



**Destination 2025 Monthly: March 2020**  
**Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management**

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## Key Findings

- Academic progress is measured with Illuminate FastBridge this year. Students in Grades K-1 are assessed one-on-one with earlyReading and earlyMath. Students in Grades 2-3 are assessed with aReading and aMath, which are computer-adaptive assessments.
- The median growth percentiles for reading for SCS students in Grades K-1 were notably low, at the 28th percentile and 27th percentile, respectively. In Grades 2-3, the median growth percentiles in reading for SCS students were comparable to the national median growth percentile, at the 52nd percentile and the 50th percentile, respectively.
- With the exception of Kindergarten, the median growth percentiles for SCS students in math was comparable to the national median growth percentile (50th percentile). The median growth percentile for SCS Kindergarten students was the 39th percentile.
- The percentage of SCS students in the bottom quartile in reading increased markedly for Grades K-1 from fall to winter, but decreased slightly for students in Grades 2-3. Over one third of SCS student at all grade levels are in the bottom quartile in reading on the winter assessment.
- There were slight increases from fall to winter in the percentage of SCS students in the bottom quartile in math in Grades K-2. In Grade 3, there was a slight decrease. Approximately 30% of all SCS students in Grades K-3 are in the bottom quartile in math on the winter assessment.
- With the exception of Grade 3, the median Lexile score for each Grade 2-8 was below the recommended Lexile range of text complexity students should be reading to be college- or career-ready at the end of Grade 12.

### Illuminate FastBridge Assessments

This year, SCS switched from using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to a suite of assessments offered through Illuminate. FastBridge assessments are used to measure K-8 students' academic standing and growth three times per year. Students in Grades K-1 are assessed using earlyReading and earlyMath. Both these assessments are administered in a one-on-one setting between the teacher and student, with teachers asking the assessment questions and recording student responses in the computer as they proceed. Students in Grade 2 and above take aReading and aMath, which are computer-adaptive assessments. That is, as a student answers questions correctly or incorrectly, the computer adapts so the subsequent questions will be more or less difficult until the student's level of performance is identified. The computer-adaptive format is similar to how MAP was administered in previous years for all students in Grades K-8. The one-on-one assessments for students in Grades K-1 this year introduces a different process from how these grades have previously been assessed.

As with the District's previous universal screen measures, there are three assessment windows per year - fall, winter, and spring. For each assessment, students receive an achievement percentile. In addition, student growth is calculated and growth percentiles are assigned to the level of progress. Both the achievement percentiles and growth percentiles allow for comparisons to national percentiles, which are based on a large and demographically-representative sample of students from across the country.



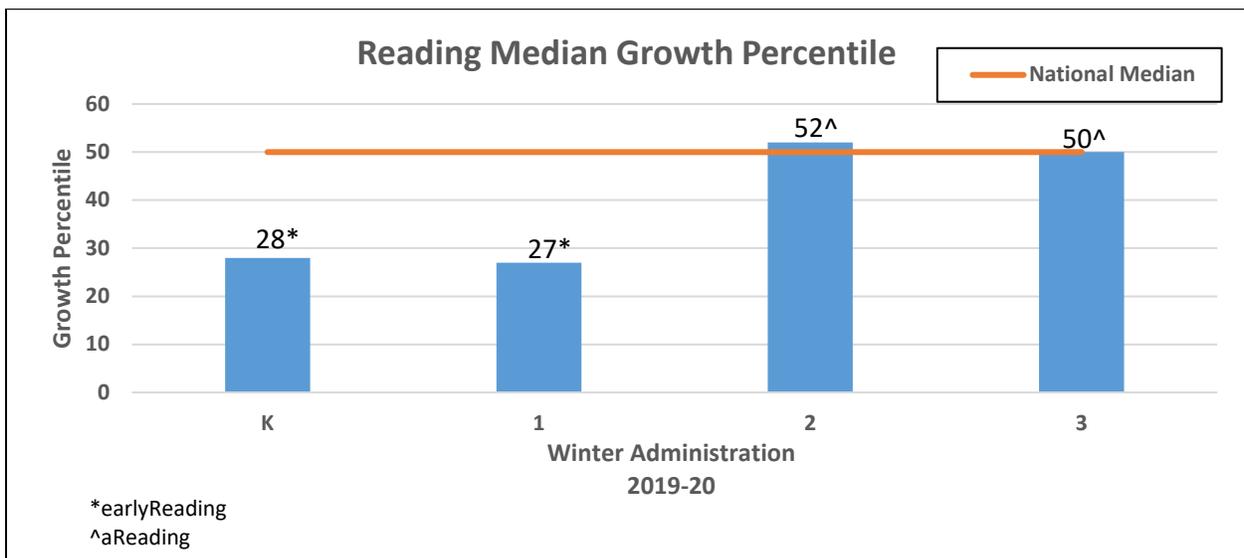
## Academic Growth in Reading and Mathematics

### Median Growth Percentiles

FastBridge median growth percentiles for Reading and Mathematics for students in Grades K-3 were analyzed to look at academic progress. If a student earns a growth score at the 50th percentile, it means that half the students in the national sample demonstrated more growth and half demonstrated less growth between test administrations than that student.

The median growth percentile for each grade level can be used to compare the academic growth for SCS students to the academic growth of students nationally. If students in all SCS grades are demonstrating academic growth comparable to the national growth rate, the median growth percentiles for SCS would all be at the 50th percentile. Growth rates above the 50th percentile would indicate faster growth than the national rate, and those lower would indicate slower growth than the national rate.

Two graphs below show the FastBridge median growth percentile by grade for Reading and Mathematics from fall to winter this year. The first graph displays percentiles for Reading. The median growth percentile for Kindergarten was the 28th percentile, which means that half of SCS Kindergarten students' rate of growth in reading was below the 28th percentile and half above. The median growth percentile for Grade 1 was the 27th percentile. These median percentiles indicate that SCS students in Grades K-1 are progressing at a rate quite a bit slower than the national average. By contrast, SCS students in Grades 2-3 are keeping pace with the national average with median growth rates at the 52nd percentile and 50th percentile, respectively.

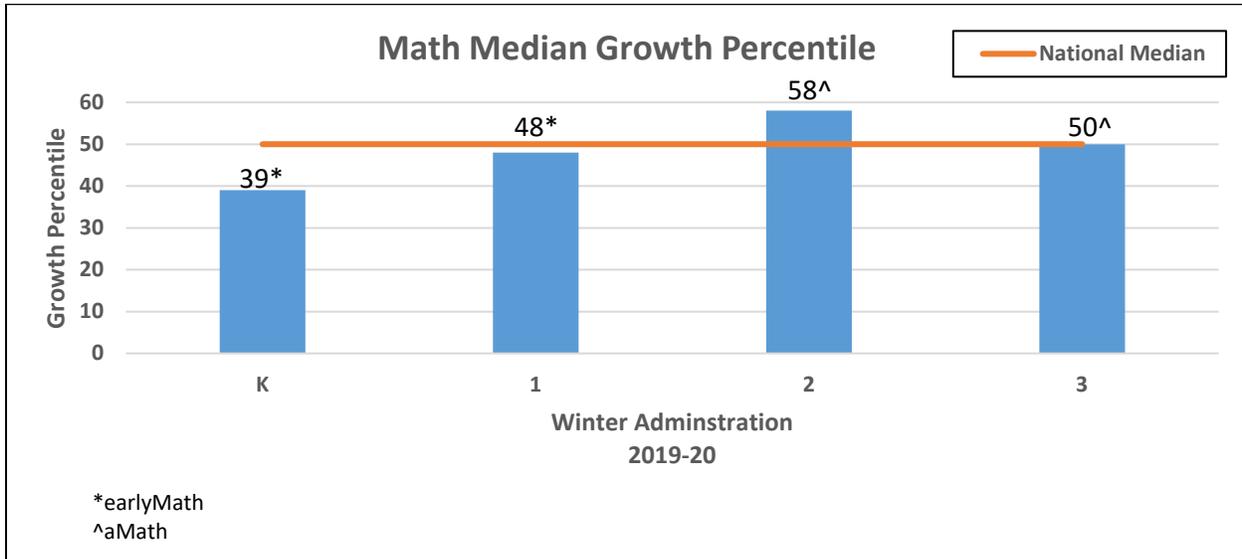


The next graph displays median growth percentiles for Mathematics. All grades, with the exception of Kindergarten, reached a median growth percentile comparable to or above the national average growth percentile (Grade 1: 48th percentile, Grade 2: 58th percentile, Grade 3: 50th percentile). SCS students in these grades are demonstrating growth in Mathematics at a rate similar to the national average growth rate, and in the case of students in Grade 2, at a pace faster than the national



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average. However, this year's median growth percentile in Mathematics for Kindergarten was lower, at the 39th percentile, indicating slower growth for Kindergarten students compared to the national average growth rate.



### Percentage of Students in Bottom Quartile

Another data point that can speak to academic growth is the percentage of students whose test scores are in the bottom quartile (25th percentile or below) on the FastBridge Reading and Mathematics assessments. Unlike the median growth percentile discussed above, which measures students' growth in Reading and Mathematics from fall to winter compared to test takers nationwide, the percentage of students in the bottom quartile indicates how many students had test scores ranked at or below the 25th percentile on the fall or winter assessments. Ideally, it is best to have as few students as possible in the bottom quartile.

The first graph below presents Reading data for fall and winter. The percentage of SCS students with test scores in the bottom quartile increased markedly for Grades K-1, while the percentage of students in Grades 2-3 declined slightly. The dramatic increases in Grades K-1 bear examination. It is also notable that over one third of SCS students in all grade levels (Gr K-3) were in the bottom quartile for reading, which also bears scrutiny. In K-1, new early literacy subskills were tested in winter that were not tested in fall (Word Segmenting and Nonsense Words for Gr K and Curriculum Based Measure Reading [passage reading] for Gr 1)

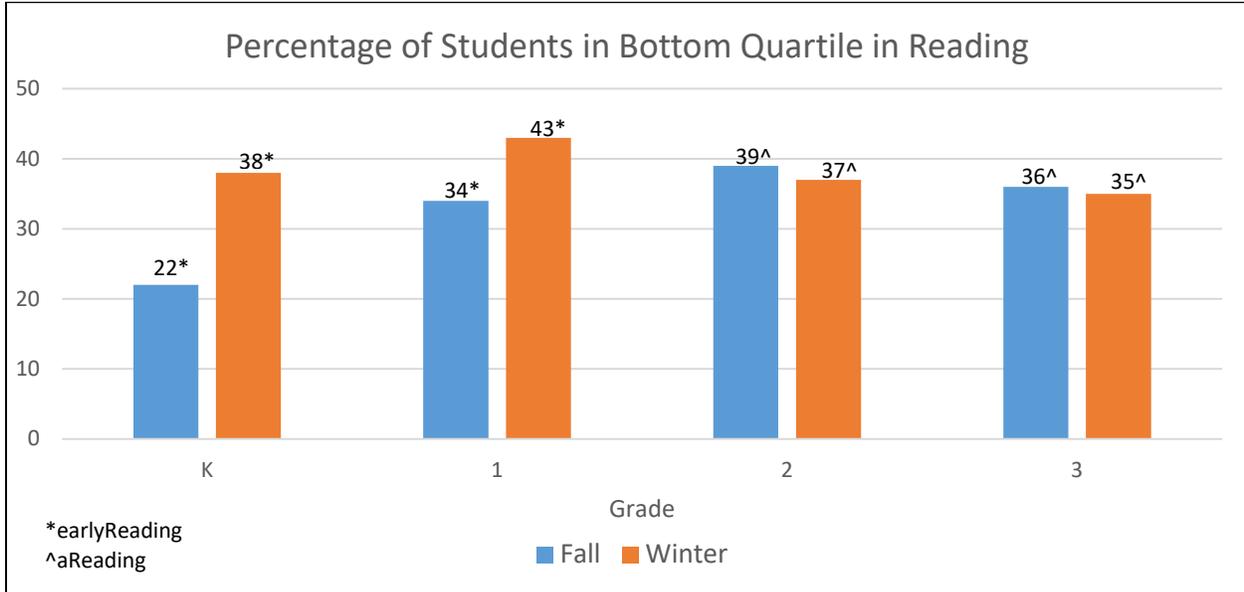
The SCS median test percentile for all subtests except one was below the national average of the 50th percentile. According to Illuminate, some notable challenges include:

- 6% of Gr K students scored in the 1st percentile on Letter Sounds (unable to say any letter sounds on the assessment)
- 15% of Gr K students were unable to perform any of the Nonsense Word assessment items, compared to 5% nationally

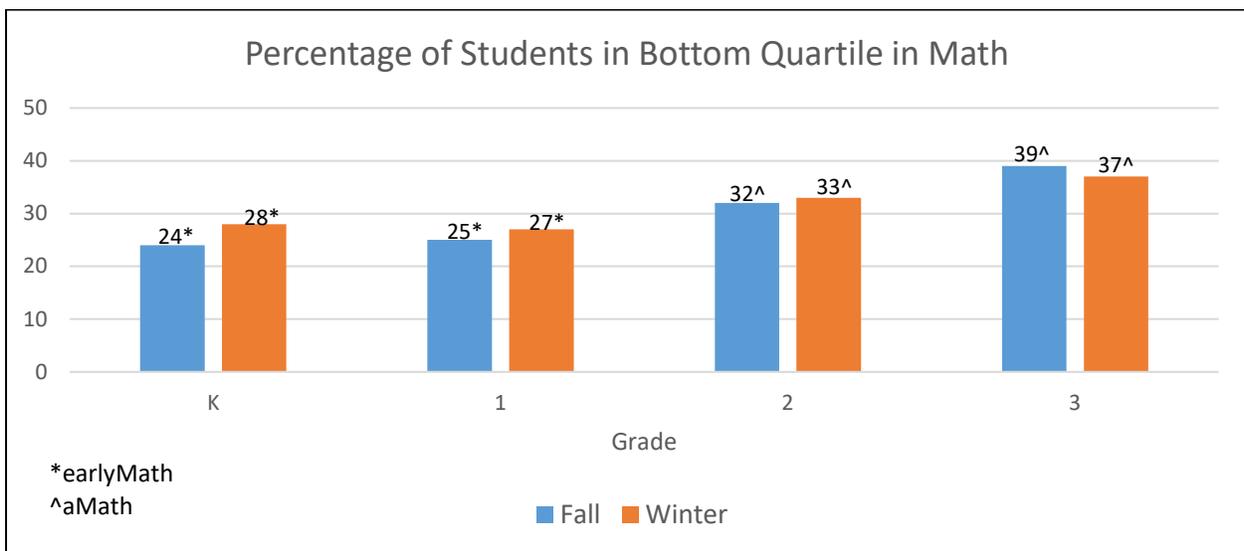


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This downward trend could be due to a combination of factors such as misalignment of skills with the SCS curriculum pacing, student skill deficits in these literacy competencies, and/or inter-rater reliability among teachers conducting the assessment.



In Mathematics, the percentage of students with test scores in the bottom quartile remained relatively constant from fall to winter for all grades. There were slight increases in the percentage of students in Grades K-2, and a slight decrease for Grade 3. While Grades K-1 show lower percentages of students in the bottom quartile than in Reading, there are still one third or more of Grade 2-3 students in the lowest quartile in Mathematics.



For students to move out of the bottom quartile, their growth rate would need to be faster than the national average, or above the 50th percentile. Students in the bottom quartile whose growth rate is below the 50th percentile are not making enough progress to get on track to meet grade-level



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expectations. The two tables below present information on the number of students in the bottom quartile with growth rates at or below the national average.

The first table shows numbers for reading by grade level. The first row presents the number of students with assessments. The second row is the number and percentage of students in the bottom quartile. The third row shows the number of students in the bottom quartile with growth rates at or below the national average. The first column shows that 2,608 Kindergarten students (38%) scored in the bottom quartile on the winter assessment; and 2,543 (37%) are in the bottom quartile with growth rates slower than the national average. The students in the bottom row across the table are those who are most struggling with reading in Grades K-3 throughout the District.

Students in Bottom Quartile and Below National Median in Reading				
	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<b>Total # of students with test scores</b>	6,795	6,933	6,895	6,945
<b>Students in bottom quartile on winter assessment</b>	2,608 (38%)	2,980 (43%)	2,541 (37%)	2,454 (35%)
<b>Students in bottom quartile and at or below national median growth percentile (50th percentile)</b>	2,543 (37%)	2,907 (42%)	1,314 (19%)	1,282 (18%)

The second table below presents the same information for the math assessment. Again, the students who are in the bottom quartile slower than average growth rates (third row) are those facing the most challenges in early math.

Students in Bottom Quartile and Below National Median in Math				
	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<b>Total # of students with test scores</b>	6,813	6,823	6,827	6,870
<b>Students in bottom quartile on winter assessment</b>	1,878 (28%)	1,827 (27%)	2,267 (33%)	2,512 (37%)
<b>Students in bottom quartile and at or below national median growth percentile (50th percentile)</b>	1,641 (24%)	1,028 (15%)	1,448 (21%)	1,697 (23%)

**Lexile Scores**

Additional information about student reading levels can be obtained from Lexile scores. The Lexile scale provides information about text complexity by reporting scores ranging from the Beginning Reader level up through college level. Lexile scores are reported as a whole number followed by the letter *L* (e.g., 0L, 250L, 1190L). The Lexile scale reports scores lower than 0L, and it is typical for many beginning readers to score in this range. Lexile scores that begin with *BR*, which stands for Beginning Reader, indicate scores below 0L (e.g., BR20L, BR360L). The Lexile scale is like a thermometer in that BR scores with greater numbers indicate that they are further away from 0L compared to BR scores with smaller numbers. Additional information about Lexile scores can be obtained from the Lexile Framework (<https://lexile.com>).

Students' Lexile scores indicate the complexity of text they are capable of reading. Median Lexile scores for SCS students in grades 2-8 are presented in the table below. To better understand the



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reading levels of SCS students, the scores were compared with additional information provided by the Lexile Framework that is related to college and career readiness. For each grade level from Kindergarten through Grade 12, the Lexile Framework provides a Lexile range to describe the complexity of texts students should be reading at each grade level to be college and career ready (CCR) by the end of twelfth grade. The table below shows where SCS students' Lexile scores from above compare to the recommended Lexile ranges. Except for Gr 3, the median Lexile score for each grade is below the bottom end of the CCR range for winter Lexile scores, meaning that at least half the students at each grade level are currently reading below the recommended range.

Median Lexile Scores by Grade Level Compared to CCR Lexile Ranges		
Grade Level	SCS Median Lexile	CCR Lexile Range
2	403L	420L to 650L
3	583L	520L to 820L
4	655L	740L to 940L
5	745L	830L to 1010L
6	781L	925L to 1070L
7	853L	970L to 1120L
8	961L	1010L to 1185L

### District Strategies & Updates

- Complete a future **linking study** between Illuminate FastBridge results and other academic results such as i-Ready to determine how consistently they assess student performance
- Determine from schools if they are experiencing any **barriers to implementing the K-1 earlyReading assessment** that might influence results
- **Third Grade Commitment** processes are underway with schools administering the required assessments and communicating with parents about student progress. Student progress on success criteria is included on K-2 report cards.
- **Foundational Literacy Laureates** in elementary schools serve as a resource for K-2 instruction in foundational skills in their school
- **Second-Grade Paraprofessionals** in elementary schools support foundational skills in the classroom by assisting teachers with various instructional tasks
- The Office of Schools and Leadership provided resources (scripted PowerPoints, assessment descriptions and facts, and parent resources for all schools (K-12) to host **January Family Data Night**