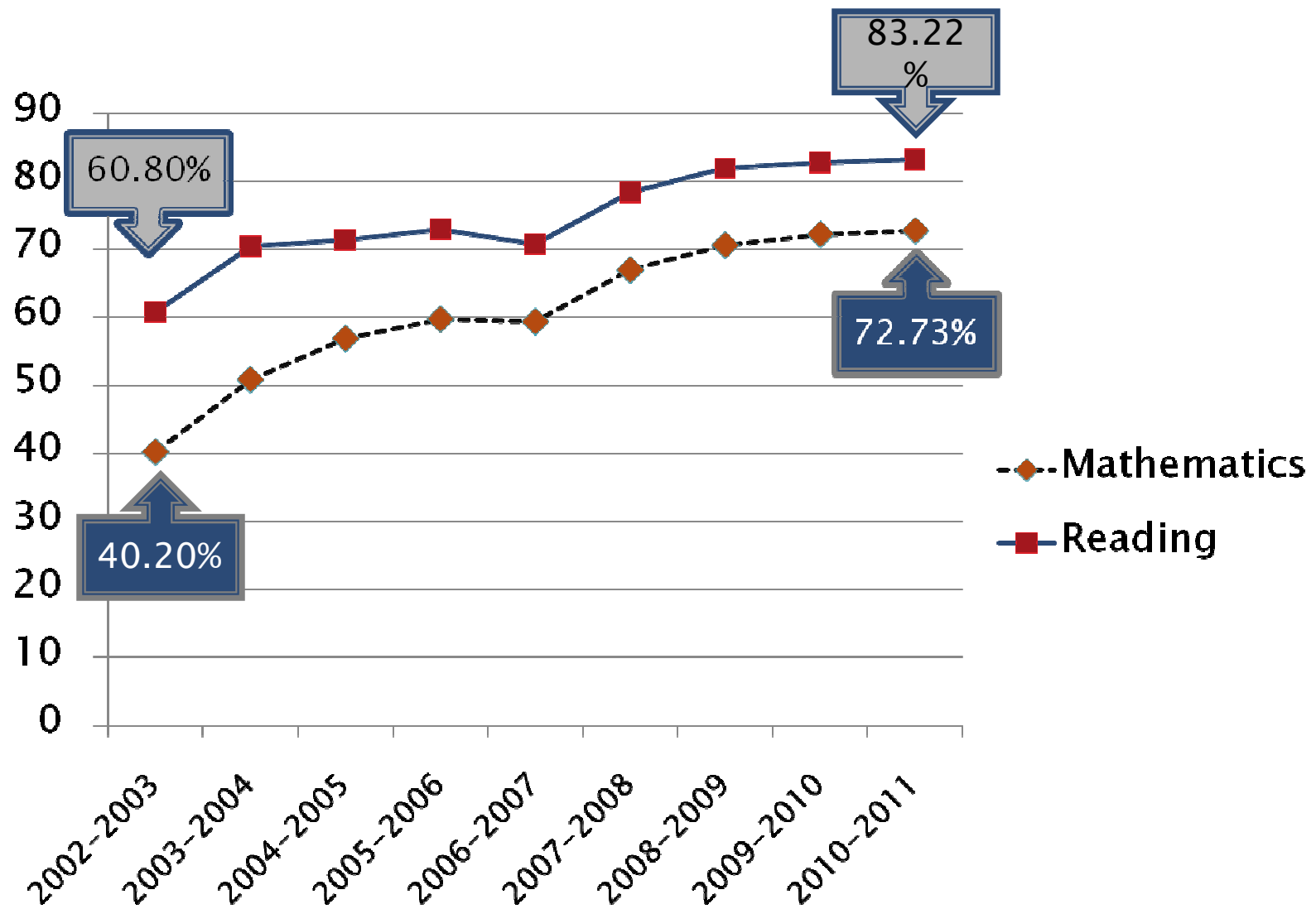
# Middle School FARMS Enrollment



# Middle School Attendance



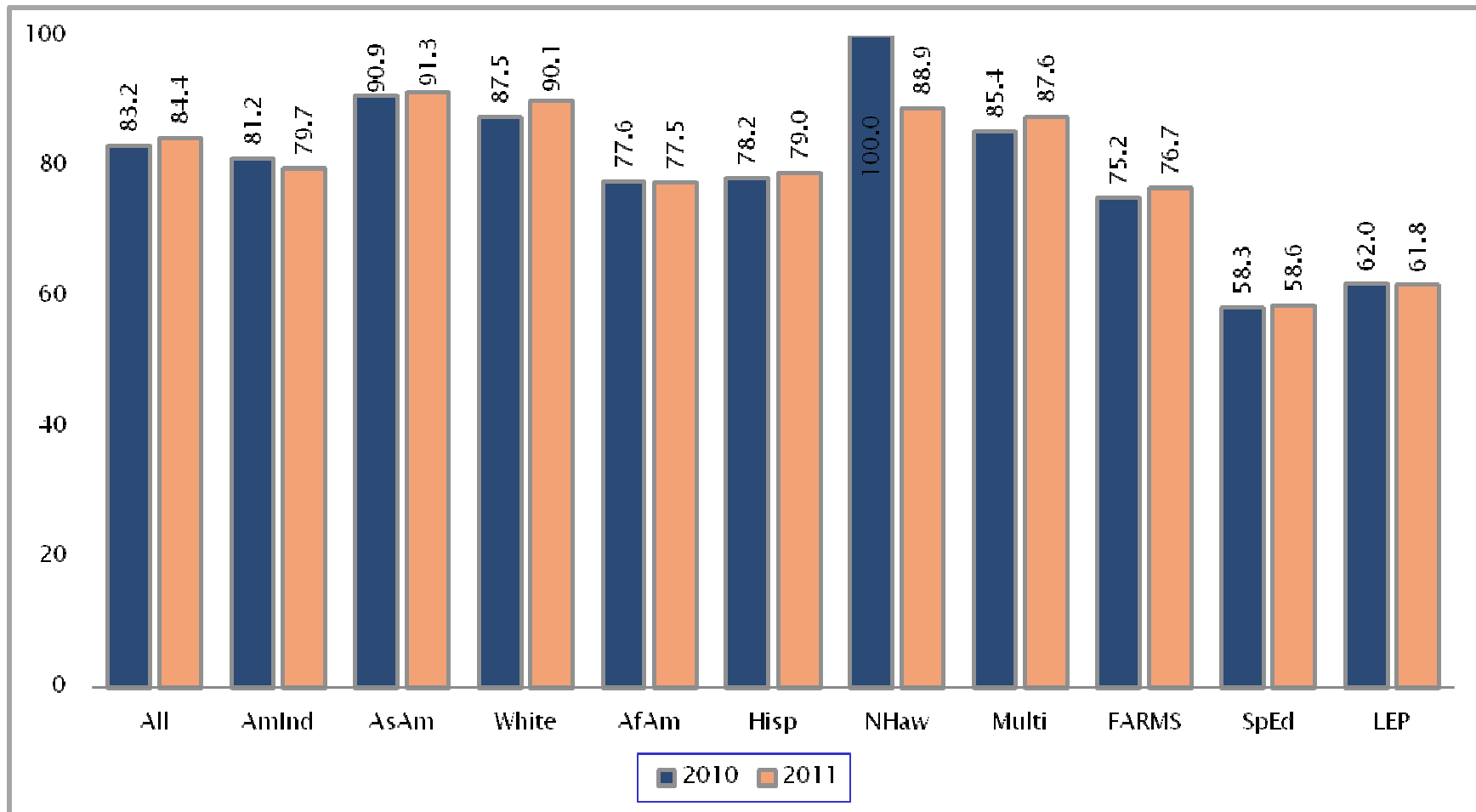
# MSA Performance Trend Data



# MSA Reading 2010 & 2011

2010 AMO=80.8

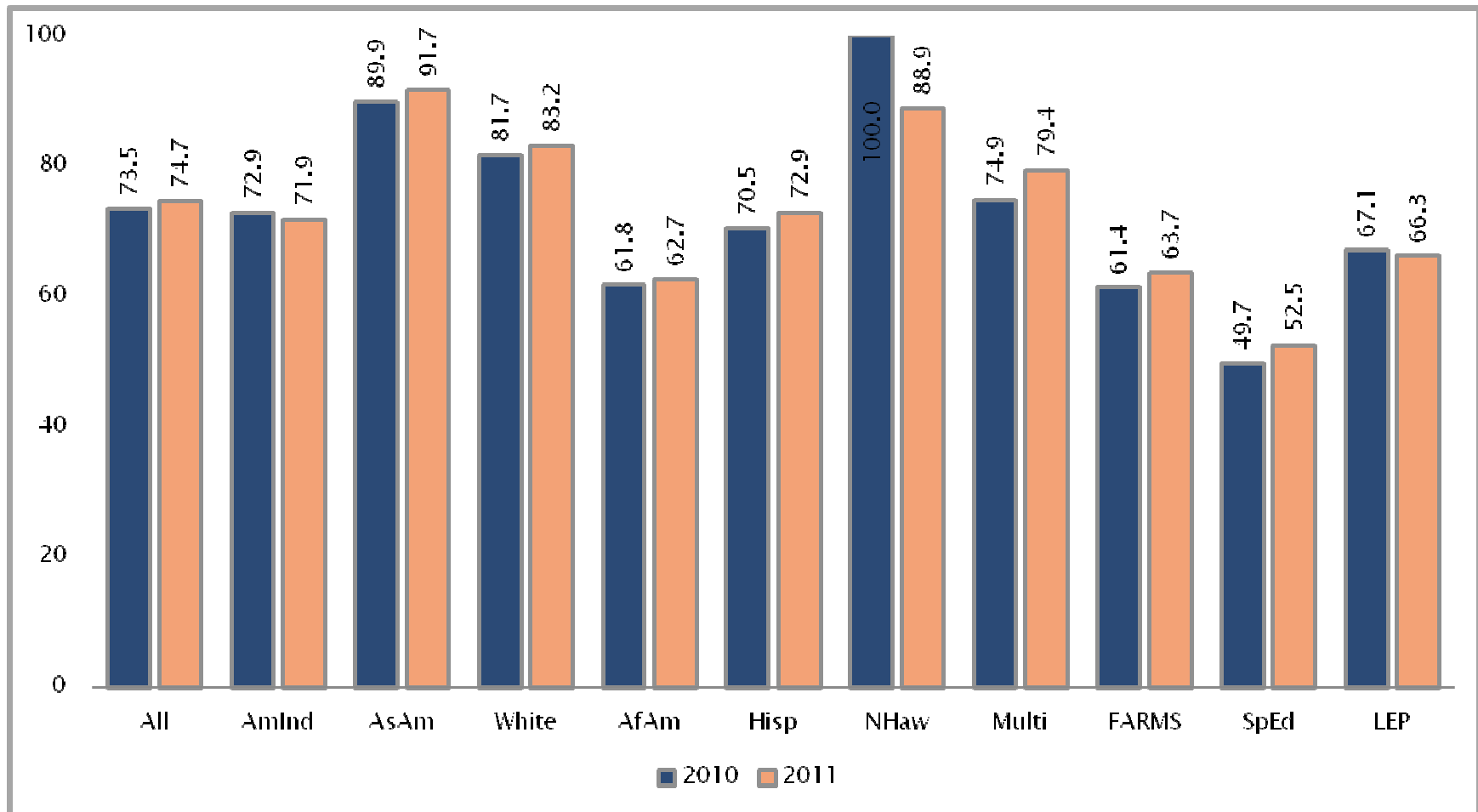
2011 AMO=85.6



# MSA Mathematics 2010 & 2011

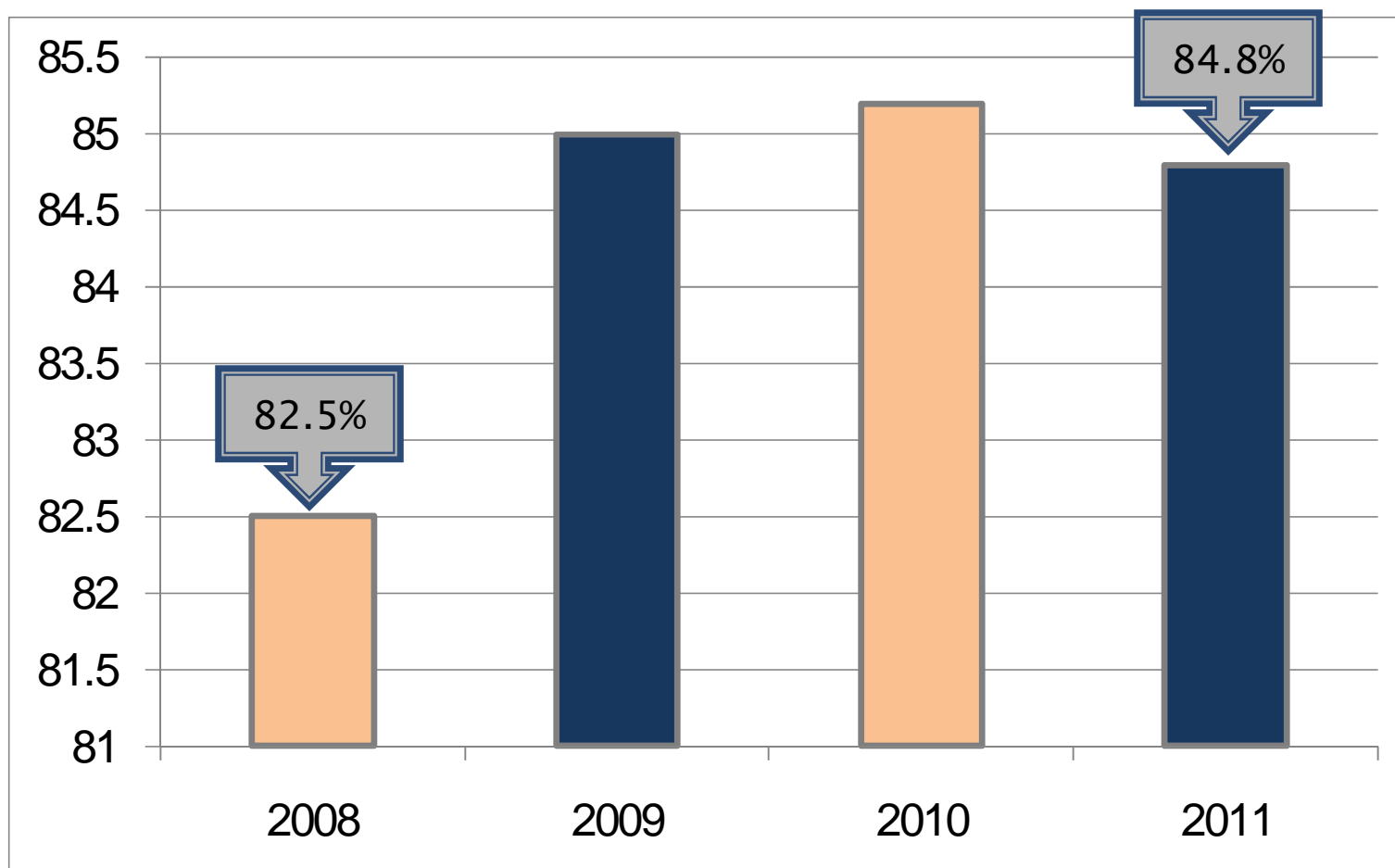
2010 AMO=71.4

2011 AMO=78.6





# Algebra I HSA





## *Instructional Program Review*

### Middle School Observation Profile

*Attachment A*

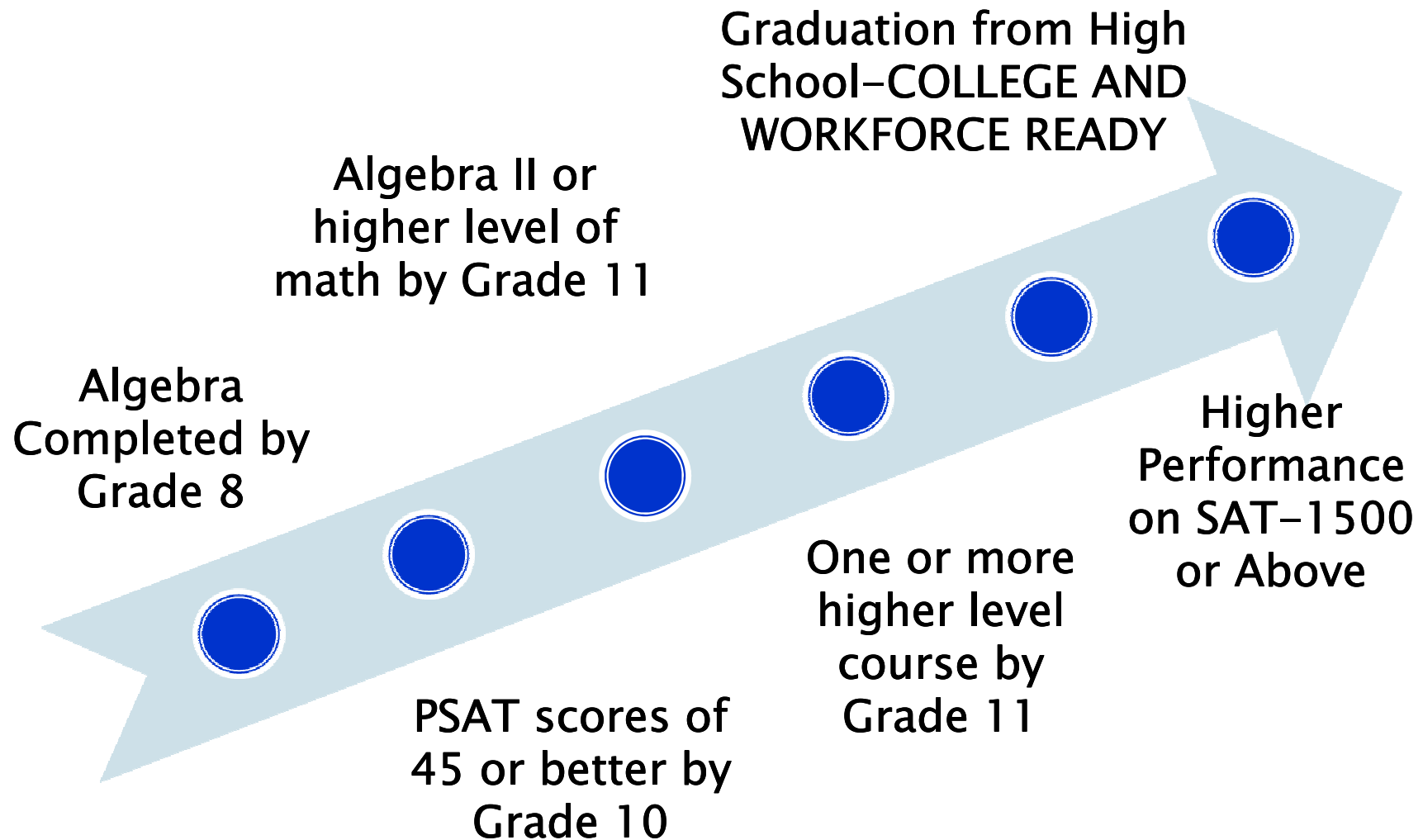
School Name		Classroom #1	Classroom #2	Classroom #3	Classroom #4
<i>Classroom Visits</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers establish and communicates high expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple and varied opportunities for success are provided <input type="checkbox"/> Plans and provides for cognitive growth (Bloom's) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides enrichment and remediation opportunities	Students identified faulty and valid generalization s using key words.	Students reviewed author's attitude in a short story.	Students used context clues to complete a fill in the blank handout.	Students reviewed organizational patterns in a non-fiction passage.
<i>Knowledge of Subject Matter</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Transfers content/concepts to application <input type="checkbox"/> Relates content to prior & future knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates content in logical and sequential <input type="checkbox"/> Content aligned with the curriculum (vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses vocabulary and content appropriate to subject area and students abilities <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates content knowledge	Instruction was logical and sequential, but low-level. Students mastered the concept in the first five minutes.	<p>The teacher related the lesson to prior learning. Students worked independently.</p> <p>However, the analysis of the short story would have been more effective if the reading had been completed in one setting.</p>	The plan for the class was logical, but it did not challenge the students. Students did not read the non-fiction passage that	The teacher worked with the students to use text features to identify the organization of the passage and the expectations for the type of information that they would find. The lesson was logical and sequential.

# Common Core State Standards

- College and workforce ready standards
- Nationally and internationally benchmarked
- Transdisciplinary



# College and Workforce Readiness Continuum



# Preparing for the Future



“We may not be able to prepare the future for our children, but we can at least prepare our children for the future.”

F. D. Roosevelt

# Personal Flying Vehicle





# “I Believe I Can Fly”



# Phase Planning







**“We are a school system,  
not a system of schools.”**

*Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent*

