Study Session

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 5:30 PM
Oak Park Learning Center, 6355 Osman Avenue North, Stillwater, MN 55082

I.	**Call to Order**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair
II.	**Roll Call**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair
III.	**Pledge of Allegiance**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair
IV.	**Approval of Agenda**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair
V.	**Student Report**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Avery Crickenberger and Ms. Katie Smith, Student Representatives
VI.	**Consent Agenda**	
VI.A.	Payment of Invoices, September 19–October 9, 2026	
VI.B.	Stillwater Middle School Donation Proposal	
VII.	**Business Items**	
VII.A.	Part-Time Teacher Program Resolution	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Kristine Carlston, Executive Director of Human Resources
VIII.	**Workshop Topic**	
VIII.A.	Achievement Update	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Caitlyn Willis, Chief Academic Officer and Ms. Elsa Mundt, Educational Data Analyst
VIII.B.	High School Schedule Update	**Speaker(s):** Mr. Rob Bach, Stillwater Area High School Principal
VIII.C.	High School Course Proposal Process	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Caitlyn Willis, Chief Academic Officer
IX.	**Closed Session**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair
X.	**Adjournment**	**Speaker(s):** Ms. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair

BOARD RESOLUTION APPROVING PARTICIPATION IN THE QUALIFIED PART-TIME TEACHER PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 354.66 permits an eligible teacher, by agreement with the employing school board or its authorized representative, to participate in the Qualified Part-Time Teacher Program administered by the Minnesota Teachers Retirement Association ("TRA"); and

WHEREAS, Ashley Gunn ("EMPLOYEE") has requested approval to participate in the Qualified Part-Time Teacher Program for the 2026-27 school years; and

WHEREAS, the School Board has considered EMPLOYEE's request and is willing to approve participation subject to the conditions stated below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 834, Stillwater Area Public Schools, as follows:

1. The School Board approves EMPLOYEE's participation in the Qualified Part-Time Teacher Program under Minnesota Statutes section 354.66 for the 2026-27school years, subject to EMPLOYEE's eligibility under applicable law and TRA requirements and the timely execution and filing of all required agreements and documents.
2. EMPLOYEE's participation is conditioned upon EMPLOYEE assuming and paying the entire portion of any additional employer contribution attributable to the difference between EMPLOYEE's actual part-time compensation and the compensation EMPLOYEE would have received if employed on a full-time basis, together with any employee contributions, fees, penalties, or other costs arising from or associated with EMPLOYEE's participation that may lawfully be assigned to the employee.
3. Except for employer contributions that the District is required by law to make based upon the compensation EMPLOYEE actually receives for services performed in the part-time assignment, the District shall not be responsible for any contributions, fees, penalties, or other costs associated with EMPLOYEE's participation in the program.
4. The Superintendent, Executive Director of Human Resources, and their designees are authorized to execute and submit the required agreement and related documents and to take any other actions reasonably necessary to implement this resolution.

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the School Board of Independent School District No. 834, Stillwater Area Public Schools, at a duly called meeting held on _____**, 2026.**

Board Chair: _____

Board Clerk: _____



Expect More.

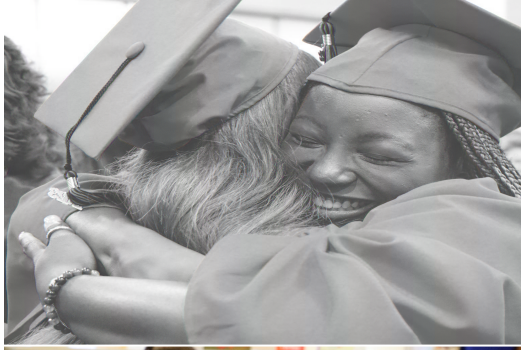
Achievement Update
2025-2026

Presented to the school board
Oct. 13, 2026

Part 1 | Comprehensive Achievement & Civic Readiness

District goals, progress and improvement strategies

Comprehensive Achievement & Civic Readiness (CACR)







Legislation designed to ensure schools enhance student achievement through teaching and learning supports:

- All students are ready for school
- All racial and economic achievement gaps are closed
- All students are ready for career and college
- All students graduate from high school
- Students are prepared to be lifelong learners







#1: School Readiness

Target:

Increase the percentage of incoming kindergarteners meeting age-appropriate literacy and numeracy benchmarks as measured on fall FastBridge screening from 68% in reading to 72% in reading; and from 84% in math to 85% in math by August 2026.

Fall FastBridge screening • Percentage at low risk

Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Fall 2026
Early Reading	68%	73%	70%
Early Math	84%	87%	85%

Goal Status: Partially Met

#2: Achievement Gaps

Target:
Reduce the achievement gap in Reading and Math between:

- Non-white and white students
- Students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) and those not receiving FRL

… by at least 5% per year for 5 consecutive years, measured by FastBridge (winter-to-winter).

Goal Status: Partially Met

	Measure: Winter FastBridge	Prior Gap	Current Gap
Reading	Grades K–1; Racial	26	15
	Grades K–1; Income	20	21
	Grades 2–12; Racial	32	16
	Grades 2–12; Income	26	28
Math	Grades K–1; Racial	22	19
	Grades K–1; Income	25	25
	Grades 2–12; Racial	27	27
	Grades 2–12; Income	31	32

Understanding the Gaps

Where gaps narrowed

- K–1 reading: non-white students increased from 48% to 53%; white students decreased from 74% to 68%.
- K–1 math: both racial groups declined.

Where gaps persisted/widened

- Grades 2–12 reading: lower-income students remained at 46% while non-FRL students increased to 74%.
- Grades 2–12 math: both income groups declined; the gap widened.

#3: College and Career Readiness

Target:
Increase student credits earned in advanced coursework, concurrent enrollment, work-based learning and internships by 3% per year for 5 consecutive years, measured by student transcript data.

Credits earned by course type	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Advanced coursework (Enriched, AP, PLTW)	3,330 credits	2473 credits	TBD
Concurrent enrollment (CIS, CE)	1,016 credits	2350 credits	TBD
PSEO	1,198 credits	1195 credits	TBD
Work-based learning and internships	45 credits	52 credits	TBD
Total	**5,589**	**6,070 (Δ+8.6%)**	**TBD**

Goal Status: Partially Met

#4: All Students Graduate

Target:

Maintain the four-year graduation rate at Stillwater Area High School at 95%;

Increase the five-year graduation rate at St. Croix Valley Alternative Learning Center (ALC) to 73% by June 2026;

Increase the seven-year graduation rate at St. Croix Valley Alternative Learning Center (ALC) to 82% by June 2026

Goal Status: Partially Met

	Graduation Rate	2023	2024	2025
Stillwater Area High School	4-year	94.6%	95.2%	96.1%
St Croix Valley Area Learning Center	5-year	65.9%	70.2%	85.7%
	7-year	75.6%	80.0%	66.7%

#5: Lifelong Learners

THIRD YEAR OF NEW GOAL AREA

Proposed Target:

1. **Early Learning Readiness:** Increasing kindergarten readiness by improving fall FastBridge screening results annually, to 80% in reading and 85% in math.
2. **Equity in Achievement:** Closing the reading and math achievement gaps between non-white and white students, and between FRL and non-FRL students, to 10 percentage point gap, based on winter-to-winter FastBridge assessments**.**
3. **Expanded Learning Opportunities:** Increasing the number of credits earned in advanced coursework, concurrent enrollment, and work-based learning by 15%, measured via transcript audits.
4. **On-Time Graduation & Persistence:**
   - Maintain a four-year graduation rate of ≥95% at SAHS
   - Increase the five-year graduation rate at ALC toward 73%.
   - Increase the seven-year graduation rate at ALC toward 82%.

Progress in these four goal areas will be used as indicators of students' preparedness to be lifelong learners - academically capable, socially engaged, and future-ready.

Part 2 | MCA Results

A closer look at student learning in reading, mathematics and science

How To Read MCA Results

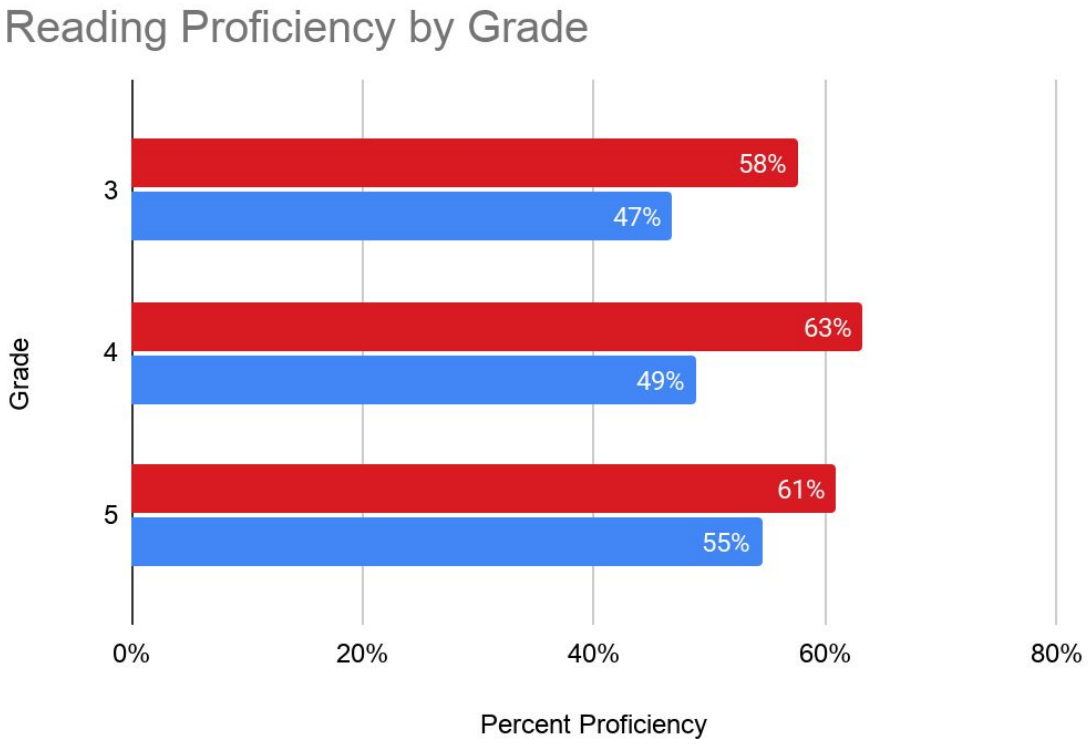
- Reading MCA-IV began in 2025–26; results establish a new baseline
- Science MCA-IV began in 2024–25
- Mathematics changes coming in 2027–28
- State comparisons provide context, not the sole measure of success
- MCA results should be considered alongside FastBridge and classroom evidence



Three Findings from MCAs

1. Stillwater performs above statewide proficiency in the tested subjects
2. Achievement varies substantially by grade, school and student group
3. Too many students remain below proficiency, particularly in science

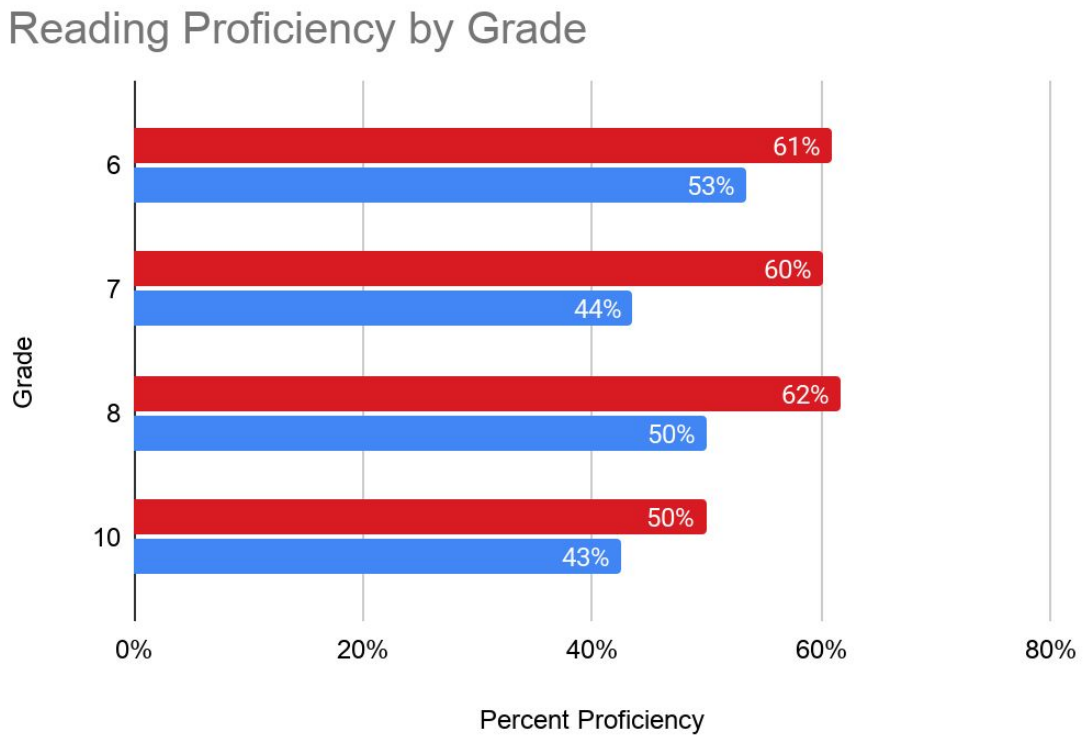
MCA Reading By Grade



Districtwide reading proficiency = 59%

Because this is a new assessment, prior MCA-III reading results are not directly comparable

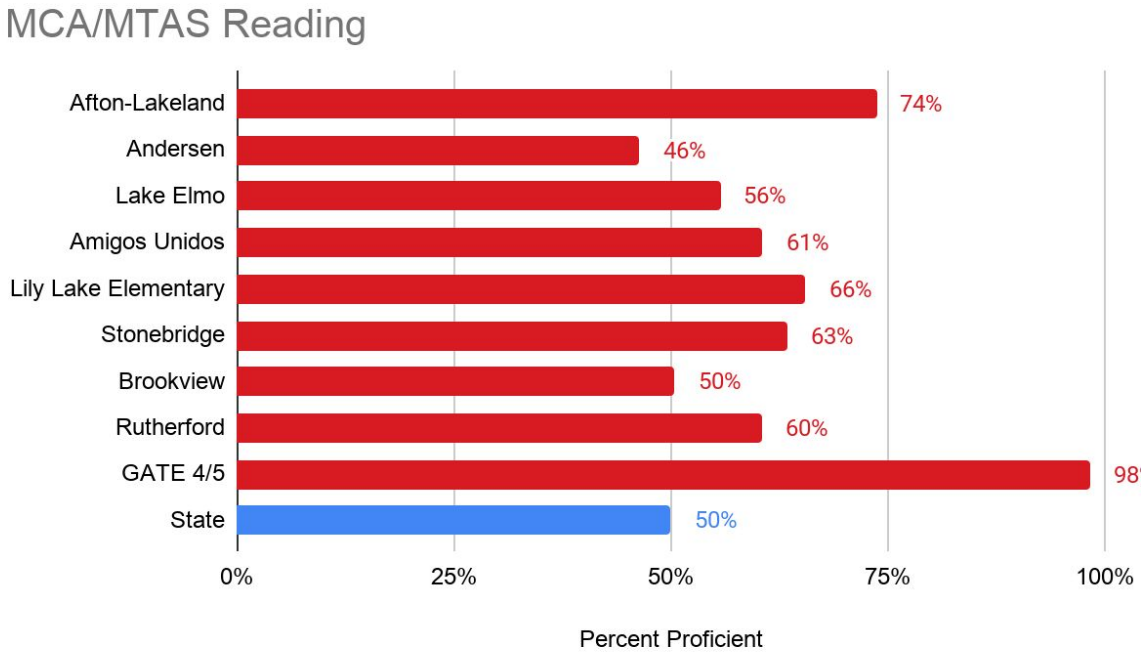
MCA Reading By Grade



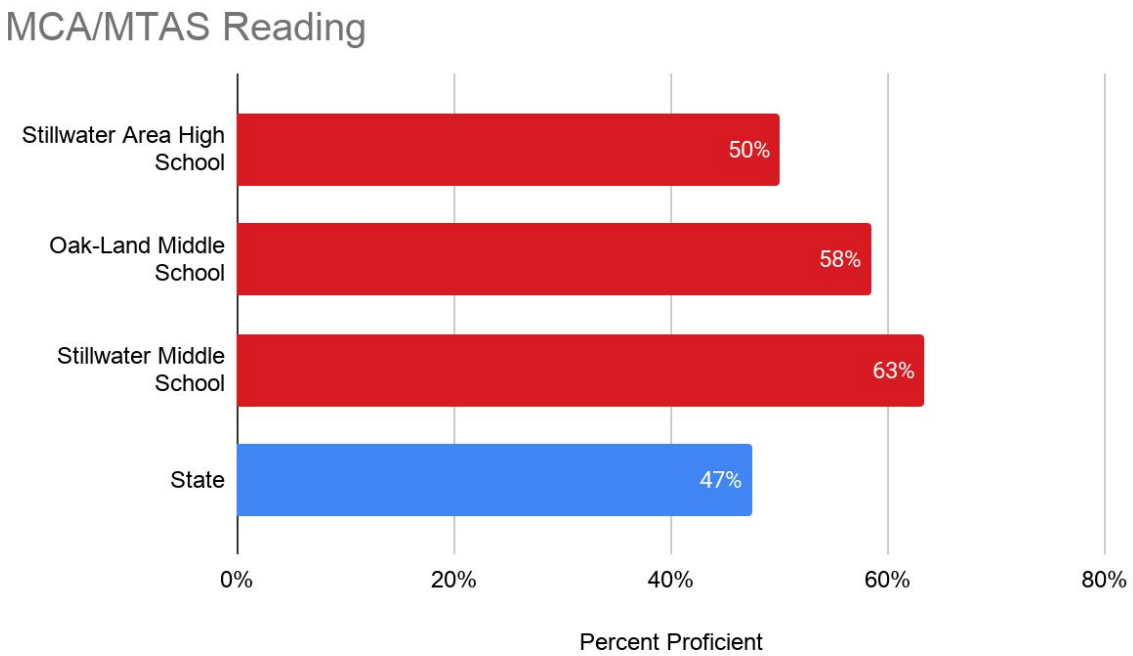
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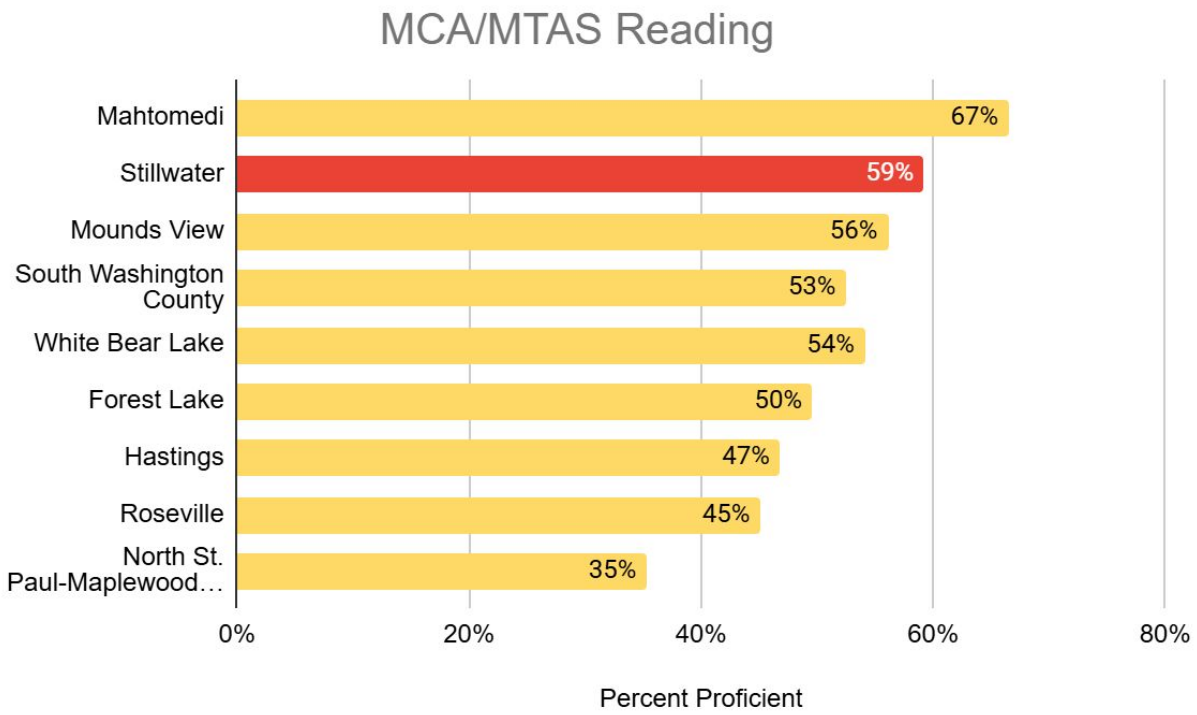
MCA Reading By School



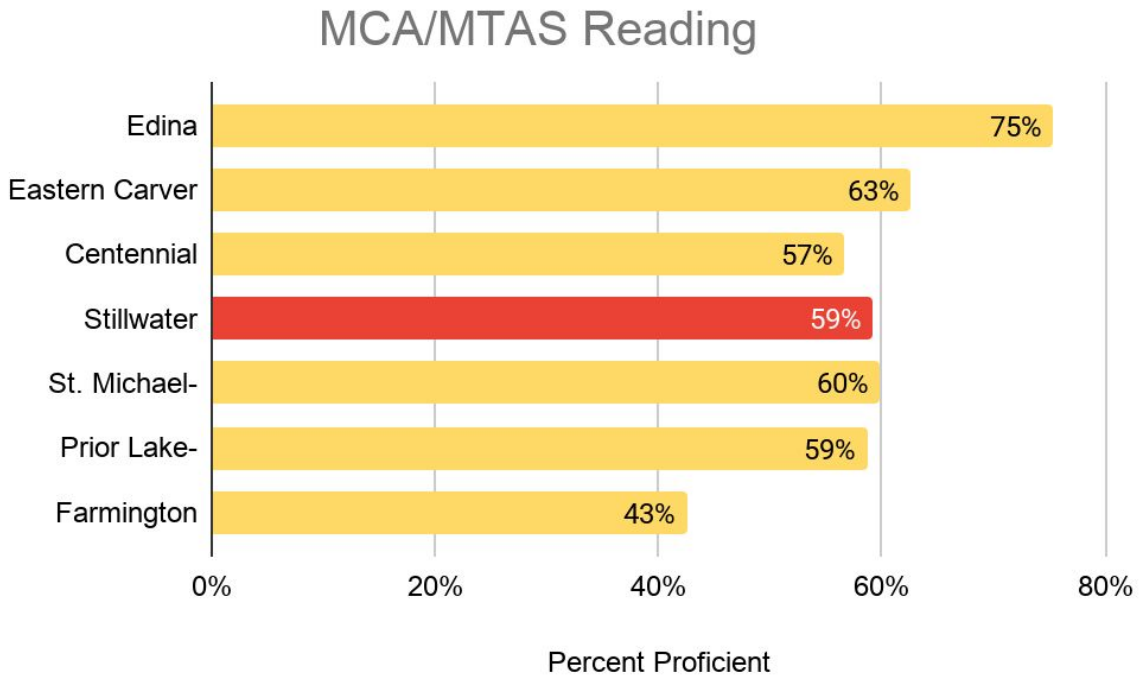
MCA Reading By School



MCA Reading Comparison East Metro



MCA Reading Comparison Like Districts



MCA Reading Key Points

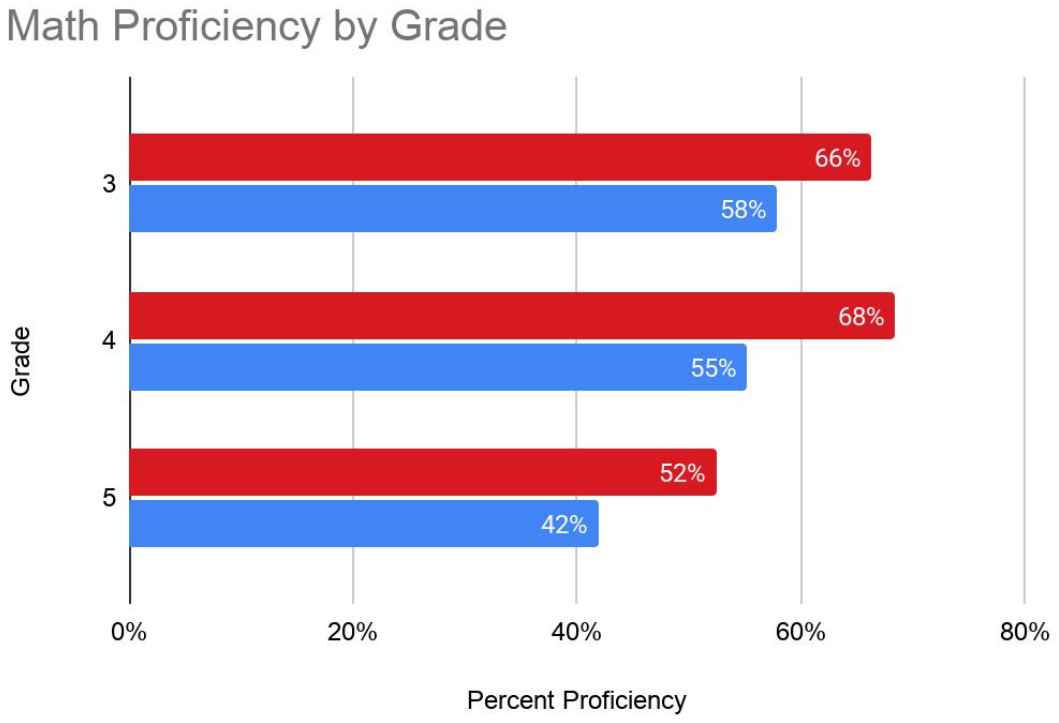
What the data show

- Significant variation by schools and grade bands
- Persistent achievement gaps exist between student groups, with the starkest gaps by family income level and race

Instructional implication

- Performance reflects Stillwater's engagement with the new standards and benchmarks, and the new exam

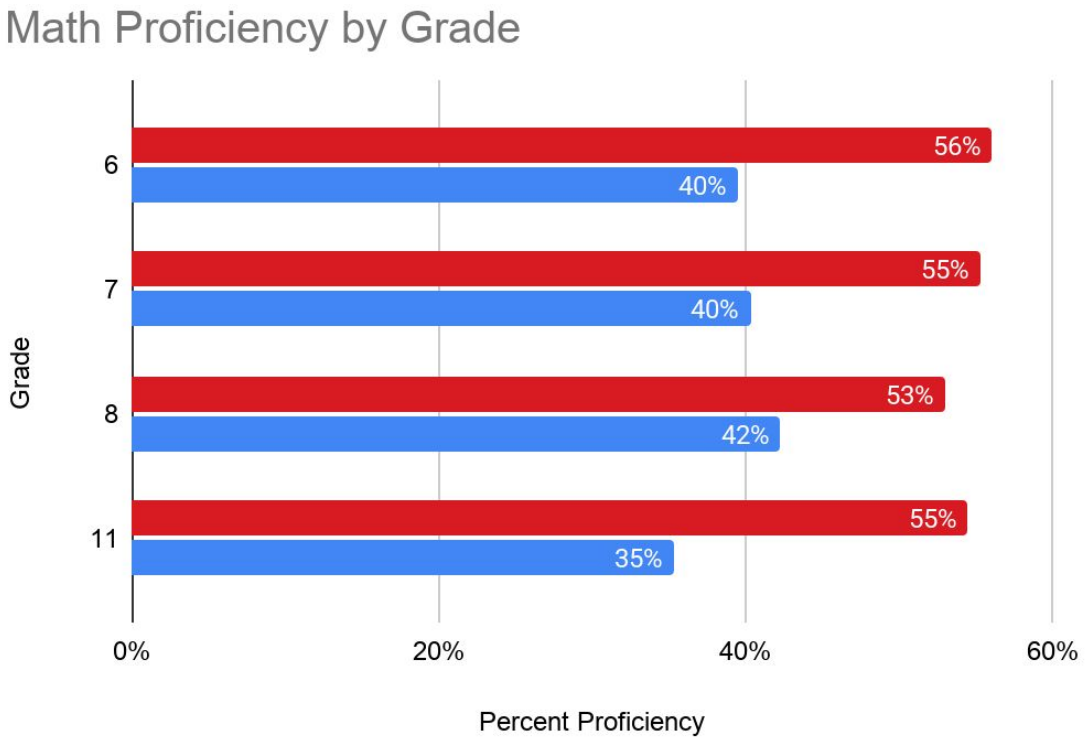
MCA Math By Grade



Districtwide math proficiency: 58%

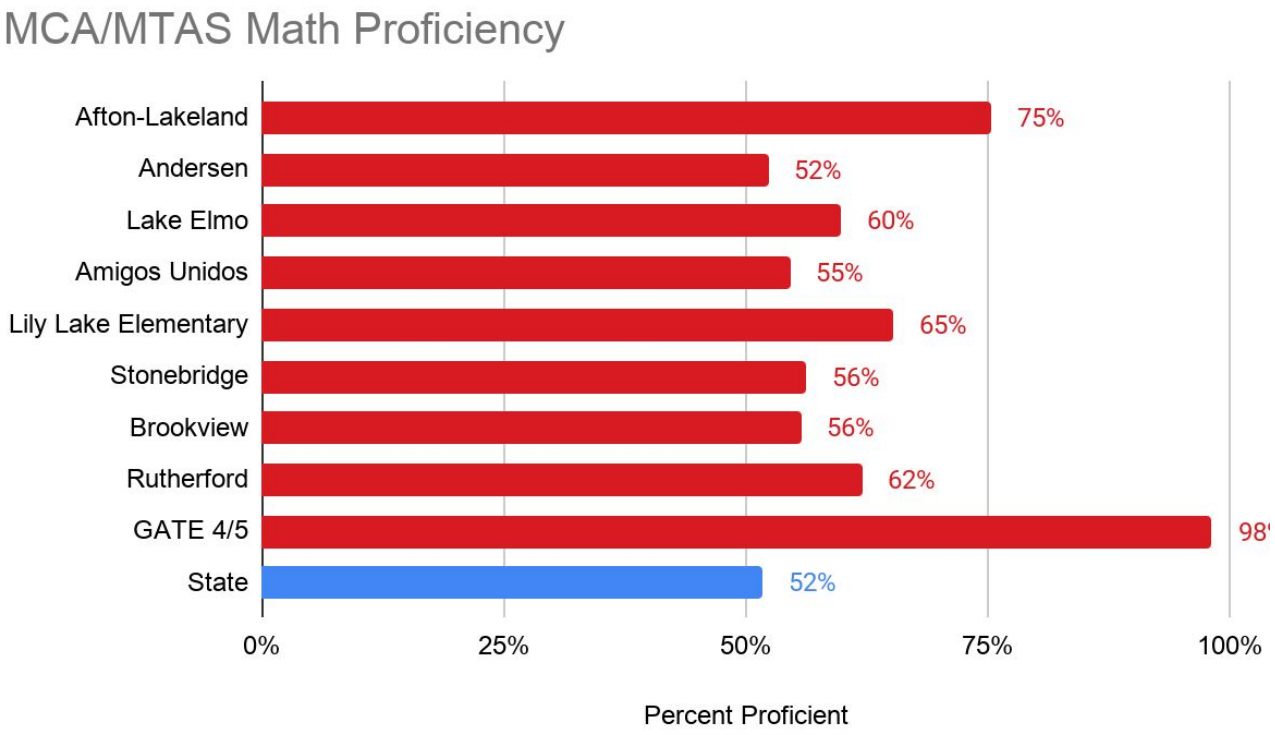
Grade 5 is a priority for examining standards alignment, student work and readiness for middle school mathematics

MCA Math By Grade

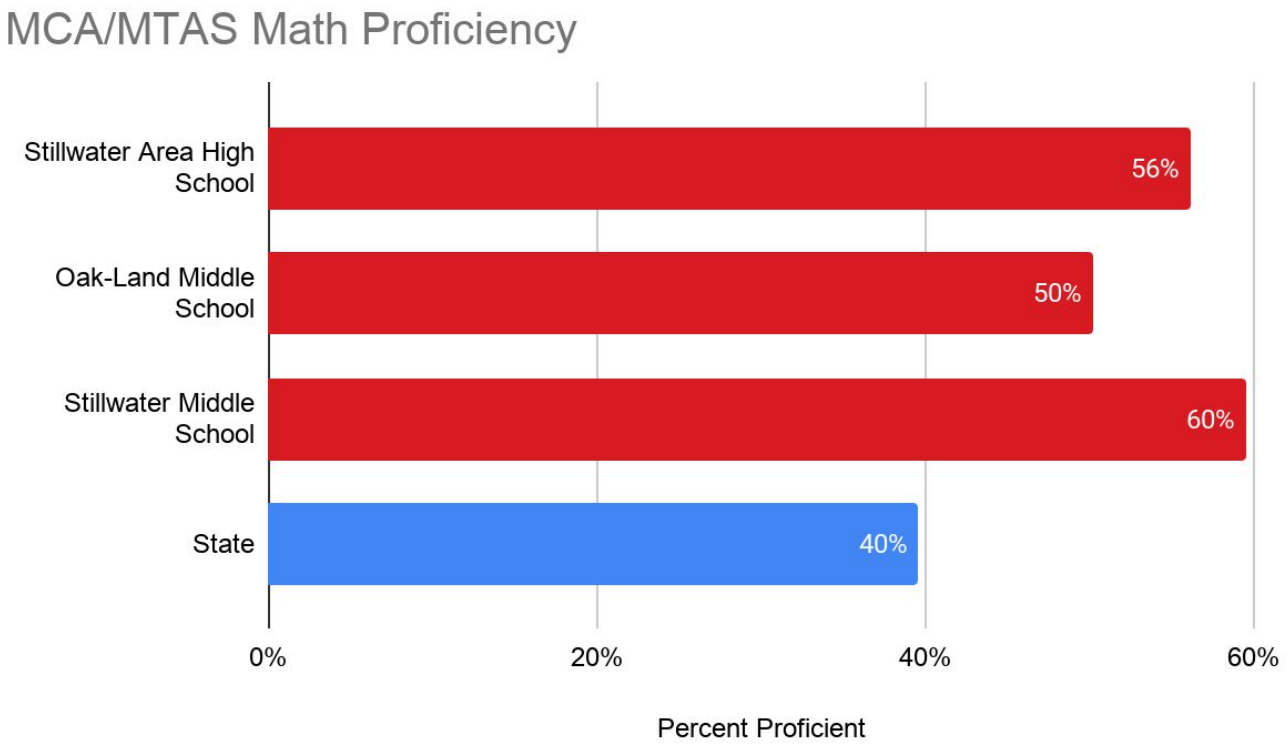


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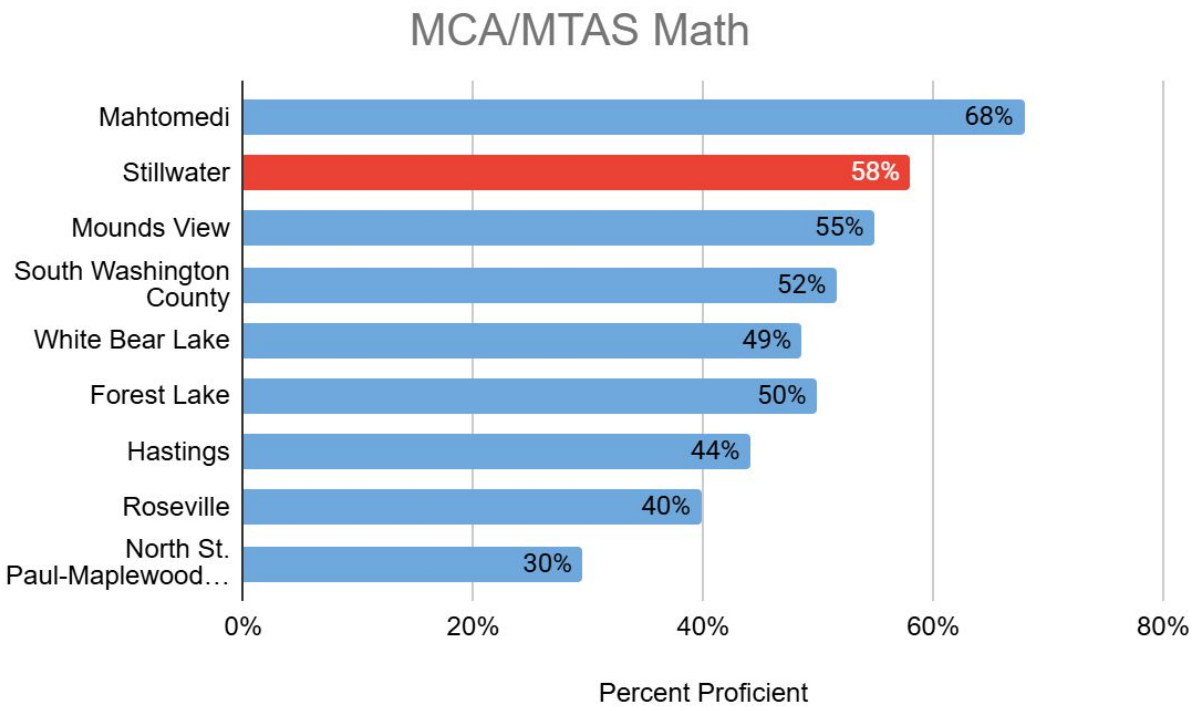
MCA Math By School



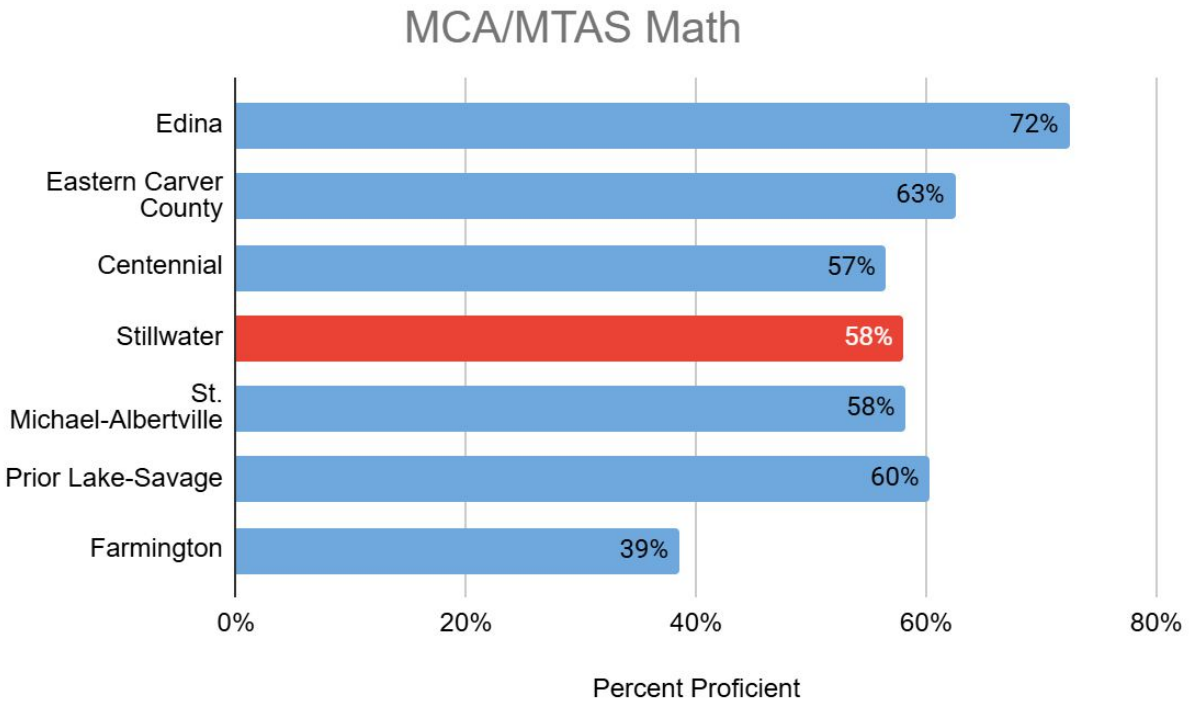
MCA Math By School



MCA Math East Metro Districts



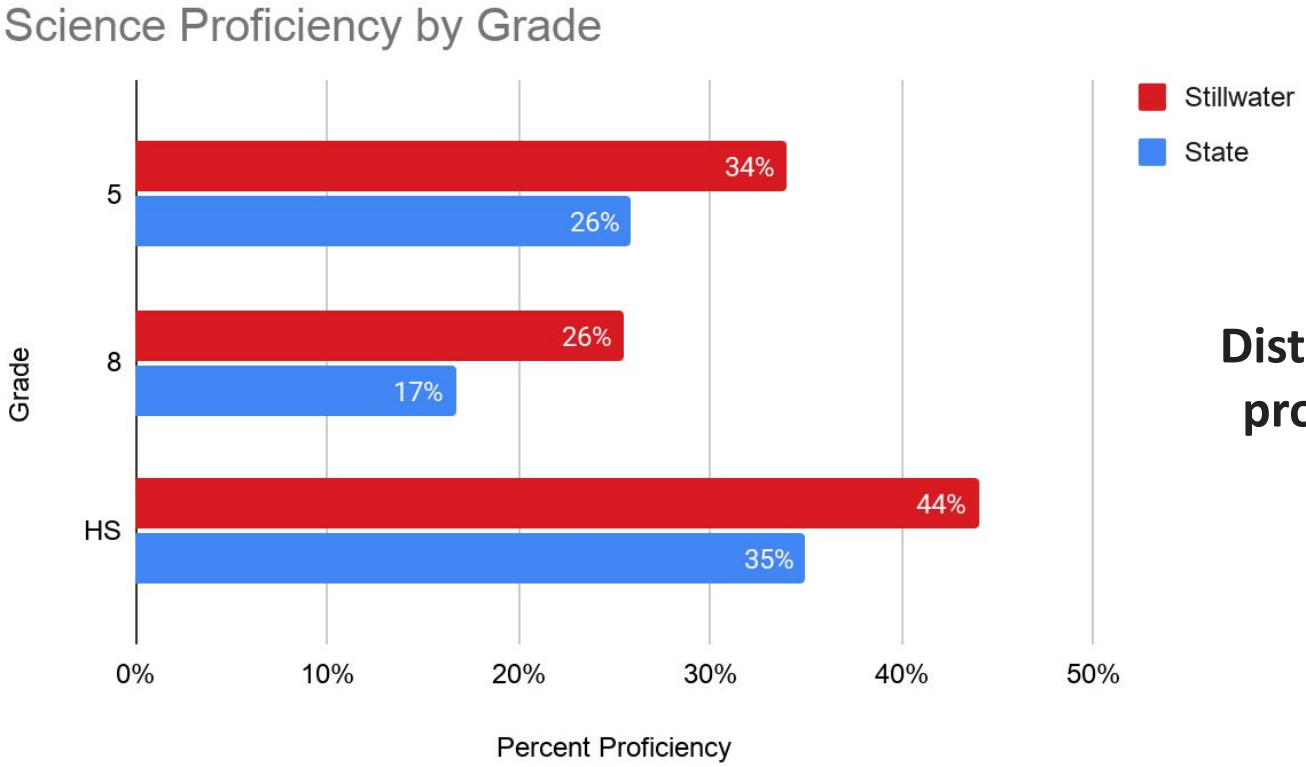
MCA Math Comparison Districts



MCA Math Key Points

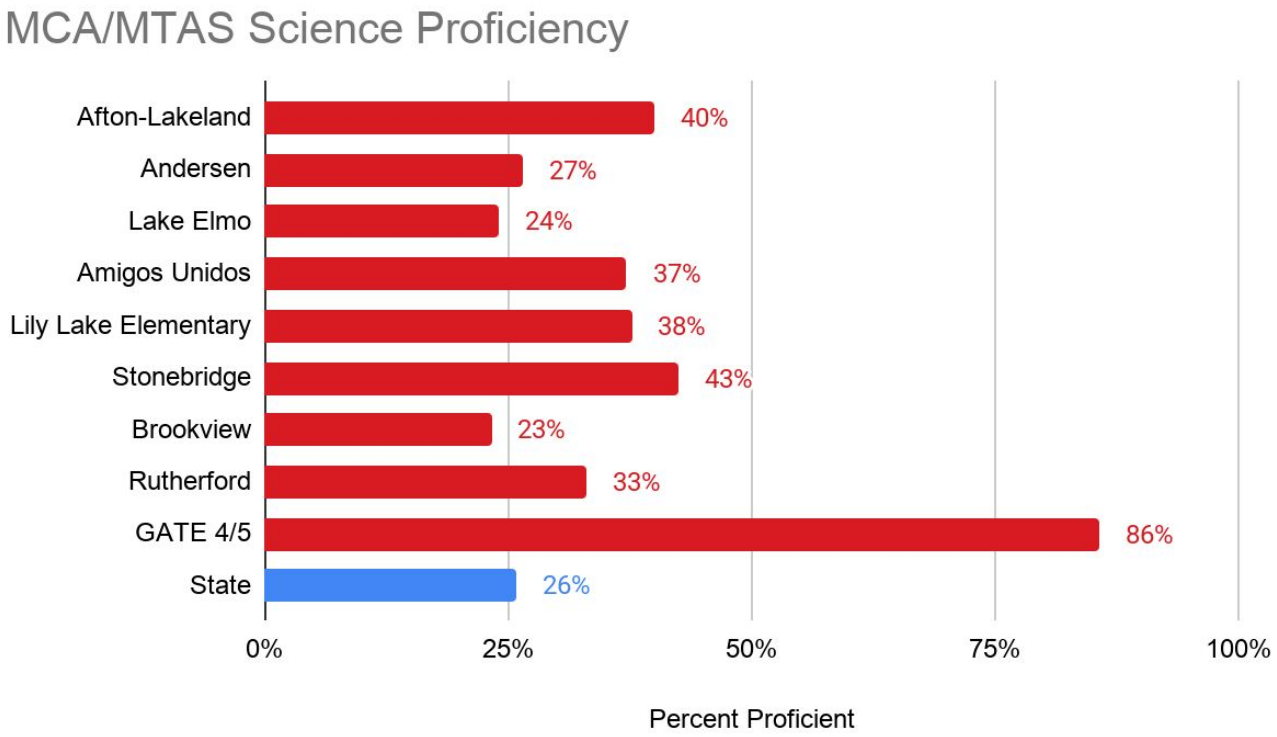
- Stillwater's MCA and MTAS scores exceed the state average across grade levels in math
- Stillwater's scores have improved since 2022 in math, with growth across grade levels -- particular growth at the HS in 2026 and sustained growth in grade 5
- Significant variation by schools
- Persistent achievement gaps exist between student groups, with the starkest gaps by family income level and race

MCA Science By Grade

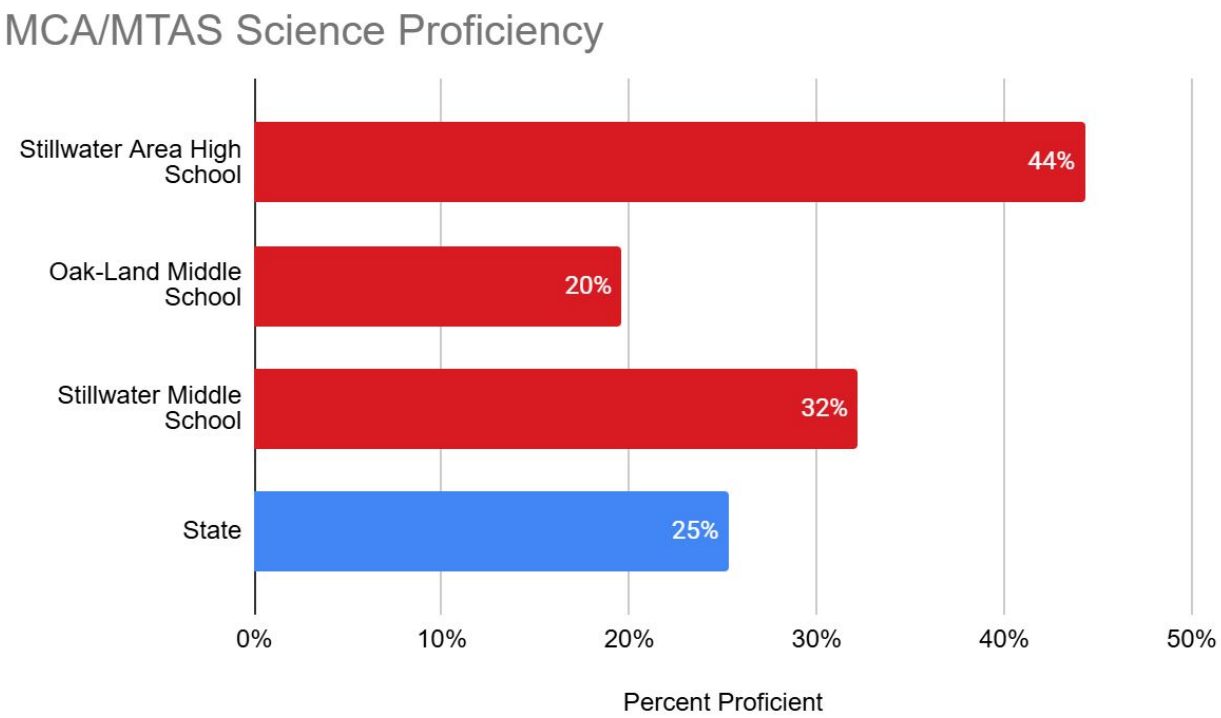


Districtwide science proficiency is 34%

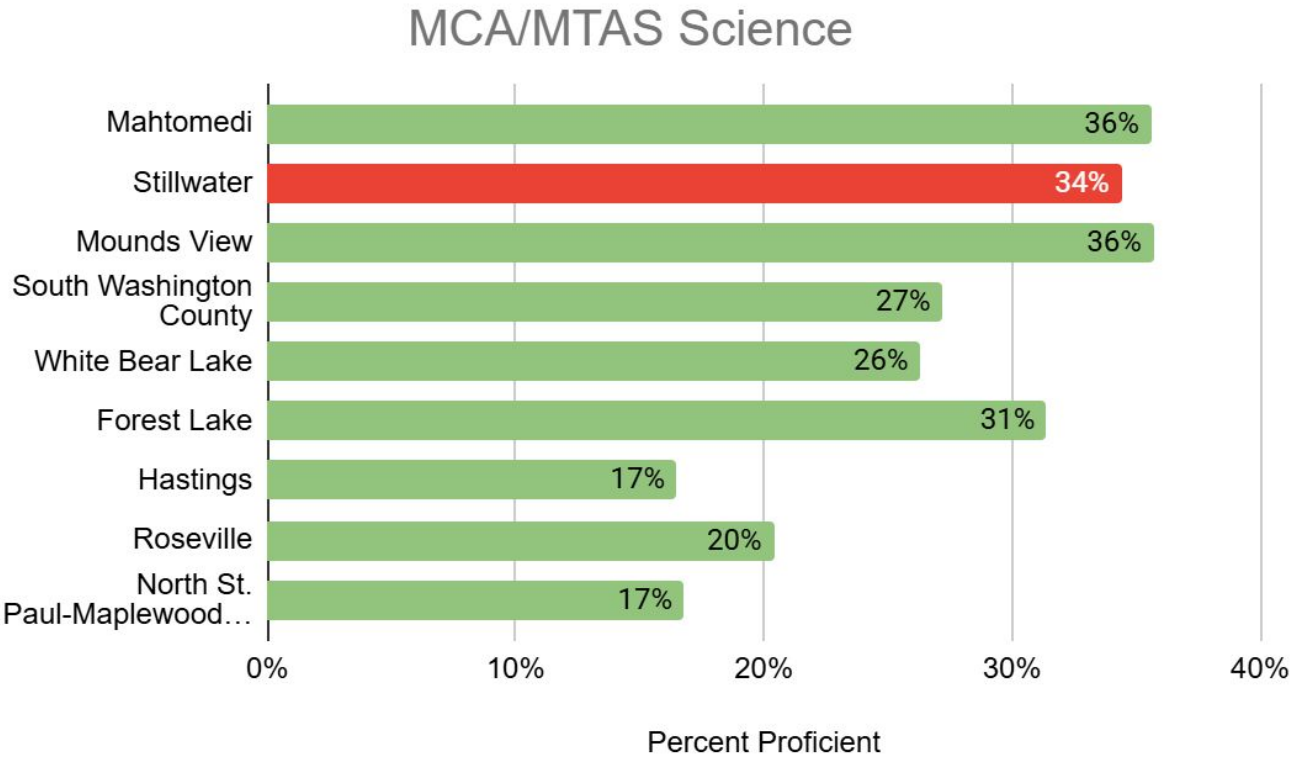
MCA Science By School



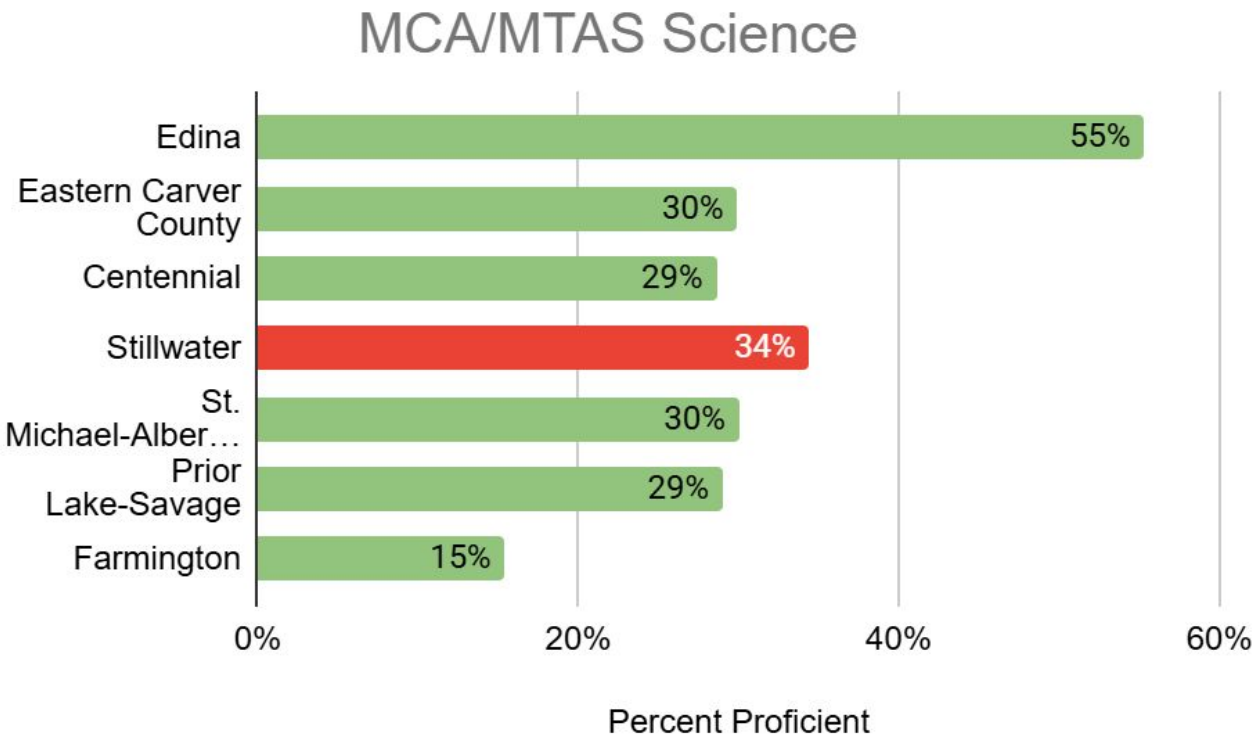
MCA Science By School



MCA Science Comparison East Metro



MCA Science Comparison Like District



MCA Science Key Points

- Stillwater's MCA and MTAS scores exceed the state average across grade levels in science
- Statewide achievement levels reflect amount of work to be done to meet the rigor of the new benchmarks
- Significant variation by schools and grade bands
- Persistent achievement gaps exist between student groups, with the starkest gaps by family income level and race

Next Steps

- Continue to monitor literacy implementation
- Evaluate math pilot for future curriculum adoption
- Address variation across schools and grade bands
- Use school-level data for improvement planning

Questions

High School Schedule Implementation Update

School Board Study Session
Oct. 13, 2026

A Strategic Investment

KEY QUESTION

Are students finding more reasons to choose/stay with Stillwater Area High School?

The investment was designed to expand student choice while strengthening enrollment and retention.

More electives

- College + career pathways
- Online learning
- Greater flexibility
- Stronger connection to SAHS

Expanded Opportunities

+8
additional elective opportunities over four years

7
courses in a student's daily schedule

29
students enrolled in associate degree (AA) program

44
students enrolled in the transfer curriculum program

24
students in the Certified Nursing Assistant program

Students can now combine SAHS courses, electives, online learning, college credit and career pathways in a more individualized high school experience.

Early indicators based on preliminary data

Online Courses

Year	# of online courses
2026-27	**600**
2025-26	720
2024-25	378

Students are taking fewer online courses through external vendors

Students are taking more online courses at SAHS

Year	Semester 1	Semester 2	Total
2026-27	**914**	**874**	**1,788**
2025-26	413	180	593

# of courses taken

PSEO Enrollment

Fewer students are leaving campus for post-secondary enrollment options classes

= Significant cost savings to the district

Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) early indicators based on preliminary data

	Semester 1	Semester 2	Total
2026-27	**838**	**675**	**1,513**
2025-26	1,017	1,001	2,018

Enrollment by period

Meeting Our Students Needs

MORE WAYS TO EARN CREDIT. MORE WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED.

- SAHS courses + electives
- Concurrent enrollment
- AA coursework
- Online coursework
- CNA + career pathways
- PSEO when it fits

Connection matters: teachers + classmates | activities + athletics |support + belonging | broader course opportunities

Early Schedule Feedback

WHAT THEY LIKE

- Overall reaction to the modified block schedule is generally positive
- Students like having more time in hands-on classes.
- Many teachers are adapting instruction to longer class periods

WHAT WE ARE WATCHING

- “All Days” feel long; math and science can be harder to adapt
- Every-other-day contact affects progress in some classes (ie. language, music, math)
- Pony Pursuits
- Prep time and workload

Pony Pursuits

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

- Not all students are engaging in Pony Pursuits
- Some students leave rather than participate
- Sign-up and attendance are difficult to manage
- Limited access to different clubs and activities

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- Career exploration
- Academic intervention
- Clubs + activities
- Homework + study
- Work-based learning
- Pathways + credentials

NEXT STEP: Refine the flexible-time model to better balance student prep + academic support + enrichment + connection.

How We Will Measure ROI

RETURN ON INVESTMENT =

ACCESS
More courses + electives

OPPORTUNITY
AA, CNA, online + college credit

RETENTION
Resident students choosing SAHS

EXPERIENCE
Student + staff feedback

ACHIEVEMENT
Credit attainment + course success

SUSTAINABILITY
Enrollment + resource impact

FALL: implementation + early demand | WINTER: experience + adjustments | SPRING: enrollment, retention + outcomes

Next Steps

- Survey staff and students regarding experiences with new schedule
    - Consider opportunities to improve the block schedule for the future based on this feedback



Questions