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BEATING THE ODDS REPORT: STUDENT GROWTH IN MISSOURI'S HIGHEST POVERTY SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

In this second publication in the Policy Research in Missouri Education (PRiME) Center's 2022 Growth Report series, we highlight the schools that are “beating the odds” across the state by moving the needle on student learning while serving high concentrations of low-income students as measured by the percentage of students identified as eligible for the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) program. In the first report of our 2022 Growth Report series, Missouri Statewide Student Growth, we focused on overall statewide student growth in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for schoolwide and Subgroup achievement. We divided the rankings by elementary, eleMiddle, and middle schools and showed the wide range in the types of schools across the state with outstanding student growth. Importantly, this report offered a first glimpse into the learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student growth was disrupted in schools across the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, high-poverty schools were disproportionately affected (Lewis & Kuhfeld, 2021). Relative to previous years, national data from fall 2021 indicated students in low-poverty schools were 2–4 percentage points behind in reading and 4–11 percentage points behind in math. Meanwhile, in high-poverty schools, students were 4–11 percentage points below in reading and 8–16 percentage points below in math (Lewis & Kuhfeld, 2021), which further widened the achievement gap.

While this achievement gap is a cause for concern, in our 2022 Missouri Statewide Growth Report, we found that the top-growth schools vary by socio-demographic background of the students served. In fact, many high-poverty schools across the state have shown exceptional growth, even in the midst of a national pandemic. This Beating the Odds Report calls attention to these schools.

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The PRiME Center asserts that policymakers, educators, and parents need to know and understand the progress students and schools are making from year to year. Examining student growth scores on the MAP is one way to do that. The PRiME Growth Score indicates which schools are moving students toward or beyond proficiency even if some students at these schools start the year far behind their peers when examining proficiency rates.

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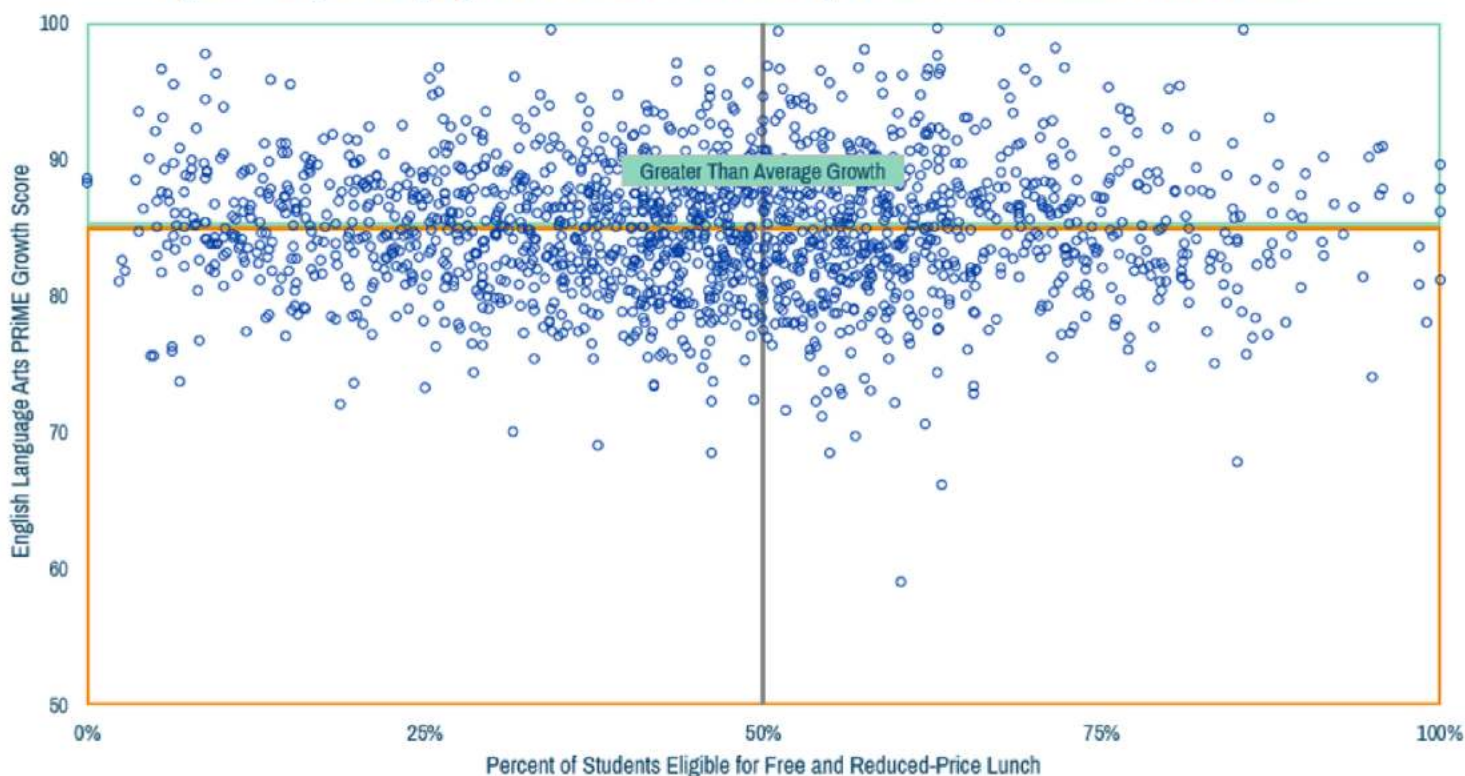
In our first publication, we explained that the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) is the standardized assessment in Missouri that measures the extent to which students have learned what is expected at specific grade levels in elementary and middle school and for end-of-course exams in high school. School-level results are most often publicly reported as the fraction of students that earn scores of proficient or advanced on these assessments. The results are a useful measure of student achievement at a single point in time but fail to adequately communicate how much (or little) students learn over time. For educators and policymakers to understand students' progress toward learning goals, a measure of progress over time—known as a student growth score—is more helpful.

The importance of examining student growth for a more full picture of school effectiveness is even more apparent when looking at the performance of schools that serve high concentrations of low-income students. Single point-in-time achievement scores, often reported as the percentage of students who score in the proficient or advanced categories, can undersell the performance of schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty. For this “beating the odds” report, we focus on the schools across the state that achieve high student growth scores while serving high concentrations of students who are eligible for the free or reduced lunch (FRL) program. We believe it is especially important to recognize these schools as they face many unique barriers to succeed at moving students forward at incredible rates.

Single point-in-time achievement scores can undersell the performance of schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty.

Research indicates that poverty does not determine the effectiveness of a school (Reardon, 2019). We emphasize this finding using Missouri data in Figure 1. There is almost no relationship between the percentage of students participating in the FRL program and a school's growth score (correlation = -0.02). This means that schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty and those serving very low concentrations of students in poverty are essentially equally as likely to demonstrate levels of growth that are higher than predicted.

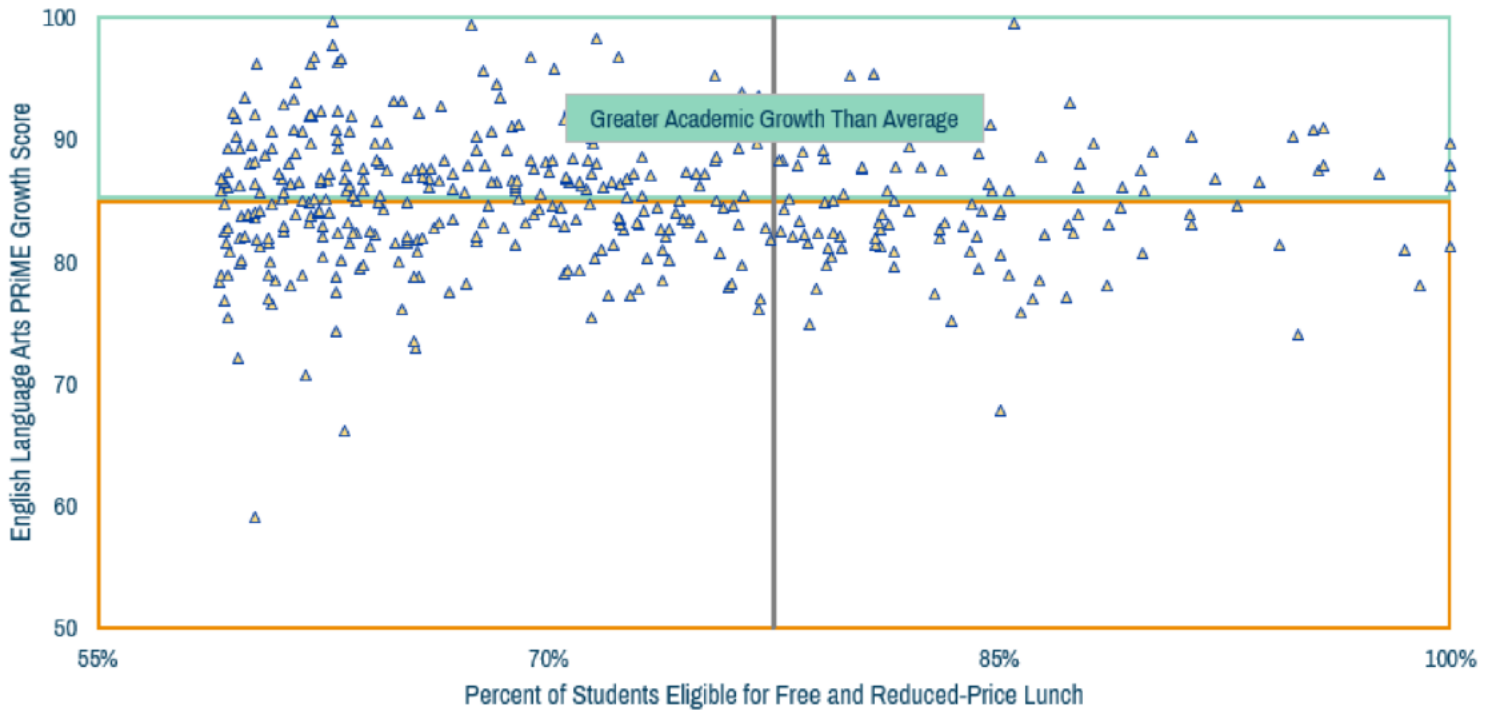
Figure 1 : English Language Arts PRiME Growth Score by School FRL %, Missouri Public Schools



When we examine growth only for those schools with the highest percentages (59% and higher) of students participating in FRL (Figure 2), the relationship is essentially the same (correlation = -0.03). This means that schools serving the highest concentrations of students in poverty—such as schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision—have the same likelihood to exhibit greater than average expected growth. All these schools are serving high concentrations of students in poverty, but there is wide variation in the amount of academic growth students are experiencing at these schools. While we have shown the relationship between the percentage of students participating in FRL and growth in English Language Arts, the relationship is nearly identical when examining growth in math.

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Figure 2 : English Language Arts PRiME Growth Score by School FRL %, Schools Serving High Concentrations of Students in Poverty



In our 2022 Growth Report series, we report the 2021 PRiME Growth Scores for schools across the state. The PRiME Growth Score is a translation of DESE’s 2020-21 Missouri Growth Model score, which reflects average annual student growth between the 2016-2017 school year and the 2017-2018 school year, the 2017-2018 school year and the 2018-2019 school year, and the 2018-2019 school year and the 2020-2021 school year. Notably, standardized test scores were not administered during the 2019-20 school year; thus, this year’s growth scores provide a first look at student growth during the pandemic.

Any schools for which 2021 PRiME Growth Scores are unavailable or yet to be attained—such as schools with untested grades—are excluded from this report. This transformation of scores does not alter the ordering of the Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) growth scores provided by DESE; rather, it places the same scores on a scale that widens the distribution and is more like a percentage score that one might see on a report card. That is, growth scores in the high 90s are very good and scores in the low 70s are quite low. We believe the PRiME Growth Score makes the existing DESE growth measure more familiar and thus understandable to education stakeholders.

To better understand how the PRiME Center used the Missouri Growth Model measure and translated the state’s scale to help educators and the public better understand its significance, please refer to the 2022 Missouri Statewide Student Growth Report found at www.sluprime.org.

DEFINITIONS

- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)—a special non-pricing school meal funding option of the National School Lunch Program that enables schools and school districts in low-income areas to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting household applications (USDA, 2022).
- Elementary schools—schools that serve students no older than the sixth grade.
- EleMiddle schools—schools with grades in both elementary and middle schools ranges. For example, a K–8 school would be included in the rankings of eleMiddle schools with top student Growth Scores.
- Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL)—a proxy measure for students' socioeconomic need. In Missouri, schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) are listed as 100% FRL eligible. We report FRL as the percentage of students identified as FRL eligible at each school within districts using the CEP.
- MAP—the Missouri Assessment Program is used to measure how well students acquire the skills and knowledge described in Missouri's Learning Standards (MLS) (DESE, 2021). MAP tests are administered in Grades 3–8 and as End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in high school.
- Middle schools—schools that range from sixth grade through twelfth grade. These schools have three years of tests included in the Growth Scores in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.
- Missouri Learning Standards—DESE defines these as “the knowledge and skills students need in each grade level and course for success in college, other post-secondary training and careers” (DESE, 2016).
- Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE)—NCE scores, or Normal Curve Equivalent scores, are a method of reporting test scores created for the U.S. Department of Education. They range from 1 to 99 with a mean of 50, similar to percentiles.
- Proficiency levels—on the MAP tests, proficiency levels include advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. Scoring proficient or advanced indicates that a student has mastered learning standards for their grade level at that point in time.
- Rebounding—NWEA defines this as "patterns of achievement gains that mirror or exceed pre-pandemic trends" (Kuhfeld & Lewis, 2022).
- Student growth—the change in achievement (as measured by the Missouri Assessment Program ELA and math assessments) for an individual student between two or more points in time (DESE, 2013).
- Subgroup achievement—Subgroup includes students receiving free and reduced-price lunch, Black and Hispanic students, English language learners (ELL), and students with disabilities (DESE, 2015). FRL percentages of individual schools were used for districts within the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).





OVERALL RESULTS

This publication (the second in a series of three reports) highlights the schools achieving top student growth while serving high concentrations of low-income students. We define these “high poverty” schools as schools where the student body eligible for FRL is in the fourth quartile. Essentially, these schools serve the highest proportion of students eligible for the FRL program.

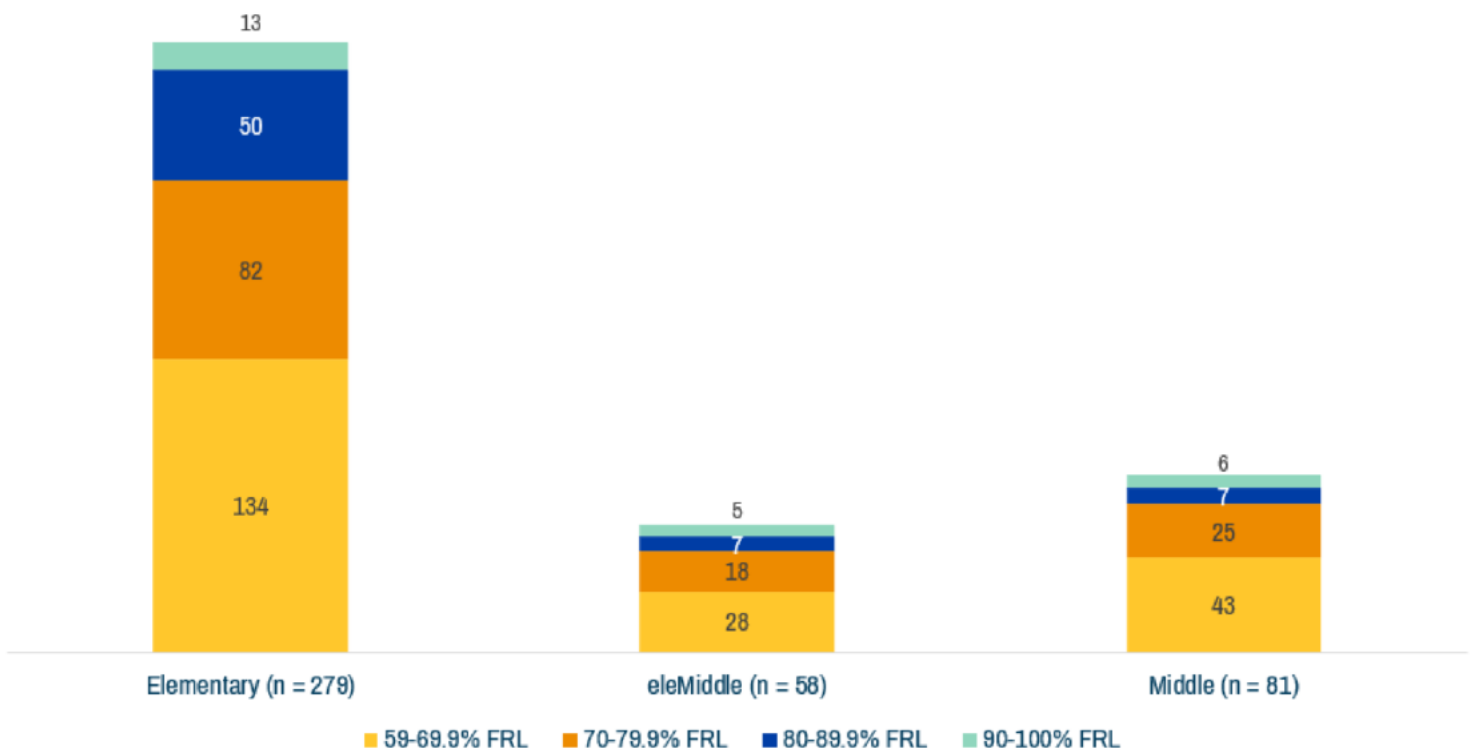
We define these “high poverty” schools as schools where the student body eligible for FRL is in the fourth quartile. Essentially, these schools serve the highest proportion of students eligible for the FRL program.

We divide our results into three sections according to school type: elementary, eleMiddle, and middle. We intend to group schools based on similarity in grade levels tested to avoid comparing dissimilar schools. For the purposes of this report, we rely on DESE’s categorization of schools for the basis of our groups. Therefore, elementary schools are defined as schools that serve students no older than the sixth grade. Middle schools are defined as schools that range from sixth grade through twelfth grade. These schools have three years of tests included in the PRiME Growth Scores in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. We want to note that there are a few schools that overlap, in which case we rely on the DESE categorization of schools and the school’s name to place it into a school type. Schools that serve grades spanning across the elementary and middle school categories are designated as eleMiddle schools. For example, this category includes PreK-8, K-8, PreK-7, K-7, 4-12, and 3-8 schools.

For each school type, the threshold for being considered a school serving high concentrations of students in poverty is calculated based on the distribution of the percentage of FRL-eligible students in each school. The percentage of students eligible for FRL ranges from 2% to 100% in elementary schools; 5% to 100% in eleMiddle schools; and 15% to 100% in middle schools. We consider schools to be “high poverty” schools if they fall within the top quartile of this range, making the threshold 59.1% for elementary schools, 59.1% for eleMiddle schools, and 59.2% for middle schools.

We present the number of schools included in the fourth quartile based on the above mentioned thresholds and school FRL percentage in Figure 3. Importantly, schools or districts participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) in Missouri report a blanket FRL eligibility of 100%. However, a school or school district is CEP eligible if at least 40% of their enrolled students qualify for FRL, making the reported FRL percentage flawed. In this year's report, we provide a more accurate measure of students' socioeconomic need by reporting the percentage of FRL eligible students at individual schools participating in the CEP by using data from DESE's Food and Nutrition Services. Notably, this may result in varying FRL percentages from our 2021 Growth Reports. For more details of the CEP in Missouri, see PRiME's evidence primer on "The Community Eligibility Provision and Student Outcomes" (Shelton, 2020) available at www.sluprime.org.

Figure 3 : Number of Schools in Fourth Quartile, by School FRL%



In each section, we present the PRiME Growth Scores for schools for each of the two main MAP tests (ELA and mathematics) for all tested students. This results in six total categories of top schools featured in this report. Because there is variability in the total number of schools in each school type category statewide (1,011 elementary schools, 164 eleMiddle schools, and 501 middle schools), the number of schools observed in this report varies as well. For this report, our sample of elementary schools covers 279 schools, 58 eleMiddle schools, and 81 middle schools that each fall into the top-quartile of the percentage of students participating in the FRL program. Over the coming pages, we highlight the top 30 elementary schools, top 10 eleMiddle schools, and top 15 middle schools in each category. Notably, we highlight a differing number of schools in each school type category because the number of schools in the fourth quartile for each school type varies.

These rankings show the schools across the state that are going above and beyond to foster student learning as demonstrated by each school's PRiME Growth Score. These tables indicate the percentage of students eligible for FRL. In this column, higher percentages are generally associated with higher poverty schools. To offer more context of the school, we also include the school enrollment, the percent of students who score proficient and advanced on MAP tests (MAP Prof. & Adv.), and the district and region in which the school is located.

Statewide, 1,679 schools (across 549 districts and nine regions) have 2021 PRiME Growth Scores. Schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 59.1 to 103.1 while schoolwide math PRiME Growth Scores range from 62.7 to 104.9. While a very small number of schools earned scores above 100, we do cap our PRiME Growth Scores at 100 in the following tables in keeping with our objective to present these scores on a scale that is familiar to most readers.

The schools on the top ranked lists have varying starting points (in terms of proficiency levels) on state assessments. However, many schools on the top ranked lists have proficiency rates lower than 50%. Thus, this PRiME Growth Score can reveal excellent academic growth in schools that may have been otherwise overlooked.



SECTION A: ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BEATING THE ODDS

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri elementary schools that are “beating the odds,” achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students. We present the PRiME Growth Scores for ELA in Table 1 and math in Table 2.

Our rankings highlight 47 different elementary schools with the highest PRiME Growth Scores. Thirteen schools received top Growth Scores in both ELA and math and appear on both lists in this section. The schools that appear on both lists include: Benton Elementary (Neosho School District), Central Elementary (Neosho School District), Gladstone Elementary (Kansas City 33), Humansville Elementary (Humansville R-IV), Jefferson Elementary (Boonville R-I), Longfellow Elementary (Kansas City 33), Matthews Elementary (New Madrid Co. R-I), Monett Intermediate (Monett R-I), Parkview Elementary (Sedalia 200), Richland Elementary (Richland R-I), Senath-Hornersville Elementary (Senath-Hornersville C-8), South Harrison Elementary (South Harrison Co. R-II) and York Elementary (Springfield R-XII).

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri elementary schools that are "beating the odds," achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students.

For this report, we focus on the 279 elementary schools with a FRL percentage in the fourth quartile (higher than 59.1%). Across these elementary schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty, schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 67.8 to 103.1 and schoolwide math Growth Scores range from 71.3 to 99.8. Statewide, there are 1,011 elementary schools with PRiME Growth Scores located in 453 districts and nine regions across Missouri. Schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 67.5 to 102.6 and math Growth Scores range from 69.2 to 102.4. For simplicity and clarity in the tables that follow, we cap the growth scores at 100 and round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. As there is such a large number of elementary schools in the state, we’re only capturing a tiny slice of schools that are performing well in terms of growth in the top 30 lists. To check out other schools who are top performing, refer to our downloadable data file available with the 2022 Statewide Student Growth Report at www.sluprime.org/education-reports.

Several schools appearing on the following two lists are also among the top achieving schools in the state, regardless of student demographics. However, many elementary schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty highlighted in this section (29) were not among the Top 20 statewide. By narrowing in on high-poverty schools, we highlight schools with excellent student growth who may have been otherwise overlooked. These schools include: Advance Academy (Advance R-IV), Anderson Elementary (McDonald Co. R-I), Benton Elementary (Neosho School District), Bernie Elementary (Bernie R-XIII), Blue Eye Elementary (Blue Eye R-V), Bryan Hill Elementary (St. Louis Public Schools), Central Elementary (Neosho School District), David Barton Elementary (Boonville R-I), Gladstone Elementary (Kansas City 33), Grundy Co. Elementary (Grundy Co. R-V), Jefferson Elementary (Joplin Schools), Jeffries Elementary (Springfield R-XII), Longfellow Elementary (Kansas City 33), Millennium at Sante Fe (Hickman Mills C-1), Morgan Co. Elementary (Morgan Co. R-II), Osceola Elementary (Osceola), Parkview Elementary (Sedalia 200), Rich Hill Elementary (Rich Hill R-IV), Sante Fe Trail Elementary (Independence 30), Sheldon Elementary (Sheldon R-VIII), Southeast Elementary (Sikeston R-6), The Arch Community School (The Arch Community School), Thomas Hart Benton Elementary (Independence 30), Van Buren Elementary (Van Buren R-I), Westran Elementary (Westran R-I), Westridge Elementary (Raytown C-2), Wheaton Elementary (Wheaton R-III), Wildwood Elementary (Sarcoxie R-II), and William Southern Elementary (Independence 30).

Notably, the top-growth elementary schools in each category vary widely in their proficiency rates. While several schools have both high PRiME Growth Scores and high proficiency rates, many top-growth schools have low proficiency rates.

Notably, the top-growth elementary schools in each category vary widely in their proficiency rates. While several schools have both high PRiME Growth Scores and high proficiency rates, many top-growth schools have low proficiency rates. For example, as shown in Table 1, Richland Elementary in the Richland R-I School District achieved the No. 3 ELA PRiME Growth Score for elementary schools with high percentages of FRL-participating students (66.5) with most (87.7%) of their students performing at proficient or advanced levels. Meanwhile, only 15.9% of the students at Longfellow Elementary in the Kansas City 33 School District are proficient or advanced. Yet, this school achieved the No. 24 ELA Growth Score for elementary schools with a PRiME Growth Score of 92.7. Longfellow Elementary represents a very important reason for highlighting growth. This is a school where the data reveal a great deal of student growth; thus, good things are happening that would not be apparent from a simple review of proficiency rates.

Only 15.9% of the students at Longfellow Elementary in the Kansas City 33 School District are proficient or advanced. Yet, this school achieved the No. 24 ELA Growth Score for elementary schools with a PRiME Growth Score of 92.7.

Table 1: Beating the Odds - Top English Language Arts Growth, Elementary Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	KIPP Victory Academy*	100.0	10.5%	590	78.1%	KIPP St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
2	Matthews Elem.*	100.0	83.3%	140	59.2%	New Madrid Co. R-I	Bootheel
3	Richland Elem.	99.9	87.7%	147	66.5%	Richland R-I	Bootheel
4	Monett Intermediate	99.3	48.2%	336	62.8%	Monett R-I	Southwestern
5	York Elem.	99.1	45.1%	195	85.5%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
6	Senath-Hornersville Elem.	97.8	50.5%	270	71.6%	Senath-Hornersville C-8	Bootheel
7	Neelyville Elem.	97.2	58.8%	196	62.8%	Neelyville R-IV	Bootheel
8	Benton Elem.	96.4	40.7%	464	72.3%	Neosho School District	Southwestern
9	Delaware Elem.	96.3	38.4%	211	62.2%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
10	South Harrison Elem.	96.2	50.0%	309	63.1%	South Harrison Co. R-II	Northwestern
11	Parkview Elem.	95.8	55.7%	475	60.3%	Sedalia 200	Western Plains
12	Humansville Elem.	95.7	30.1%	149	62.1%	Humansville R-IV	Southwestern
13	Wing Elem.	95.3	34.3%	354	70.2%	Sikeston R-6	Bootheel
14	Anderson Elem.	95.2	55.2%	436	67.8%	Mcdonald Co. R-I	Southwestern
15	Thomas Hart Benton Elem.	95.0	29.4%	408	80.8%	Independence 30	Kansas City
16	Central Elem.	94.9	31.1%	194	75.5%	Neosho School District	Southwestern
17	Gladstone Elem.	94.1	25.9%	343	68.3%	Kansas City 33	Kansas City
18	Wildwood Elem.	93.4	36.0%	275	76.4%	Sarcoxie R-II	Southwestern
19	Jefferson Elem.	93.1	42.1%	188	77.0%	Joplin Schools	Southwestern
20	David Barton Elem.	93.0	35.1%	311	68.4%	Boonville R-I	Central
21	William Southern Elem.	92.8	36.4%	401	61.5%	Independence 30	Kansas City
22	Southeast Elem.	92.7	33.6%	285	64.9%	Sikeston R-6	Bootheel
23	Bernie Elem.	92.7	65.1%	286	65.1%	Bernie R-XIII	Bootheel
24	Longfellow Elem.	92.7	15.9%	182	87.3%	Kansas City 33	Kansas City
25	Grundy Co. Elem.	92.5	29.6%	60	71.4%	Grundy Co. R-V	Northwestern
26	Jeffries Elem.	92.3	40.1%	425	66.4%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
27	Advance Elem.	92.0	63.1%	236	63.0%	Advance R-IV	Bootheel
28	Westran Elem.	92.0	45.2%	253	62.4%	Westran R-I	Northeastern
29	Morgan Co. Elem.	91.7	44.4%	501	62.1%	Morgan Co. R-II	Central
30	Westridge Elem.	91.6	19.5%	326	75.3%	Raytown C-2	Kansas City

* For simplicity and clarity, PRiME caps growth scores at 100. In reality, some schools may have growth scores above 100. We also round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. You can explore more in the downloadable data file available at www.sluprime.org/education-reports.

Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 1:

- KIPP Victory Academy in St. Louis is the top elementary school beating the odds in ELA, with a PRiME Growth Score of 100. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 1 in ELA schoolwide and Subgroup achievement).
- Two schools, KIPP Victory Academy and Matthews Elementary earned PRiME Growth Scores over 100.
- Proficiency rates vary from 10.5% to 87.7%.

Table 2: Beating the Odds - Top Mathematics Growth, Elementary Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	Matthews Elem.*	100.0	79.6%	140	59.2%	New Madrid Co. R-I	Bootheel
2	Froebel Elem.	99.0	5.9%	148	82.4%	St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
3	Humansville Elem.	98.5	20.4%	149	62.1%	Humansville R-IV	Southwestern
4	Niangua Elem.	97.8	11.1%	161	66.2%	Niangua R-V	Southwestern
5	Gladstone Elem.	96.6	16.2%	343	68.3%	Kansas City 33	Kansas City
6	Craig Elem.	96.4	-	34	94.3%	Craig R-III	Northwestern
7	Risco Elem.	96.0	32.1%	101	70.5%	Risco R-II	Bootheel
8	York Elem.	95.5	34.1%	195	85.5%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
9	Hope Leadership Academy	95.4	-	116	84.7%	Hope Leadership Academy	Kansas City
10	Parkview Elem.	94.8	50.3%	475	60.3%	Sedalia 200	Western Plains
11	Monett Intermediate	94.6	34.4%	336	62.8%	Monett R-I	Southwestern
12	Richland Elem.	94.4	79.5%	147	66.5%	Richland R-I	Bootheel
13	Bryan Hill Elem.	94.1	-	130	78.3%	St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
14	Oak Hill Elem.	93.9	12.7%	191	62.2%	St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
15	Jefferson Elem.	93.8	33.3%	188	77.0%	Joplin Schools	Southwestern
16	Osceola Elem.	93.8	54.7%	236	60.2%	Osceola	Western Plains
17	Washington Elem.	93.7	44.4%	233	70.8%	Sedalia 200	Western Plains
18	Longfellow Elem.	93.5	9.5%	182	87.3%	Kansas City 33	Kansas City
19	Van Buren Elem.	93.5	50.0%	243	67.9%	Van Buren R-I	Bootheel
20	The Arch Community School	93.3	-	88	89.1%	The Arch Community School	St. Louis
21	Santa Fe Trail Elem.	93.1	38.9%	286	75.9%	Independence 30	Kansas City
22	Blue Eye Elem.	93.0	36.8%	158	59.6%	Blue Eye R-V	Southwestern
23	Rich Hill Elem.	92.8	47.9%	142	61.8%	Rich Hill R-IV	Western Plains
24	Millennium at Sante Fe	92.7	15.7%	300	72.8%	Hickman Mills C-1	Kansas City
25	Sheldon Elem.	92.0	47.7%	88	70.6%	Sheldon R-VIII	Southwestern
26	South Harrison Elem.	92.0	40.2%	309	63.1%	South Harrison Co. R-II	Northwestern
27	Wheaton Elem.	91.8	31.7%	239	61.0%	Wheaton R-III	Southwestern
28	Senath-Hornersville Elem.	91.6	53.6%	270	71.6%	Senath-Hornersville C-8	Bootheel
29	Central Elem.	91.5	28.4%	194	75.5%	Neosho School District	Southwestern
30	Benton Elem.	91.4	34.6%	464	72.3%	Neosho School District	Southwestern

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Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 2:

- Matthews Elementary in the bootheel is the top elementary school beating the odds, with a PRiME Growth Score of 100. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 2 in math schoolwide achievement No. 3 in math Subgroup achievement).
- Froebel Elementary in St. Louis is a great example of a school beating the odds, with a proficiency rate of 5.9% while earning the No. 2 spot with a PRiME Growth Score of 99.0.
- Proficiency rates range from 5.9% to 79.6%.



SECTION B: ELEMIDDLE SCHOOLS BEATING THE ODDS

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri eleMiddle schools that are “beating the odds,” achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students. We present the PRiME Growth Scores for ELA in Table 3 and math in Table 4.

Our rankings highlight 13 different eleMiddle schools with the highest PRiME Growth Scores. Seven schools received top Growth Scores in both ELA and math and appear on both lists in this section. The schools that appear on both lists include: Gasconade Elementary (Gasconade C-4), Green Forest Elementary (Green Forest R-II), Manes Elementary (Manes R-V), North Wood Elementary (North Wood R-IV), Oak Hill Elementary (Oak Hill R-I), Scuola Vita Nuova Charter (Scuola Vita Nuova), and Thornfield Elementary (Thornfield R-I).

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri eleMiddle schools that are "beating the odds," achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students.

There are 164 eleMiddle schools with PRiME Growth Scores located in 146 districts and nine regions across Missouri. Schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 70.9 to 101.5 and math Growth Scores range from 71.6 to 99.4. For this report, we focus on the 58 eleMiddle schools with a FRL percentage in the fourth quartile (higher than 59.1%). Across these eleMiddle schools with high percentages of FRL-eligible students, schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 72.9 to 96.3 and schoolwide math Growth Scores range from 75.2 to 101.1.

Several schools appearing on the following two lists are also among the top achieving schools in the state, regardless of student demographics. However, some eleMiddle schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty highlighted in this section were not among the Top 20 statewide. By narrowing in on high-poverty schools, we highlight schools with excellent student growth who may have been otherwise overlooked. These schools include: Richards Elementary (Richards R-V), Skyline Elementary (Skyline R-II), and Thornfield Elementary (Thornfield R-I).

The top ranked eleMiddle schools in this report have proficiency rates ranging from 28% to 72.7%. While several schools have proficiency rates in the middle of this range, many top-growth schools have low proficiency rates.

Notably, the top-growth eleMiddle schools in each category vary widely in their proficiency rates. The top ranked eleMiddle schools in this report have proficiency rates ranging from 28% to 72.7%. While several schools have proficiency rates in the middle of this range, many top-growth schools have low proficiency rates. For example, as shown in Table 3, Thornfield Elementary in Thornfield R-1 achieved the No. 10 ELA PRiME Growth Score (89.3) with only 28% of students performing at proficient or advanced levels. In table 4, we see another example in Scuola Vita Nuova Charter who achieved the No. 8 math PRiME Growth Score (91.9) with less than one-third of students (30.4%) performing at proficient or advanced levels. These are schools where the data reveal a great deal of student growth; thus, good things are happening that would not be apparent from a simple review of proficiency rates.

In Table 4, we see another example in Scuola Vita Nuova Charter who achieved the No. 8 math PRiME Growth Score (91.9) with less than one-third of students (30.4%) performing at proficient or advanced levels. This is a school where the data reveal a great deal of student growth.

Table 3: Beating the Odds - Top English Language Arts Growth, EleMiddle Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	Gasconade Elem.	95.7	29.3%	76	63.0%	Gasconade C-4	Southwestern
2	Woodland Middle	94.0	47.8%	271	61.6%	Woodland R-IV	Bootheel
3	Green Forest Elem.	92.2	57.7%	188	77.1%	Green Forest R-II	Ozarks
4	St Louis Lang. Immersion Sch	92.0	39.9%	460	61.2%	St. Louis Lang. Immersion Sch	St. Louis
5	Oak Hill Elem.	91.8	31.4%	121	70.7%	Oak Hill R-I	Ozarks
6	Scuola Vita Nuova Charter	91.4	37.4%	339	79.9%	Scuola Vita Nuova	Kansas City
7	North Wood Elem.	91.4	47.1%	201	59.5%	North Wood R-IV	Ozarks
8	Manes Elem.	91.1	31.3%	50	77.6%	Manes R-V	Southwestern
9	Richards Elem.	89.9	39.5%	337	61.5%	Richards R-V	Ozarks
10	Thornfield Elem.	89.3	28.0%	32	67.6%	Thornfield R-I	Southwestern

* For simplicity and clarity, PRiME caps growth scores at 100. In reality, some schools may have growth scores above 100. We also round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. You can explore more in the downloadable data file available at www.sluprime.org/education-reports.

Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 3:

- Gasconade Elementary in southwestern Missouri is the top eleMiddle school beating the odds, with a PRiME Growth Score of 95.7. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 3 in ELA schoolwide and Subgroup achievement).
- Four schools on this list (Gasconade Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, Manes Elementary, and Thornfield Elementary) have less than one-third of students performing at proficient or advanced levels.
- Proficiency rates range from 28% to 57.7%.

Table 4: Beating the Odds - Top Mathematics Growth, EleMiddle Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	Manes Elem.	99.4	53.1%	50	77.6%	Manes R-V	Southwestern
2	North Wood Elem.	98.9	45.5%	201	59.5%	North Wood R-IV	Ozarks
3	Oak Hill Elem.	93.8	34.3%	121	70.7%	Oak Hill R-I	Ozarks
4	Green Forest Elem.	93.5	72.7%	188	77.1%	Green Forest R-II	Ozarks
5	Thornfield Elem.	93.4	68.0%	32	67.6%	Thornfield R-I	Southwestern
6	Skyline Elem.	93.2	48.9%	74	72.6%	Skyline R-II	Southwestern
7	Raymondville Elem.	92.8	47.6%	125	83.2%	Raymondville R-VII	Ozarks
8	Scuola Vita Nuova Charter	91.9	30.4%	339	79.9%	Scuola Vita Nuova	Kansas City
9	Gasconade Elem.	90.6	34.1%	76	63.0%	Gasconade C-4	Southwestern
10	Kairos Academies	90.5	33.0%	233	62.2%	Kairos Academies	St. Louis

* For simplicity and clarity, PRiME caps growth scores at 100. In reality, some schools may have growth scores above 100. We also round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. You can explore more in the downloadable data file available at www.slprime.org/education-reports.

Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 4:

- Manes Elementary in southwestern Missouri is the top eleMiddle school beating the odds in, with a PRiME Growth Score of 99.4. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 1 in math schoolwide and Subgroup achievement).
- More than half (6) of the schools on this list (Manes Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, Green Forest Elementary, Skyline Elementary, Raymondville Elementary, and Scuola Vita Nuova Charter) serve a student population where at least 70% of students are FRL-eligible.
- Proficiency rates range from 30.4% to 72.7%.



SECTION C: MIDDLE SCHOOL PRIME GROWTH SCORES

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri middle schools that are “beating the odds,” achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students. We present the PRiME Growth Scores for ELA in Table 5 and math in Table 6.

Our rankings highlight 21 different middle schools with the highest PRiME Growth Scores. Nine schools received top Growth Scores in both ELA and math and appear on both lists in this section. The schools that appear on both lists include: Delta C-7 High (Delta C-7), East Middle (Joplin Schools), Greenfield High (Greenfield R-IV), Guadalupe Centers Middle (Guadalupe Centers Schools), Hawthorne Middle (Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls), Humansville Middle (Humansville R-IV), Hurley High (Hurley R-I), Long International Middle School (St. Louis Public Schools), Neosho Junior High (Neosho School District).

In this section, we describe trends and present two tables highlighting the Missouri Middle schools that are "beating the odds," achieving the highest PRiME Growth Scores while serving high concentrations of low-income students.

There are 501 middle schools with PRiME Growth Scores located in 403 districts and nine regions across Missouri. Schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 59.4 to 100.8 and math Growth Scores range from 64.3 to 105.0. For this report, we focus on the 81 middle schools with a FRL percentage in the fourth quartile (higher than 59.2%). Across these middle schools serving high percentages of FRL-participating students, schoolwide ELA Growth Scores range from 59.1 to 99.4 and schoolwide math Growth Scores range from 62.7 to 100.9.

Several schools appearing on the following two lists are also among the top achieving schools in the state, regardless of student demographics. However, many middle schools serving high concentrations of students in poverty highlighted in this section (9) were not among the Top 20 statewide. By narrowing in on high-poverty schools, we highlight schools with excellent student growth who may have been otherwise overlooked. These schools include: Carr Lane VPA Middle (St. Louis Public Schools), Charleston Middle (Charleston R-I), Climax Springs High (Climax Springs R-IV), Craig High (Craig R-III), Guadalupe Centers Middle (Guadalupe Centers Schools), Humansville Middle (Humansville R-IV), North Middle (Joplin Schools), Reed Middle (Springfield R-XII), and Seymour Middle (Seymour R-II).

The top ranked middle schools shown here have proficiency rates ranging from 2.6% to 65.9%.

Notably, the top-growth middle schools in each category vary widely in their proficiency rates. The top ranked middle schools shown here have proficiency rates ranging from 2.6% to 65.9%. While several schools have proficiency rates in the middle of this range, many top-growth schools have low proficiency rates. For example, as shown in Table 6, Guadalupe Centers Middle in Guadalupe Centers Schools, which serves a student body that is nearly all (95.6%) FRL-eligible, achieved the No. 15 PRiME Growth Score for middle school math (88.6) with only 6.3% of students performing at proficient or advanced levels. This is a school where the data reveal a great deal of student growth; thus, good things are happening that would not be apparent from a simple review of proficiency rates.

Guadalupe Centers Middle in Guadalupe Centers Schools, which serves a student body that nearly all (95.6%) FRL-eligible, achieved the No. 15 PRiME Growth Score for middle school math (88.6) with only 6.3% of students performing at proficient or advanced levels.

Table 5: Beating the Odds - Top English Language Arts Growth, Middle Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	Hurley High*	100.0	37.2%	93	67.4%	Hurley R-I	Southwestern
2	Greenfield High	98.1	55.1%	195	69.4%	Greenfield R-IV	Southwestern
3	Allen Village Junior	96.5	38.0%	131	80.0%	Allen Village	Kansas City
4	Neosho Jr. High	94.7	48.6%	744	59.9%	Neosho School District	Southwestern
5	East Middle	93.5	43.8%	623	65.7%	Joplin Schools	Southwestern
6	Long International Middle School	93.1	15.1%	231	63.5%	St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
7	Reed Middle	91.3	46.0%	646	71.4%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
8	Humansville Middle	90.9	39.7%	84	100.0%	Humansville R-IV	Southwestern
9	St. James Middle	90.5	48.1%	410	60.8%	St. James R-I	Ozarks
10	Delta C-7 High	89.7	32.6%	84	73.1%	Delta C-7	Bootheel
11	Lift For Life Academy	89.5	17.6%	235	79.2%	Lift For Life Academy	St. Louis
12	Hawthorn Middle	89.4	19.6%	53	64.3%	Hawthorn Leadership Schl Girls	St. Louis
13	Carr Lane VPA Middle	89.4	10.4%	475	77.7%	St. Louis Public Schools	St. Louis
14	Jarrett Middle	88.7	40.5%	494	69.5%	Springfield R-XII	Southwestern
15	Guadalupe Centers Middle	88.6	16.6%	327	95.6%	Guadalupe Centers Schools	Kansas City

* For simplicity and clarity, PRiME caps growth scores at 100. In reality, some schools may have growth scores above 100. We also round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. You can explore more in the downloadable data file available at www.sluprime.org/education-reports.

Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 5:

- Hurley High in southwestern Missouri is the top middle school beating the odds, with a PRiME Growth Score of 100. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 1 in ELA schoolwide achievement and No. 5 in ELA Subgroup achievement).
- One school on this list (Humansville Middle) serves a student population where 100% of students are FRL-eligible.
- Proficiency rates range from 10.4% to 55.1%.

Table 6: Beating the Odds - Top Mathematics Growth, Middle Schools

Rank	School	PRiME Growth	MAP Prof. & Adv.	School Enrollment	F/R Lunch	District	Region
1	Hurley High*	100.0	49.0%	93	67.4%	Hurley R-I	Southwestern
2	Carthage Jr. High	97.5	39.2%	820	59.2%	Carthage R-IX	Southwestern
3	Hawthorn Middle	96.7	14.6%	53	64.3%	Hawthorn Leadership Schl Girls	St. Louis
4	Dora High	95.4	38.2%	165	71.1%	Dora R-III	Southwestern
5	Delta C-7 High	94.5	65.9%	84	73.1%	Delta C-7	Bootheel
6	Neosho Jr. High	94.3	40.9%	744	59.9%	Neosho School District	Southwestern
7	Long International Middle School	93.1	2.6%	231	63.5%	St. Louis City	St. Louis
8	Climax Springs High	93.0	29.8%	108	70.1%	Climax Springs R-IV	Central
9	Craig High	91.9	-	15	73.7%	Craig R-III	Northwestern
10	Humansville Middle	90.7	32.1%	84	100.0%	Humansville R-IV	Southwestern
11	Charleston Middle	90.7	14.0%	180	71.2%	Charleston R-I	Bootheel
12	North Middle	90.3	28.2%	569	68.8%	Joplin Schools	Southwestern
13	East Middle	90.2	25.5%	623	65.7%	Joplin Schools	Southwestern
14	Greenfield High	89.8	18.4%	195	69.4%	Greenfield R-IV	Southwestern
15	Guadalupe Centers Middle	89.7	6.3%	327	95.6%	Guadalupe Centers Schools	Kansas City

* For simplicity and clarity, PRiME caps growth scores at 100. In reality, some schools may have growth scores above 100. We also round scores to one decimal place; however, we rank schools based on their full score. You can explore more in the downloadable data file available at www.sluprime.org/education-reports.

Note. MAP Prof. & Adv. indicates the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on the 2021 Missouri Assessment Program tests. The F/R Lunch column indicates the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at that school. Due to small sample sizes, some schools do not have their percent proficient and advanced reported; a (-) is indicated in these instances.

Highlights for Table 6:

- Hurley High in southwestern Missouri is the top elementary school beating the odds in math, with a PRiME Growth Score of 100. This school was also among the top-growth schools in the state (No. 2 in math schoolwide and Subgroup achievement). Hurley High earned a top-20 spot on all middle school categories across this report and the statewide report, showing excellent growth in both ELA and math.
- Proficiency rates range from 2.6% to 65.9%.



CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, & PREVIEW OF WHAT'S NEXT

CONCLUSION

In this second report in our 2022 Growth Report series, we highlight schools showing excellent academic growth in ELA and mathematics while serving high concentrations of historically underserved students who are often subjected to systemic academic and socioeconomic challenges. While racial segregation has been shown to be a strong predictor of gaps in academic achievement between White and Black or Hispanic students, school poverty exacerbates racial achievement gaps (Matheny et al., 2021). Thus, recognizing schools that are “beating the odds” and best serving traditionally underserved students from high poverty schools and shrinking achievement and opportunity gaps is especially important.

Similar to our statewide report, this report shows that schools earning high PRiME Growth Scores vary on a variety of characteristics, including proficiency levels, school size, and school location. Schools serving the highest concentrations of FRL-eligible students also have a wide range in the socioeconomic status of students served (59-100% FRL). Notably, these high-poverty schools were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of which can be seen in drops in proficiency levels in both reading and math (Lewis & Kuhfeld, 2021). As high-poverty schools support their students in recovering from pandemic-induced learning loss, it is especially important to celebrate their successes. Additionally, the schools exhibiting high growth in these communities have historically been overlooked in evaluations that simply consider proficiency rates. We applaud them for their ability to move student learning forward in the midst of a national pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PRiME's intention with this series of reports is to encourage civic leaders, educators, and the public to focus on student growth (rather than point-in-time proficiency rates) when they consider the results of standardized assessments for Missouri students. We encourage school administrators to examine the PRiME Growth Scores closely for all schools in their districts. As seen in the data, there are many schools with high concentrations of students in poverty that are accelerating student learning regardless of their proficiency rates. It is important for us to learn what is happening in these high-growth schools while simultaneously recognizing these schools' ability to move student learning forward.

As with our statewide report, this report uses only publicly available data. We encourage school education leaders and school personnel to dig deeper than these results. While we only show school-level results here, school leaders can more closely examine their own data at the student-level to learn as much as they can about academic growth in various subjects and grade levels. By doing this, leaders might discover areas of excellence or opportunities for improvement that are simply not observable in the proficiency rates. In doing so, leaders and practitioners can more effectively identify what skills might need more attention and how to better meet students' needs in their unique learning environments.

This report focuses only on top-growth schools serving high concentrations of FRL-eligible students. Superintendents and principals should also pay close attention to Growth Scores for the Subgroup, included in our statewide report, which includes Black and Hispanic students, English language learners, and students with disabilities in addition to FRL-eligible students (DESE, 2015). Ensuring that classrooms serving traditionally underserved students are making good academic progress is critical to delivering an equitable education for all students.

To learn more about student growth in Missouri amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, you can view our 2022 Statewide Growth Report and the PRiME Blog, which will be updated with breakdowns of the 2022 Growth Report series, at www.sluprime.org.

PREVIEW OF WHAT'S NEXT

Our third and final publication in our 2022 Growth Report series will analyze student growth in schools by primary instructional mode on the first day of school in fall 2020. Mode of instruction (e.g., distanced, in-person, hybrid) was an important consideration for Missouri's schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and one factor that likely contributed to student growth. We will recognize schools whose students showed exceptional growth based on differing modalities of instruction.

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OUR ROLE AT PRiME

Our role at PRiME is to communicate data and evidence to education stakeholders. DESE generates meaningful growth scores for schools in multiple subjects each year. It is our hope that this report helps to communicate these growth data to school leaders and educators in a more meaningful way as these are the experts who can make the best use of this information within Missouri's schools.

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