



E&R Report No. 10.27

December, 2010

WCPSS ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS, 2009-10

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ABSTRACT

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction revised the alternate assessment system for students with disabilities (SWD) and/or limited English proficiency (LEP) in 2009-10. On the three alternate assessments that were given in 2009-10, results for WCPSS students were mixed. On the NCEXTEND1 assessments, which are taken by students with significant cognitive disabilities, proficiency rates for 479 Grade 3-8 students ranged from 46-70% in reading and from 48-79% in math, both up from last year but still generally lower than statewide rates. The NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments, administered to students with moderate intellectual or learning disabilities, were taken by the largest number of WCPSS students (2,106). Results on these modified EOG exams were slightly higher than those of the two previous years but proficiency rates across grade levels remained low in both reading (25-42%) and mathematics (43-54%). At the high school level, 412 students took NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments, which are based on the Occupational Course of Study and serve as alternates for required assessments in reading, mathematics, and science. The percentage of students achieving proficiency on the exams ranged from 68% in English, to 70% in mathematics, and 61% in Science, all up significantly from last year and closer to statewide rates.

BACKGROUND

In 2005-06 the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) revised the state's alternate assessment system in response to guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Reauthorization of 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), all students with disabilities must be included in any state and district-wide assessments with necessary accommodations or alternate assessments as appropriate, and their results must be reported with the same frequency and detail as for students without disabilities.

DISCONTINUATION OF NCCLAS

The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS), an alternate assessment primarily used for limited English proficient (LEP) students, was **not** approved for use in North Carolina for the 2009–2010 school year and beyond due to various technical qualities of the test. With the discontinuation of the assessment, students who are currently designated to take the NCCLAS would need to take the general assessment with accommodations.

With the elimination of the NCCLAS, in 2009-10 NCDPI provided three different alternate assessments for use in grades or courses where the state typically tests students: NCEXTEND1 EOG, NCEXTEND2 EOG, and NCEXTEND2 OCS. Results from alternate assessments are included in each school's annual state ABCs Performance Composite (percent of students performing at or above grade level) and the federal measure of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) required under NCLB.

At the school level, an *Individualized Education Plan (IEP)* team is responsible for making decisions about the initial evaluations and re-evaluations of students with disabilities. The written IEP that a team develops for each student with a disability determines not only the instructional process and goals for the student but also whether that student requires an accommodation or alternate assessment of some type in lieu of the standard state assessments that other students use.

RESULTS

NCEXTEND1

In 2006-07, NCEXTEND1 assessments replaced the NC Alternate Assessment Portfolio assessments in use since 2000-01 for students enrolled in grades 3-8 or 10. *NC Extended Content Standards (NCECS)* differ in complexity from regular grade-level standards, and all students in NCECS (adapted) curriculum classrooms are assessed via NCEXTEND1. Unlike the other assessments, students identified for use of NCEXTEND1 in a single subject area are identified for its use in all subject areas.

Eligibility criteria for NCEXTEND1 assessments include the following:

- Students must have a significant cognitive disability and require extensive and explicit instruction to acquire, maintain, and generalize new skills in the tested areas.
- Students must exhibit severe and pervasive delays in multiple areas of development and in adaptive behaviors such as communication, daily living skills, and self-care.
- Students' IEP goals must focus on the functional application of academics, and instruction is based on a student's assigned grade-level on *NC Extended Content Standards (NCECS)*, access points drawn from the statewide Standard Course of Study. Information regarding extended standards/NCECS is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/ncecs> and <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/instructional/extended/>

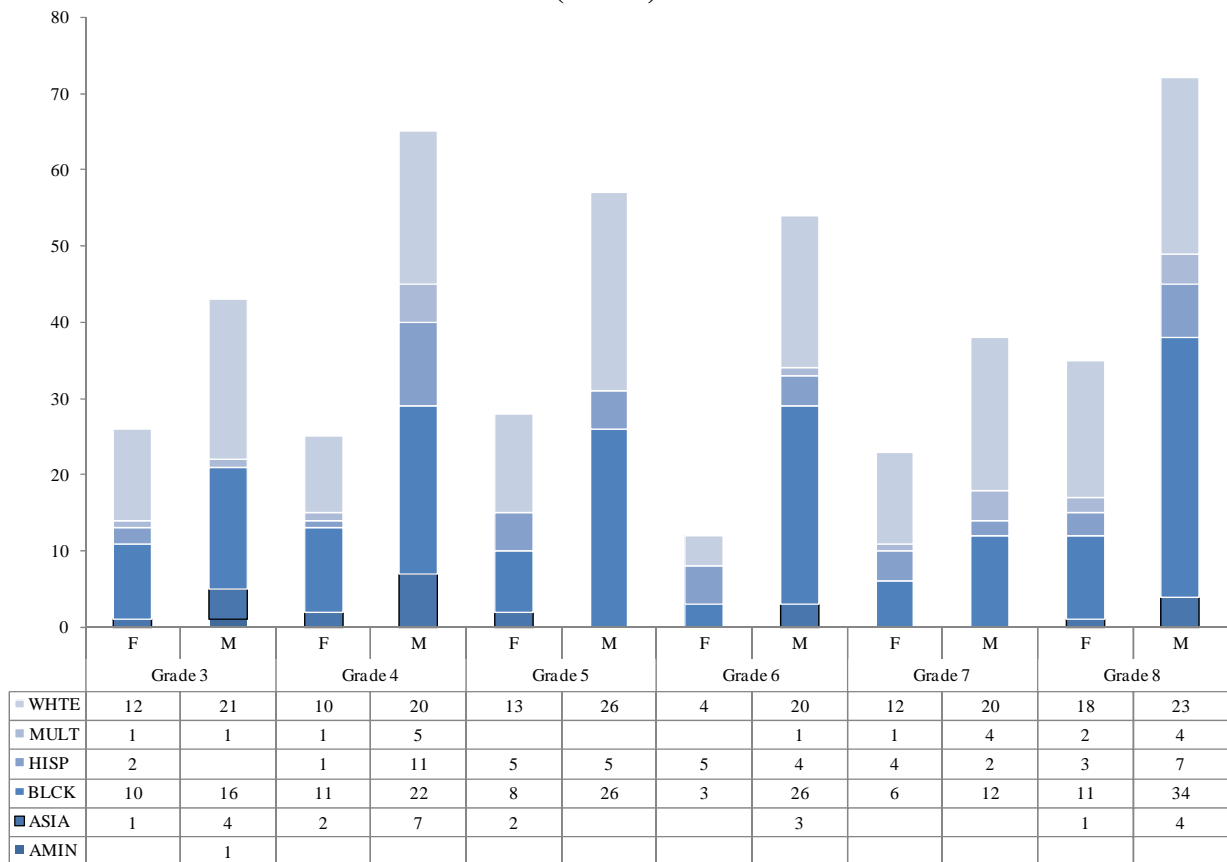
The format and scoring for an NCEXTEND1 assessment is as follows:

- Students are evaluated based on alternate achievement standards.
- NCEXTEND1 is a multiple choice assessment.
- During a six-week testing window, two independent assessors (teachers) evaluate the student's performance on the questions.
- Each assessor independently enters the results online.

NCEXTEND1 Assessment Results

NCEXTEND1 served as an alternate assessment for reading and mathematics EOG tests at grades 3-8, as well as for science assessments at grades 5 and 8. As shown in Figure 1, the performance of 479 WCPSS elementary and middle school students (all in adapted curriculum classrooms) was assessed using the NCEXTEND1 in 2009-10. At each grade, more males than females were deemed eligible, and a slightly higher percentage of Black/African American students participated in NCEXTEND1 assessments compared to their proportion in the school population. The number of students in Grades 3-8 who took NCEXTEND1 assessments in 2009-10 was up slightly from the previous year (461). As in previous years, the majority of students were identified as either autistic or having a moderate intellectual disability.

Figure 1
Number of WCPSS Students in Grades 3-8 by Race and Gender,
Identified for Use of NCEXTEND1 Assessments in 2009-10
(n=479)



Results for WCPSS and the state of North Carolina on 2009-10 NCEXTEND1 assessments in reading, mathematics, and science are presented in Table 1, and Figures 2 and 3. Also shown are comparisons of NCEXTEND1 results with standard EOG results for students with disabilities (SWD) and all students. Highlights of those comparisons by subject area are presented below:

Reading

- WCPSS NCEXTEND1 reading proficiency rates ranged from 46-69% compared to 65-72% statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND1 proficiency rates declined in grades 3-4 and rose in grades 5-8. Gains were especially pronounced in grades 6 and 7 where the percentage of students testing at or above grade level rose 14.3 and 10.1 percentage points, respectively, over the previous year.
- Although the proficiency rates of WCPSS students using NCEXTEND1 reading assessments in grades 3-8 were lower than those of statewide NCEXTEND1 students, they were greater in all grades, with the exception of Grade 4, than those of both WCPSS and statewide SWD students taking the standard EOG reading tests.

Mathematics

- WCPSS NCEXTEND1 mathematics proficiency rates ranged from 48-79% compared to 61-77% statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND1 proficiency rates declined in grades 3, 4, and 7, while rates rose in grades 5, 6, and 8.
- Proficiency rates of WCPSS students on NCEXTEND1 mathematics assessments were lower in four of six grades than those of statewide NCEXTEND1 students, and lower in three of six grades than district SWD students taking standard EOG mathematics tests.

Science

- WCPSS NCEXTEND1 science proficiency rates were 50% (Grade 5) and 34% (Grade 8) compared to 60% and 55%, respectively, statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND1 proficiency rates rose slightly for both grades.
- Overall, WCPSS NCEXTEND1 science results were higher than those of district and statewide SWD students taking standard science assessments at grade 5, but lower at grade 8.

Table 1
WCPSS and NC Results on NCEXTEND1 Assessments Compared to Standard EOG
Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10

Subject Area and Grade	WCPSS				NC			
	Number Tested WCPSS NCEXTEND1	Percent Proficient WCPSS NCEXTEND1	Percent Proficient for WCPSS SWD Students: Standard EOG Tests	Percent Proficient for All WCPSS Students: Standard EOG Tests	Number Tested NC NCEXTEND1	Percent Proficient NC NCEXTEND1	Percent Proficient for NC SWD Students: Standard EOG Tests	Percent Proficient for All NC Students: Standard EOG Tests
Reading								
Grade 3	69	46.4%	45.4%	72.5%	1,045	68.6%	39.2%	67.6%
Grade 4	90	51.1%	51.4%	78.2%	987	68.6%	42.8%	73.1%
Grade 5	86	59.3%	50.5%	78.0%	1,005	66.1%	38.8%	72.3%
Grade 6	66	69.7%	52.2%	80.6%	947	70.6%	42.2%	76.6%
Grade 7	61	67.2%	39.7%	74.0%	836	71.9%	31.8%	67.6%
Grade 8	107	50.5%	41.5%	75.8%	945	65.4%	33.5%	70.3%
Mathematics								
Grade 3	69	53.6%	66.4%	85.4%	1,045	70.1%	62.5%	83.0%
Grade 4	90	47.8%	67.9%	87.7%	988	67.3%	60.5%	84.3%
Grade 5	86	74.4%	62.9%	86.2%	1,006	74.2%	55.7%	82.3%
Grade 6	66	78.8%	58.4%	84.0%	947	76.5%	51.6%	81.1%
Grade 7	61	67.2%	56.2%	84.6%	837	73.2%	49.9%	80.8%
Grade 8	107	49.5%	54.8%	85.0%	945	61.4%	54.8%	84.6%
Science								
Grade 5	86	50.0%	49.1%	72.1%	1,005	59.8%	44.6%	69.8%
Grade 8	107	33.6%	51.1%	79.2%	945	54.8%	44.2%	73.5%

Note: Beginning in 2008-09, results for reading, mathematics, and science for grades 3-8 contain re-test results.

Figure 2
WCPSS Results on NCEXTEND1 Reading Assessments Compared to Standard EOG Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10 Reading

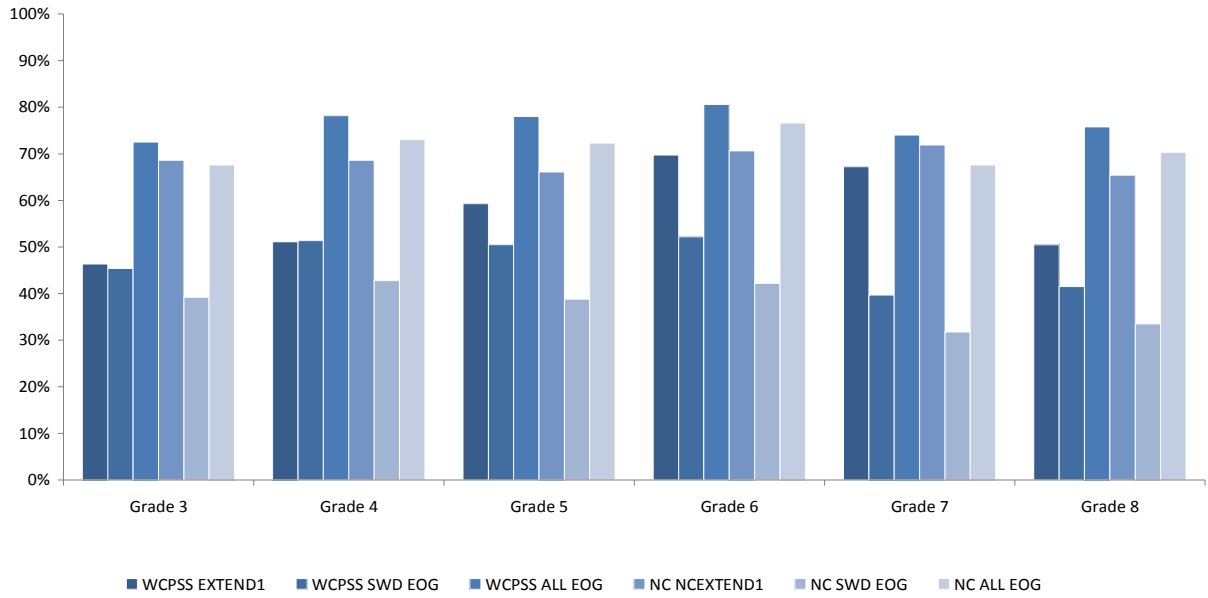
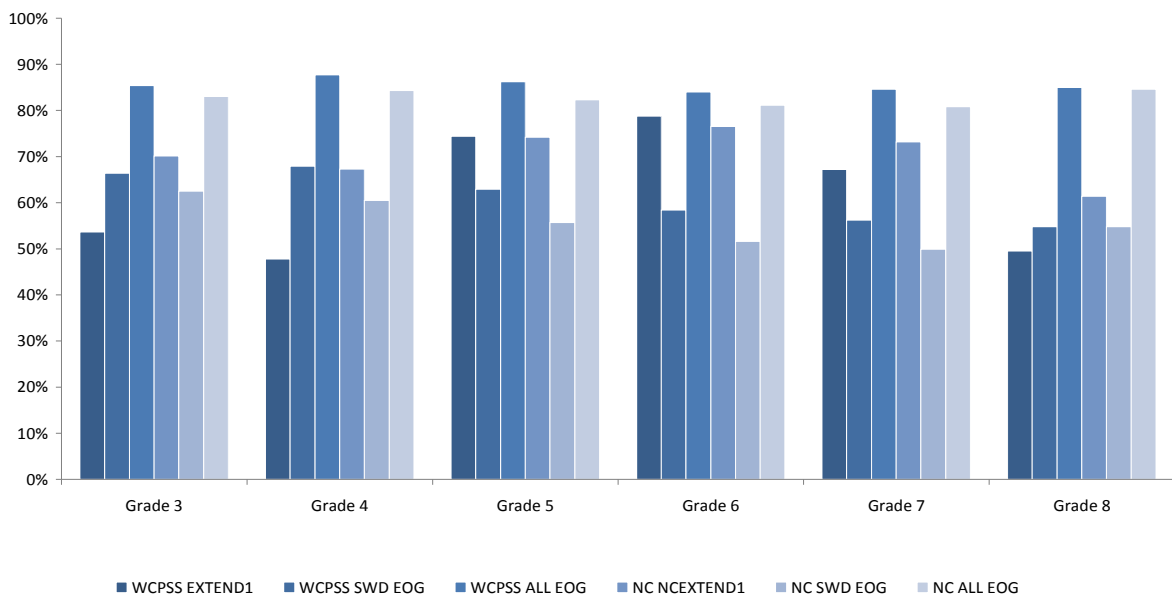


Figure 3
WCPSS Results on NCEXTEND1 Math Assessments Compared to Standard EOG Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10 Mathematics



NCEXTEND2

In 2005-06 the NC testing program was expanded to include new NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments based on the grade-level NC SCOS content but with modified grade-level standards and a modified test format (i.e., multiple-choice tests have shorter reading passages, simplified vocabulary, fewer multiple-choice test items, three rather than four response choices for each test item, and a modified page layout with only one or two items per page).

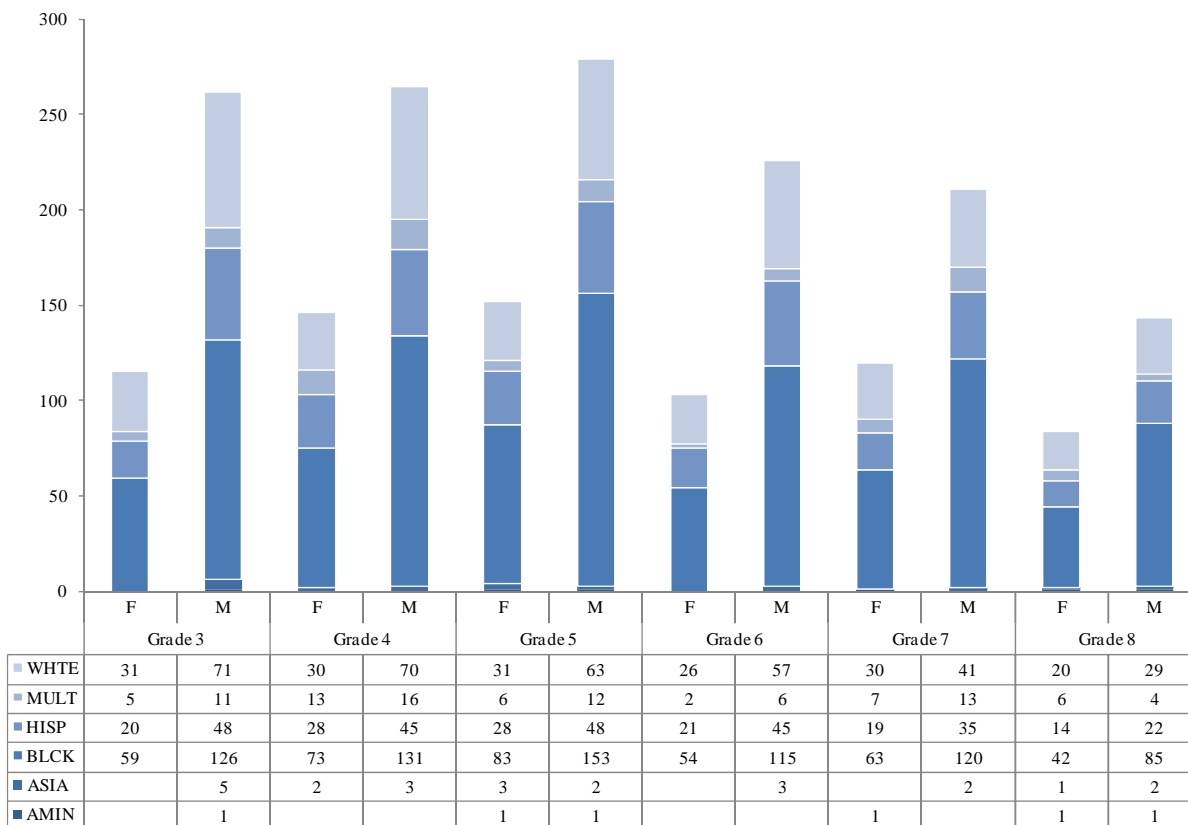
Additionally, Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams may recommend that a student be assessed by NCEXTEND2 in one or more subject areas, while participating in standard EOG testing in another area. IEP teams may also recommend accommodations for some students using NCEXTEND2. All students with disabilities participating in NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments are receiving instruction in the grade-level NC SCOS.

Student eligibility criteria considered by the IEP team for NCEXTEND2 EOG testing include:

- not having a significant cognitive disability;
- having a disability that prevents the student from attaining grade-level proficiency in the subject area, with the best of instruction, within the school year covered by the IEP – as demonstrated by objective evidence of two or more measures such as standardized state tests, intelligence and aptitude tests, and psychological evaluations; and
- having a disability that may require assessments of different design than standard tests and accommodations.

More than two thousand (2,106) WCPSS students at grades 3-8 took NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments in 2009-10. The two most common areas of identification were Learning Disabled and Mild Intellectual Disability. As shown in Figure 4, more males than females were identified for use of NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments at each grade, and Black/African American students, followed by White students, participated most often. At both the elementary and middle school levels, a disproportionate number of Black/African American students was identified for use of NCEXTEND2 EOG assessments.

Figure 4
Number of WCPSS Students at Grades 3-8, by Race and Gender,
Taking One or More NCEXTEND2 EOG Assessments, 2009-10.
(n=2,106)



NCEXTEND2 Assessment Results

Statewide and WCPSS NCEXTEND2 EOG results in reading, mathematics, and science for 2009-10 are shown in Table 2, and Figures 5 and 6. Also shown are comparisons of NCEXTEND2 EOG results with standard EOG results for other students with disabilities, and all students tested. General results were as follows:

Reading

- WCPSS NCEXTEND2 reading proficiency rates ranged from 25-42% compared to 27%-45% statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND2 proficiency rates rose in all grades except Grade 7.
- Proficiency rates of WCPSS students using NCEXTEND2 reading assessments in grades 3-8 were lower in all grades than those of WCPSS SWD students taking the standard EOG reading tests.

Mathematics

- WCPSS NCEXTEND2 mathematics proficiency rates ranged from 43-54% compared to 42-68% statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND2 proficiency rates rose in four grades and declined in one.
- Proficiency rates of WCPSS students on NCEXTEND2 mathematics assessments were lower in all grades than district and statewide SWD students taking standard EOG mathematics tests.

Science

- WCPSS NCEXTEND2 science proficiency rates were 35% (Grade 5) and 38% (Grade 8) compared to 48% and 54%, respectively, statewide.
- Compared to 2008-09 results, WCPSS NCEXTEND2 proficiency rates rose for both grades in 2009-10.
- Overall, WCPSS NCEXTEND2 science results were lower than those of district and statewide SWD students taking standard science assessments at grades 5 and 8.

Table 2
WCPSS and NC Results on NCEXTEND2 EOG Assessments
Compared to Standard EOG Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10

Subject Area and Grade	WCPSS				NC			
	Number Tested WCPSS NCEXTEND2	Percent Proficient WCPSS NCEXTEND2	Percent Proficient for WCPSS SWD Students: Standard EOG Tests	Percent Proficient for All WCPSS Students: Standard EOG Tests	Number Tested NC NCEXTEND2	Percent Proficient NC NCEXTEND2	Percent Proficient for NC SWD Students: Standard EOG Tests	Percent Proficient for All NC Students: Standard EOG Tests
Reading								
Grade 3	357	25.2%	45.4%	72.5%	3,431	27.4%	39.2%	67.6%
Grade 4	388	31.2%	51.4%	78.2%	4,194	32.6%	42.8%	73.1%
Grade 5	395	42.0%	50.5%	78.0%	4,389	44.0%	38.8%	72.3%
Grade 6	311	33.1%	52.2%	80.6%	4,204	44.1%	42.2%	76.6%
Grade 7	313	37.4%	39.7%	74.0%	3,816	44.8%	31.8%	67.6%
Grade 8	202	36.6%	41.5%	75.8%	3,348	44.9%	33.5%	70.3%
Mathematics								
Grade 3	330	43.9%	66.4%	85.4%	2,877	42.1%	62.5%	83.0%
Grade 4	346	42.8%	67.9%	87.7%	3,492	46.1%	60.5%	84.3%
Grade 5	375	53.6%	62.9%	86.2%	3,692	51.5%	55.7%	82.3%
Grade 6	293	47.8%	58.4%	84.0%	3,721	63.3%	51.6%	81.1%
Grade 7	300	48.3%	56.2%	84.6%	3,545	61.6%	49.9%	80.8%
Grade 8	202	49.5%	54.8%	85.0%	3,153	68.0%	54.8%	84.6%
Science								
Grade 5	375	34.9%	49.1%	72.1%	3,955	47.6%	44.6%	69.8%
Grade 8	199	37.7%	51.1%	79.2%	3,171	53.9%	44.2%	73.5%

Note: Beginning in 2008-09, results for reading, mathematics, and science for grades 3-8 contain re-test results.

Figure 5
WCPSS and NC Results on NCEXTEND2 EOG Reading Assessments Compared to Standard EOG Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10 Reading

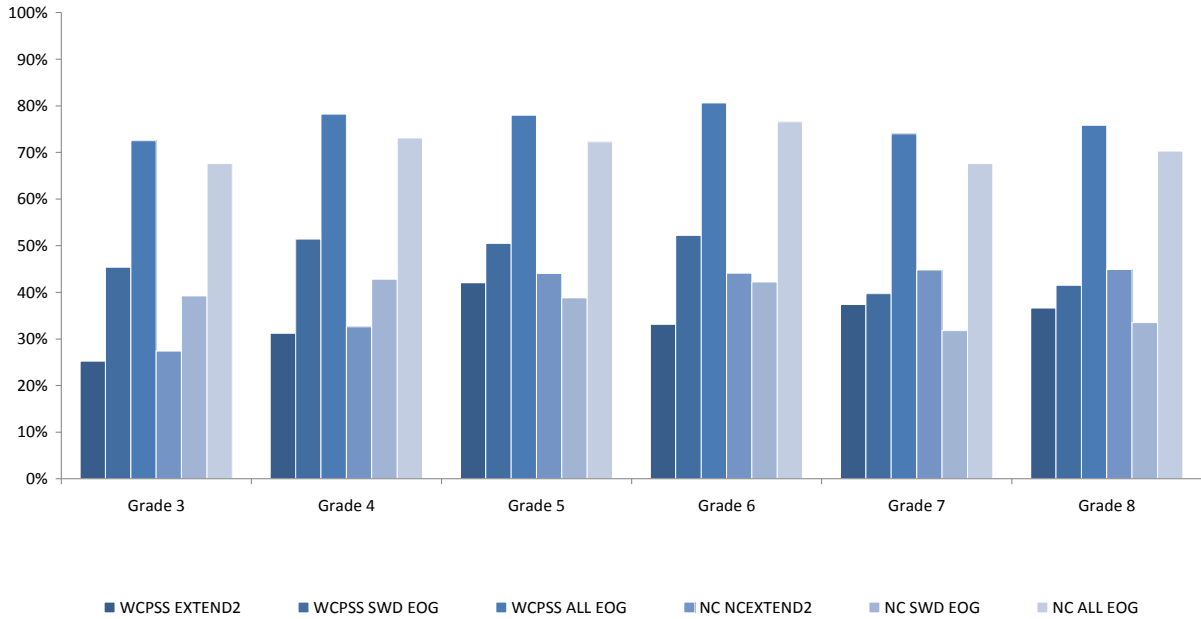
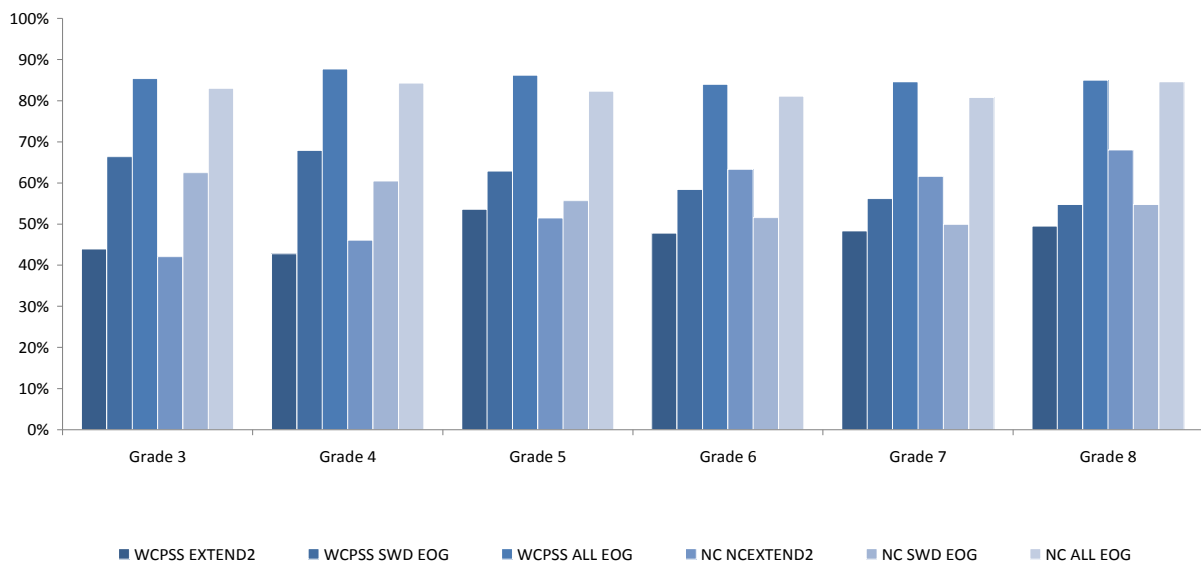


Figure 6
WCPSS and NC Results on NCEXTEND2 EOG Math Assessments Compared to Standard EOG Results for SWD Students and All Students, 2009-10 Mathematics



NCEXTEND2 OCS

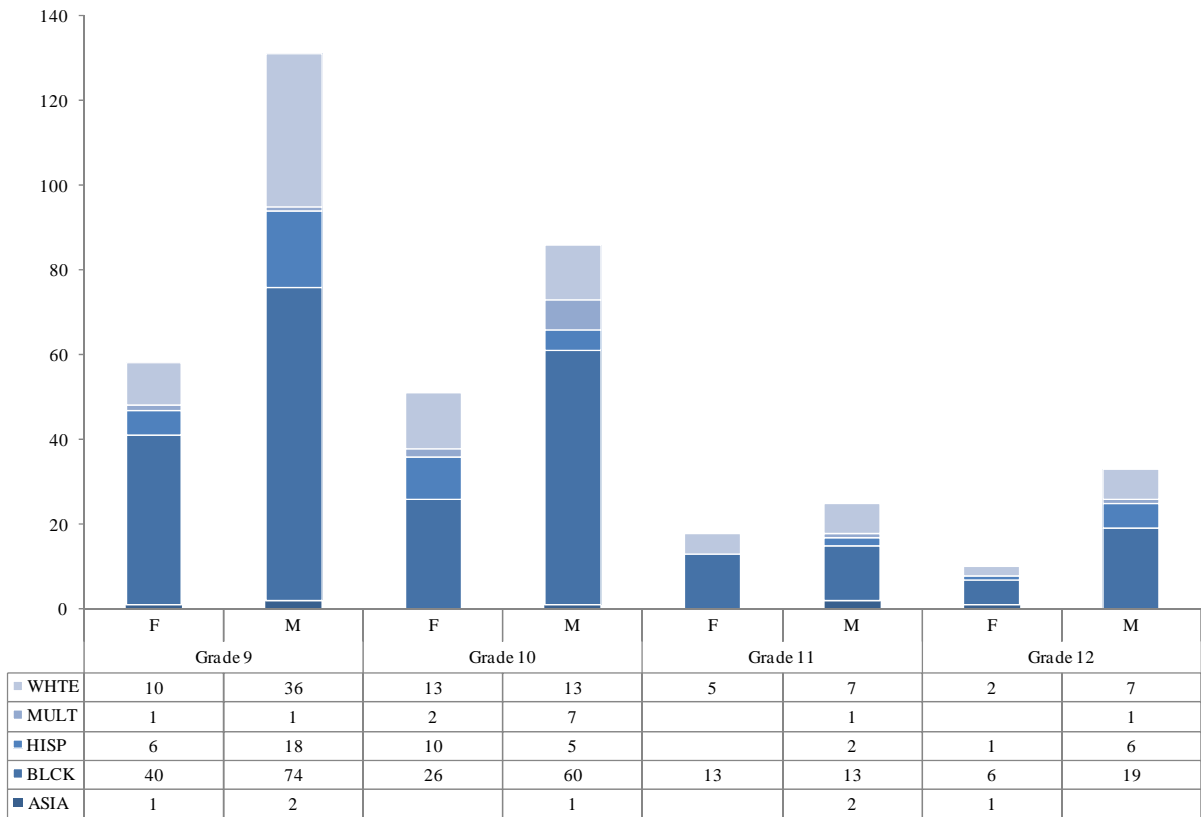
The Occupational Course of Study is intended to meet the needs of a small group of students with disabilities who need a greatly modified high school curriculum that focuses on post-school employment and independent living. *NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments*, based on the OCS curriculum and with a simplified vocabulary and format, became operational in the 2006-07 school year. These assessments are alternates for required high school assessments in reading, mathematics and science (generally English I, Algebra I and Biology) that are used to satisfy federal requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

In response to a directive from the U.S. Department of Education in 2009, NCPDI decided to discontinue the NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments after the 2009-10 school year.

The format of NCEXTEND2 OCS mathematics and reading assessments is a 40-item multiple-choice test with simplified vocabulary and three (rather than four) answer choices for each item. More information about the OCS curriculum, assessments, and sample test items can be viewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eoc/ocs>.

Selected characteristics of students participating in one or more of the NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments in 2008-09 are shown in Figure 7. Of the 412 students participating, 46% were in Grade 9, 33% in Grade 10, and 10% each in grades 11 and 12. More males than females participated at every grade level, and a disproportionate number of Black/African American students participated in the OCS alternative option.

Figure 7
Number of WCPSS Students at Grades 9-12, by Race and Gender,
Identified for Use of NCEXTEND2 OCS Assessments in 2009-10
(n=412)



The areas of identification for students participating in one or more NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments were primarily Intellectually Disabled – Mild and Learning Disabled.

NCEXTEND2 OCS Assessment Results

A comparison of NC and WCPSS 2009-10 results on NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments in Occupational English, Occupational Mathematics, Occupational Sciences (Life Skills), and the new 10th Grade Writing assessment is shown in Table 3. Overall, in the three continuing NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments, 61-70% of WCPSS students and 67-78% of students statewide tested achieved proficiency. Writing assessment results for both the district and statewide students were low (37% and 34%, respectively).

Table 3
WCPSS and NC Results on NCEXTEND2 OCS Assessments, 2009-10

	WCPSS		NC	
	Number Tested WCPSS	Percent Proficient WCPSS	Number Tested NC	Percent Proficient NC
<i>Occupational English</i>	169	67.5%	2,568	67.3%
<i>Occupational Mathematics</i>	179	70.4%	2,591	73.3%
<i>Occupational Sciences (Life Skills)</i>	147	61.2%	2,549	77.9%
<i>OCS Writing at Grade 10</i>	130	36.9%	2,291	33.8%

DISCUSSION

The number of WCPSS students taking alternate assessments in 2009-10 was similar to the previous year. The racial/ethnic composition of test-takers was also similar: African-American students continue to make up a disproportionate share of NCEXTEND1, NCEXTEND2, and NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments compared to their proportion in the overall district student population. The disproportionate number tested appears to reflect a disproportionate number of African American students in certain special education exceptionality categories.

Table 4
Students taking Alternate Assessments by Race and Ethnicity, 2009-10

	% of District Enrollment	% of Special Education	% of NCEXTEND1	% of NC EXTEND2	% of NCEXTEND2 OCS
Am. Indian	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%
Asian	6%	2%	5%	1%	2%
Black	26%	38%	39%	52%	61%
Hispanic	12%	10%	10%	18%	12%
Multi-racial	5%	4%	4%	5%	3%
White	51%	46%	42%	24%	23%

Note: Special Education category does not include Academically Gifted (AG).

NCEXTEND1 Results

Almost 500 WCPSS students with significant cognitive disabilities were formally assessed via NCEXTEND1 EOG Assessments in reading and mathematics. Results were mixed: some grades/subjects reported significant increases in proficiency compared to the previous year, while others showed moderate declines. In reading, the largest gains were in grades 6 and 7 (the percent proficient increased by 14 and 10 percentage points, respectively, largely erasing the previous large gap between WCPSS and NC outcomes). On the other hand, proficiency rates declined in grades 3 and 4, further widening the disparity between WCPSS and NC (the difference grew to 22 and 17 percentage points, respectively). In math, modest gains occurred in grades 5 and 6, bringing the passing percentages in these grades to the same level as the state. Similar to results in reading, however, math outcomes in grades 3 and 4 declined, with the gap between WCPSS and NC reaching 17 and 20 percentage points, respectively. WCPSS outcomes in science stayed the same in grade 5 (50%) but rose 5 percentage points in grade 8 (34%). However, the gap between the district and the state remained large (10 and 20 percentage points, respectively).

NCEXTEND2 Results

NCEXTEND2 EOG Assessments were taken by 2,106 students in grades 3-8 in 2009-10. Overall, passing rates rose moderately across most grades/subjects, but proficiency rates were still uniformly lower than those on NCEXTEND1 assessments. In WCPSS, Grade 5 math was the only assessment on which more than 50% of students performed at or above grade level. In

reading, large gains occurred in grades 5 and 8, with smaller increases in grades 3, 4, and 6. Proficiency rates in WCPSS still lagged those of the state, with the largest gaps in grades 6, 7, and 8. In mathematics, significant gains were made in grades 3 and 5 (both up by 14 percentage points over the previous year). More modest gains occurred in grades 4 and 8, and similar to reading results, passing rates in grade 7 declined slightly. Differences in proficiency rates between WCPSS and NC were most prominent in grades 6, 7, and 8 (15, 13, and 13 percentage points, respectively). WCPSS outcomes in science improved, but passing rates were still low (35% and 38%), and the gap between the district and the state remained large (13 and 16 percentage points, respectively).

NCEXTEND2 OCS Results

In the final year of administration of the NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments, 412 high school students participated in one or more of the four assessments. Student proficiency rates ranged from 37-70% (up from 35-53% the previous year) across the OCS subject areas. The largest gains in achievement occurred in English and Mathematics (up 24 and 20 percentage points, respectively). District proficiency rates on these assessments are now comparable to state rates. The passing rate also increased in Life Skills (up 8 percentage points to 61%), but strong improvement across the state widened the district-state gap to 17 percentage points. On the Writing assessment, the percentage of students performing at or above grade level rose modestly at both the district and state levels, but proficiency rates remained low (37% and 34%, respectively).

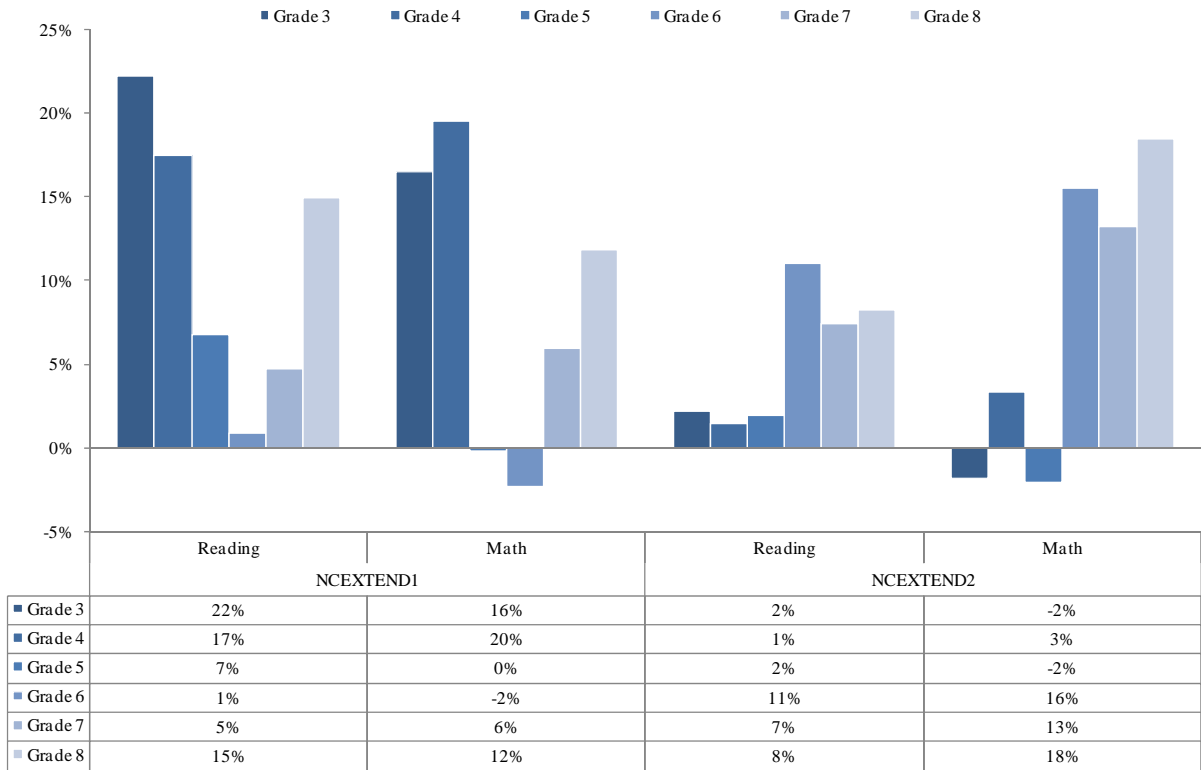
As reported in 2009, the U.S. Department of Education in April, 2009 decided to "invalidate" the NCEXTEND2 OCS tests at the high school level for the purpose of AYP determinations. As per the U.S. Department of Education's decision, any student taking the NCEXTEND2 OCS tests for Math and English will be counted as a "non-participant" for AYP. Since there was no other test available and/or appropriate for those students when they took those courses, every high school's "percent tested" targets are being negatively affected, such that any high school large enough to have an SWD subgroup is unlikely to make AYP based on that issue alone. Moreover, since those OCS students count not only in the SWD subgroup but also any other group of which they are a member (FRL, LEP, etc.), this decision affects other participation targets as well. Until North Carolina's DPI comes up with an acceptable replacement for the NCEXTEND2 OCS tests, this problem will likely be with us for a while.

Explaining the Gap between WCPSS and NC Proficiency Rates

As noted above, there are considerable gaps in proficiency rates between WCPSS students and students statewide on certain alternate assessments. In reading and math, the average difference is larger on NCEXTEND1 assessments (9.9 percentage points) than on NCEXTEND2 assessments (6.6 percentage points). As shown in Figure 8, the gap is most prominent in the following subjects and grades (all of which have a difference of more than 10 percentage points):

- NCEXTEND1: Reading and Math: grades 3, 4, and 8
- NCEXTEND2: Reading: grade 6; Math: grades 6, 7, and 8

Figure 8
Differences in Proficiency Rates between NC and WCPSS
on NCEXTEND1 and NCEXTEND2 Alternate Assessments 2009-10



What factors explain these gaps in proficiency between WCPSS and NC? One explanation may be differences in instructional approaches, whose effectiveness in preparing students for taking the assessments might vary among teachers, schools, and districts. Another cause may be variation in the administration of the assessments, which may be especially plausible in the case of NCEXTEND1 assessments, where test administrators are given more discretion in administering and scoring the test.

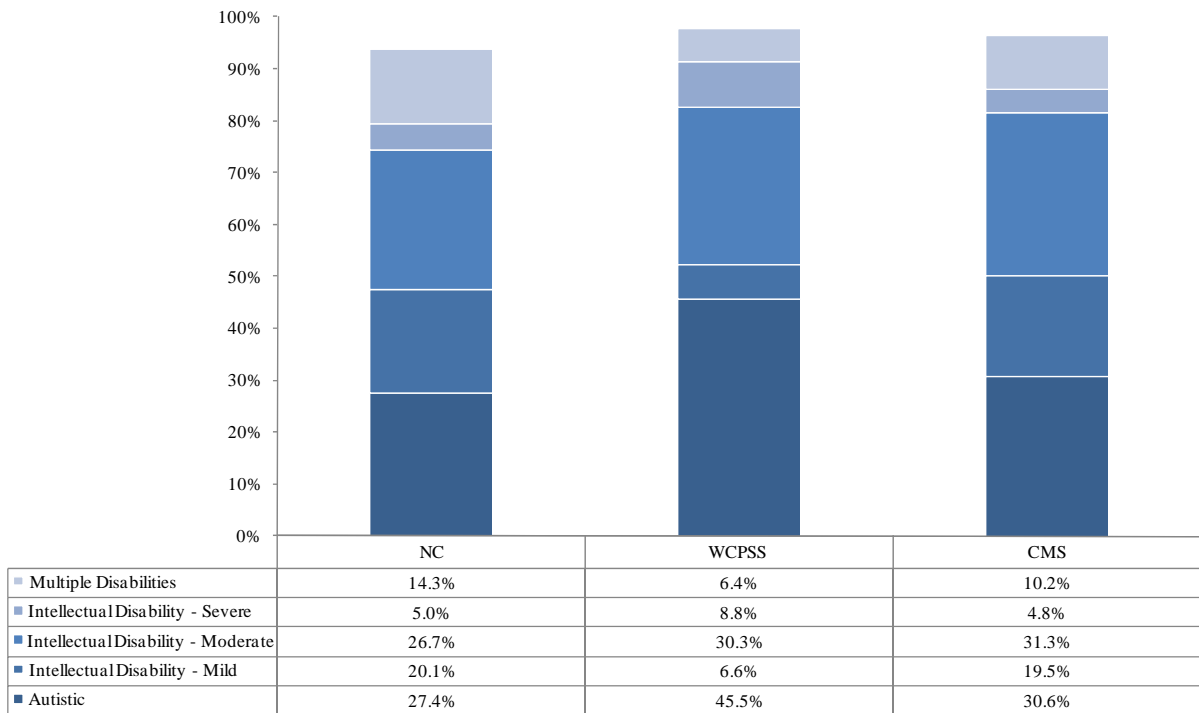
A third explanation has less to do with instruction and test administration than with the composition of the student population taking the assessments. For example, what percentage of a district's SWD population takes standard multiple choice EOG exams vs. alternate assessments? What is the prevalence of certain SWD identifications of students taking alternate assessments? If certain groups of SWD students (e.g., those with severe intellectual disability) are less likely to do well on alternate tests than other groups --- and these groups make up a larger share of the students taking the assessment --- we would expect that their overall performance on the assessment would be lower. This appears to be the case in WCPSS on NCEXTEND1 assessments.

Based on comparisons with the state and with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), the second-largest district in the state, it appears that a larger percentage of SWD students in WCPSS take the standard multiple choice end-of-grade exams (rather than alternate assessments) than the

percentages of SWD students state-wide and in CMS (75% vs. 67% for both NC and CMS). Correspondingly, the proportion of SWD students taking NCEXTEND1 exams is lower in WCPSS than in NC and CMS (5% vs. 7% for both NC and CMS).

Differences between WCPSS and the state and CMS are also evident in the composition of NCEXTEND1 test-takers by SWD identification. As shown in Figure 9, WCPSS has a much higher percentage of students identified as “autistic” than the state and CMS (46% vs. 27% and 31%, respectively). Also noteworthy is the much lower percentage of WCPSS students identified as “intellectual disability-mild” (7% compared to 20% for both NC and CMS), and the slightly higher percentage of WCPSS students identified as “intellectual disability-severe” (9% compared to 5% for both NC and CMS).

Figure 9
Composition of NCEXTEND1 Grade 3-8 Student Population by SWD Identification in NC, WCPSS, and CMS 2009-10



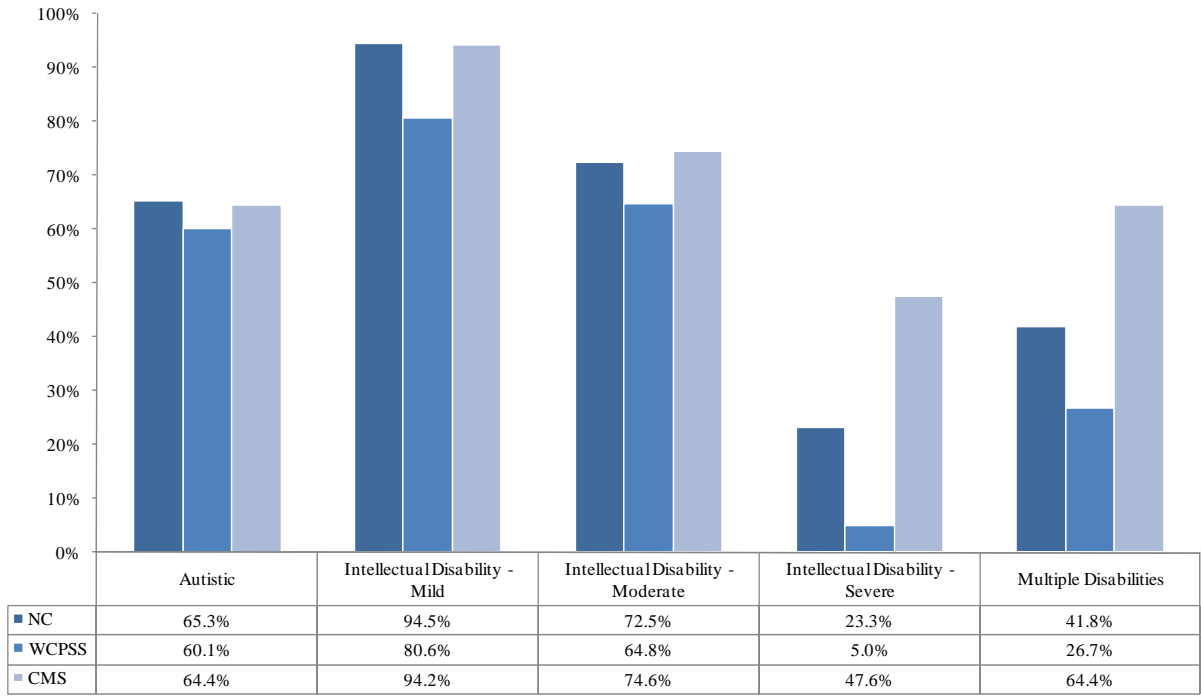
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% because several small categories of SWD identification are not included in the chart.

As shown in Figure 10, proficiency rates for NCEXTEND1 test-takers are slightly lower in WCPSS compared to NC and CMS for students identified as “autistic” or “intellectual disability-moderate,” but the deficits are much wider among students identified as “intellectual disability-mild,” “intellectual disability-severe,” or having “multiple disabilities.” While it may be difficult to compare the make-up of SWD students in each disability category across WCPSS, NC, and CMS, it does appear that WCPSS has a higher proportion of NCEXTEND1 students in subgroups whose proficiency rates are lower than other SWD subgroups, and vice versa ---

smaller percentages in subgroups with higher proficiency rates (e.g., “intellectual disability-mild”). These compositional differences may partially account for the gap in overall NCEXTEND1 proficiency rates between WCPSS, NC, and CMS.

Figure 10

**Proficiency Rates on NCEXTEND1 Grade 3-8 Reading Assessments
In NC, WCPSS, and CMS 2009-10**



RESOURCES

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program (May 2006). *North Carolina testing program assessment options, 2006-07*.

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