



Provincial Reading and Mathematics Assessment 2024

Overview

The Provincial Reading and Mathematics Assessment (PRMA) is an assessment of primary (K-3), elementary (4-6) and intermediate (7-9) reading and mathematics curriculum outcomes. It is administered during a two-week period each May/June to grades 3, 6 and 9 students, alternating annually between reading and mathematics.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, student achievement is assessed at many levels: individual, classroom, school, district, provincial, national, and international. Assessment at each of these levels provides information about student achievement at differing intervals of time and for different purposes. Each level of assessment plays an important role in informing educational decisions. The PRMA is an assessment of learning at the system level. It is not meant to mirror classroom assessments and should not be viewed or interpreted in the same way. It provides provincial information on reading and mathematics, adding to data already collected from school-based, national, and international assessments.

All students on prescribed and modified prescribed curriculum participate in the PRMA, to the extent that they are able. Students whose programming is advised by one or more Enrichment and Skill Development areas can access accommodations that are part of their ongoing support in the classroom. Exemptions are rare and are generally for students on alternate curriculum.

Administration

The third administration of the PRMA was in 2024, with a focus on reading. It was administered to 12 521 students across the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) and the Conseil scolaire francophone de provincial (CSFP); 3632 in grade 3, 4290 in grade 6, and 4600 in grade 9. Students in the grades 3 and 6 French immersion program were administered the assessment in French, while students in the grade 9 program were administered the assessment in English.

Grades 3, 6, and 9 students wrote this one-hour assessment during a school-selected period between May 27 and June 7, 2024. Newfoundland and Labrador teacher working groups engaged with the Department of Education to develop this assessment, to score the items, and to set the proficiency levels. All the selected and constructed response items were aligned with selected reading outcomes in the curriculum up to the end of grades 3, 6, and 9.

Gender

Inclusive education is valued in Newfoundland and Labrador and is supported through policies and resources that promote equitable learning environments for all students. One aspect of inclusive education relates to gender identity. As with the 2024 PRMA, the option concerning gender on the student response form provided students with the choice of female, male, and another gender identity.

Gender
<input type="radio"/> Male
<input type="radio"/> Female
<input type="radio"/> Another gender identity

In Newfoundland and Labrador, similar percentages of students identified as either female (48 percent) or male (51 percent) (Table 1.1).

For reporting purposes, it is important that each subgroup has a sufficient sample size to produce statistically reliable results. In PRMA 2024, when student performance is examined across three gender groups and three proficiency levels, several expected counts for the “another gender identity” group in Grades 3 and 6 fall below this threshold. This means that the sample sizes for these groups are too small for reliable reporting. Grade 9 meets the minimum threshold.

Because the number of students identifying as a gender other than female or male is too small in Grades 3 and 6 for reliable reporting, results for these grades are presented using only the two gender categories with sufficient sample sizes (female and male). Grade 9 has a large enough sample to report results for all three gender categories.

Table 1.1: Percentage of students by gender self-identification

Grade	Females	Males	Another gender identity
3	48.5%	51.2%	0.3%
6	48.3%	51.0%	0.7%
9	46.9%	51.8%	1.3%

Exemptions and Accommodations

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) recognizes its responsibility to provide exemptions and accommodations for students whose programming is advised by one or more Enrichment and Skill Development areas and to provide supports for students in the English as an Additional Language (EAL) program, including

exemptions for some students. Students may access accommodations, as outlined in the Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy for grades 3 and 6 and the Service Delivery Model for grade 9. These accommodations include alternate format materials, assistive technology, scribing, transcribing, and reading of print material.

The following number of students were exempt or received accommodations during the 2024 administration:

Table 1.2: Students who were exempt or availed of reading accommodations

	Grade 3	Grade 6	Grade 9
Exempt	128	148	211
Accommodations	81	234	219

Coding, Proficiency Level Descriptors, and Standard Setting

The PRMA is composed of selected and constructed response items. All selected response items (multiple-choice) were scored electronically. Constructed response items were scored by teachers, using a coding guide, at a Provincial coding Panel.

Groups of teachers, administrators, and educators from the Department of Education then created proficiency level descriptors, which helped define the three proficiency levels: Not Meeting Expectations, Approaching Expectations, and Meeting Expectations. Based on Newfoundland and Labrador curriculum expectations in reading, Meeting Expectations is the expected level of performance for grades 3, 6, and 9 students. Additional groups then participated in a standard-setting process to determine what percentage of students achieved at each proficiency level. A description of the specific skills students demonstrate at each proficiency level is provided in Tables 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.

Table 1.3	
Grade 3 Student Descriptors	
Student who is not meeting expectations	The student is working towards but not yet meeting the expectations of the grade three reading standards. The student at this level struggles to find and connect information, identify text features and use vocabulary. They find it challenging to organize and understand information throughout the text. The student has yet to demonstrate an understanding of other perspectives and opinions and seldom makes personal connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world).
Student who is approaching expectations	The student is approaching the expectations of the grade three reading standards. The student at this level is developing the skills to locate and connect information while demonstrating an emerging use of text features and vocabulary. They have a basic understanding and a literal interpretation of the text. The student is gaining an understanding of other perspectives and opinions and makes limited personal connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world).
Student who is meeting expectations	The student is meeting the expectations of the grade three reading standards. The student at this level can effectively find and connect information using text features and vocabulary. They demonstrate consistency in organizing and understanding the information presented to gain meaning. The student recognizes and connects the author's message or purpose and makes clear, personal connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world).

Table 1.4	
Grade 6 Student Descriptors	
Student who is not meeting expectations	The student is working towards but not yet meeting the expectations of the grade six reading standards. The student is still learning to locate and retrieve literal details from text and identify the main message. They have yet to demonstrate understanding and knowledge of how a text is organized. The student finds it challenging to reflect and respond and seldom makes connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) and they struggle to provide personal responses to text.
Student who is approaching expectations	The student is approaching the expectations of the grade six reading standards. The student locates and retrieves literal meaning from text and can identify the main message. They are beginning to demonstrate understanding and knowledge of how a text is organized to make meaning. When reflecting and responding, the student makes limited connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) and can provide personal responses to text.
Student who is meeting expectations	The student is meeting the expectations of the grade six reading standards. The student consistently locates and retrieves literal and implied meanings from text. They effectively combine ideas in a text to identify and interpret the main message. They also demonstrate their understanding and knowledge of how a text is organized to make meaning. When reflecting and responding, the student makes clear connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) and can provide personal and critical responses to text.

Table 1.5	
Grade 9 Student Descriptors	
Student who is not meeting expectations	The student is working towards but not yet meeting the expectations of the grade nine reading standards. They show developing and emerging skills in the areas of locating and retrieving, understanding and interpreting, and reflecting and responding. A developing student is still learning to locate and retrieve literal details. They may demonstrate a beginning knowledge of how texts are structured and organized. The student struggles to make connections to text and understand literary techniques. When reflecting and responding, they seldom include observations, ideas, and opinions or make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.
Student who is approaching expectations	The student is approaching the expectations of the grade nine reading standards. They show an increasing level of consistency and effectiveness in the areas of locating and retrieving, understanding and interpreting, and reflecting and responding. An approaching student can locate and retrieve literal details. They demonstrate a basic understanding of how texts are structured and organized to make meaning. The student shows an emerging understanding of literary techniques as well as how to connect to text. When reflecting and responding, they provide limited observations, ideas, and opinions when making text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.
Student who is meeting expectations	The student is meeting the expectations of the grade nine reading standards. They show consistency and effectiveness in the areas of locating and retrieving, understanding and interpreting, and reflecting and responding. A student who is meeting expectations can locate and retrieve both literal and implied details. They also demonstrate their understanding and knowledge of how a text is structured and organized to make meaning. The student makes strong connections to text and can also interpret a variety of literary techniques. When reflecting and responding, they demonstrate meaningful opinions, ideas, and perspectives and make critical text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.

Assessment Results

The results for the 2024 spring administration of the PRMA are shown in the figures below. Figures 1.1-1.3 show the results for grade 3 students, Figures 1.4-1.6 show the results for grade 6 students, and Figures 1.7-1.9 show the results for grade 9 students.

These results have been categorized into three main sections;

1. **Provincial Results** – overall performance by grade, including students from the English, French First Language, and French Immersion programs, and those who availed of accommodations during the assessment.
2. **Performance by Gender** – performance by gender, including males, females, and other gender identities.
3. **Performance With and Without Accommodations** – performance of students who completed the assessment with accommodations.

Primary

Provincial Results

In PRMA 2024, 56% of grade 3 students achieved the expected level of Meeting Expectation in reading. The remaining 44% of students fell below this expected level, with 29.5% approaching expectations and 14.5% below expectations.

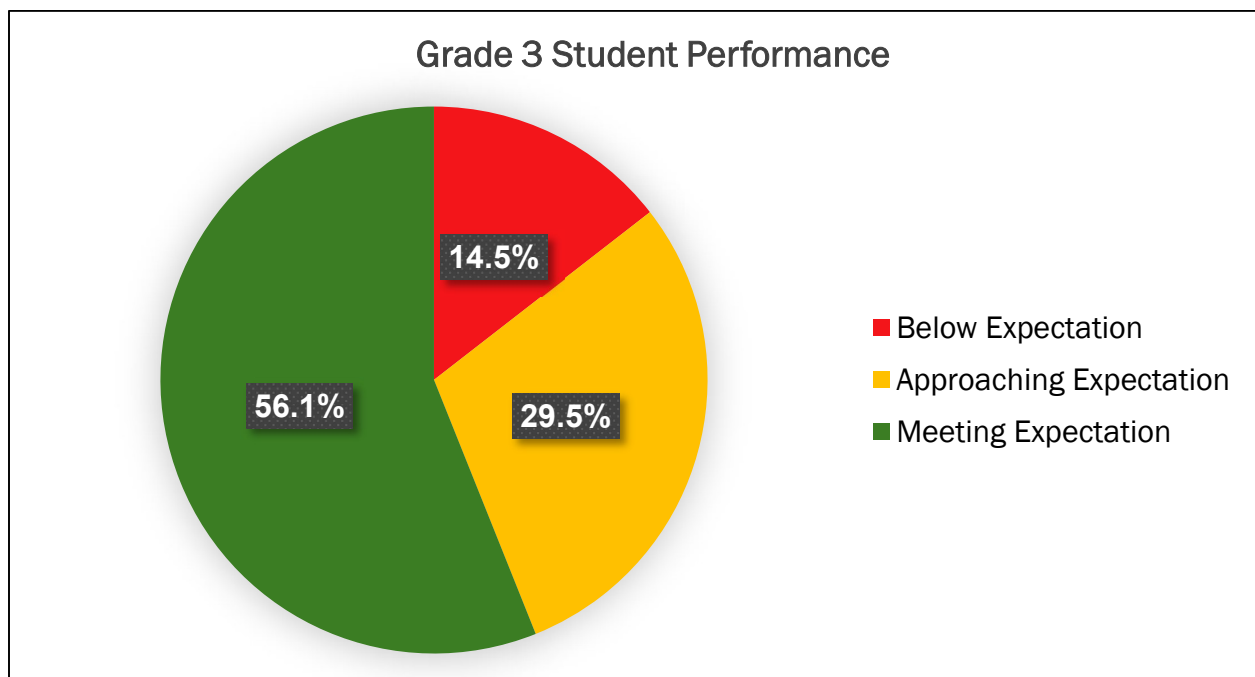


Figure 1.1: Percentage of grade 3 students below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance by Gender

When comparing males and females for grade 3, a clear gender gap was observed across all three proficiency levels. A higher percentage of males were found to be performing at the Below Expectation and Approaching Expectation levels compared to females. Conversely, a higher percentage of females achieved the Meeting Expectation level than their male counterparts.

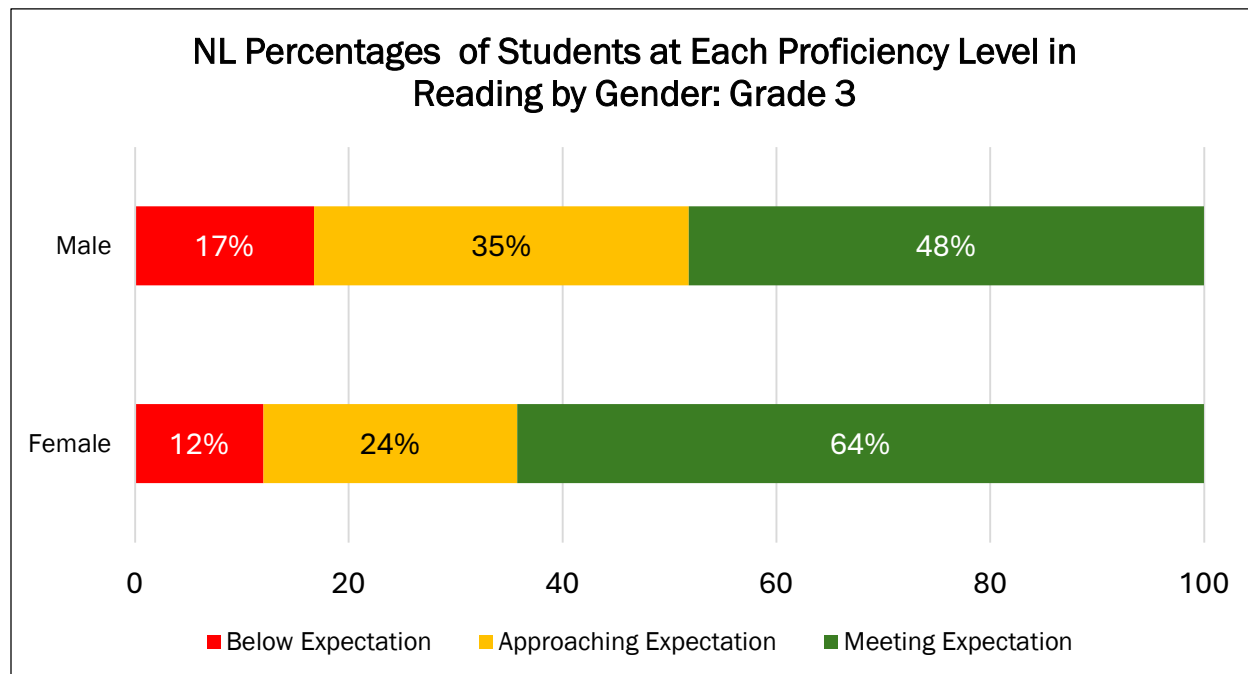


Figure 1.2: Percentage of grade 3 students by gender who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance With and Without Accommodation

When comparing students who received accommodations to those who did not, a clear distinction in performance was observed at the Meeting Expectation level. Specifically, 56% of students who did not receive an accommodation achieved the Meeting Expectation level, compared to 47% of students who did receive an accommodation.

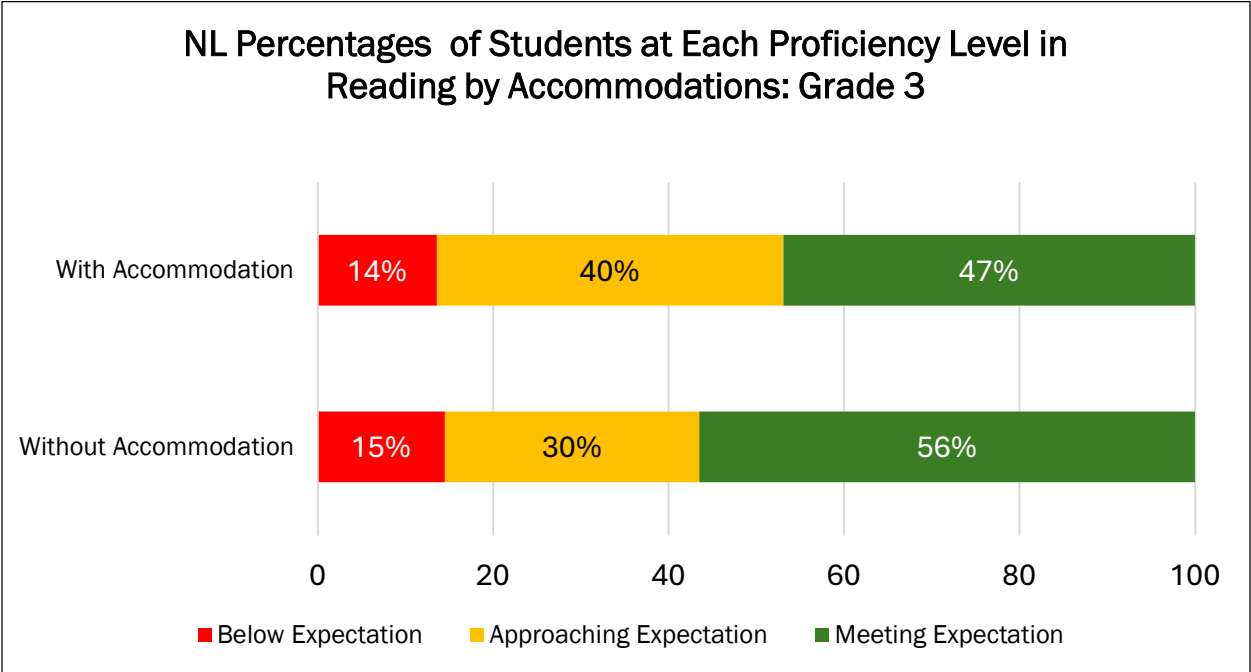


Figure 1.3: Percentage of grade 3 students with and without an accommodation who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Elementary

Provincial Results

In PRMA 2024, 73% of grade 6 students achieved the expected level of Meeting Expectation in reading. The remaining 27% of students fell below this expected level, with 23.4% approaching expectations and 3.3% below expectations.

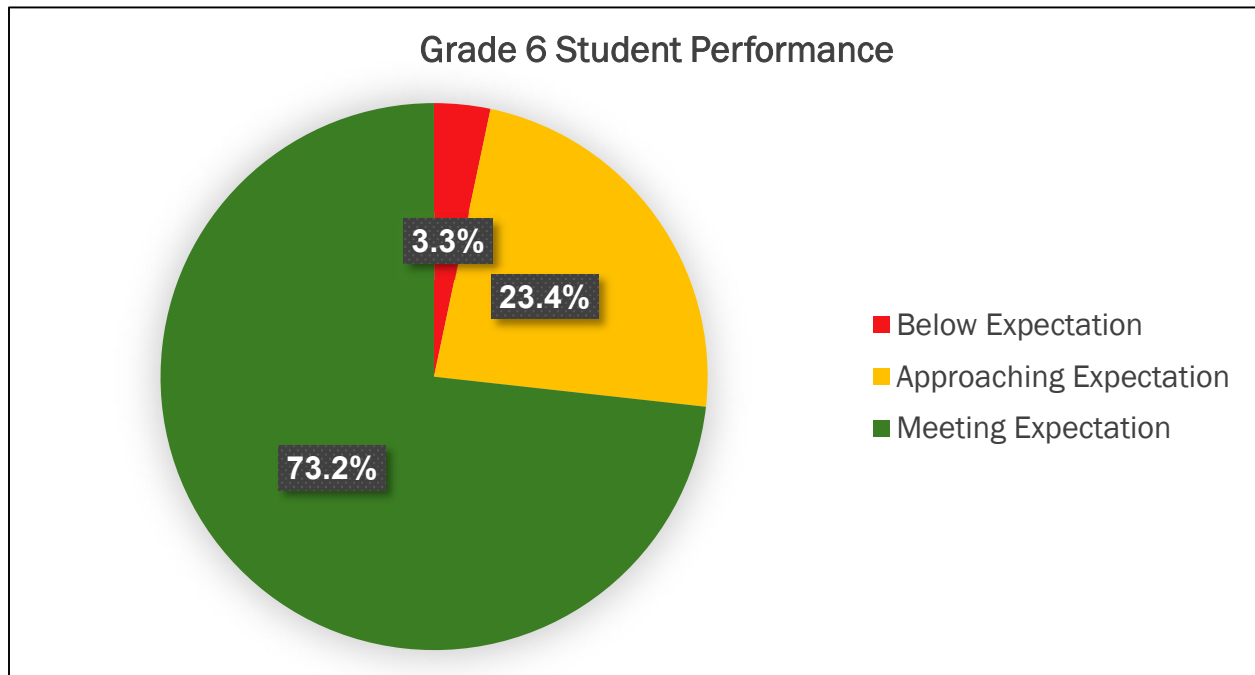


Figure 1.4: Percentage of grade 6 students below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance by Gender

When comparing males and females for grade 6, a gender gap was observed across all three proficiency levels. A higher percentage of males were found to be performing at the Below Expectation and Approaching Expectation levels compared to females. Conversely, a higher percentage of females achieved the Meeting Expectation level than their male counterparts.

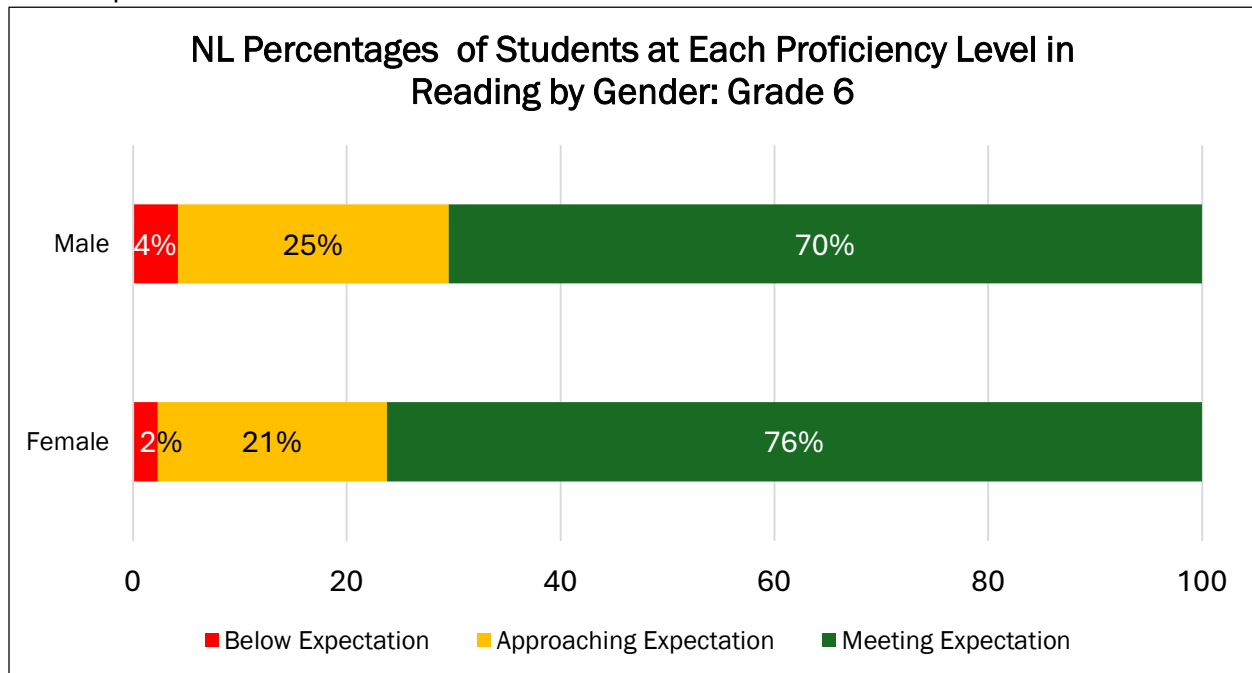


Figure 1.5: Percentage of grade 6 students by gender who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance With and Without Accommodation

When comparing students who received accommodations to those who did not, a clear distinction in performance was observed at all three levels. Specifically, 75% of students who did not receive an accommodation achieved the Meeting Expectation level, compared to 57% of students who did receive an accommodation.

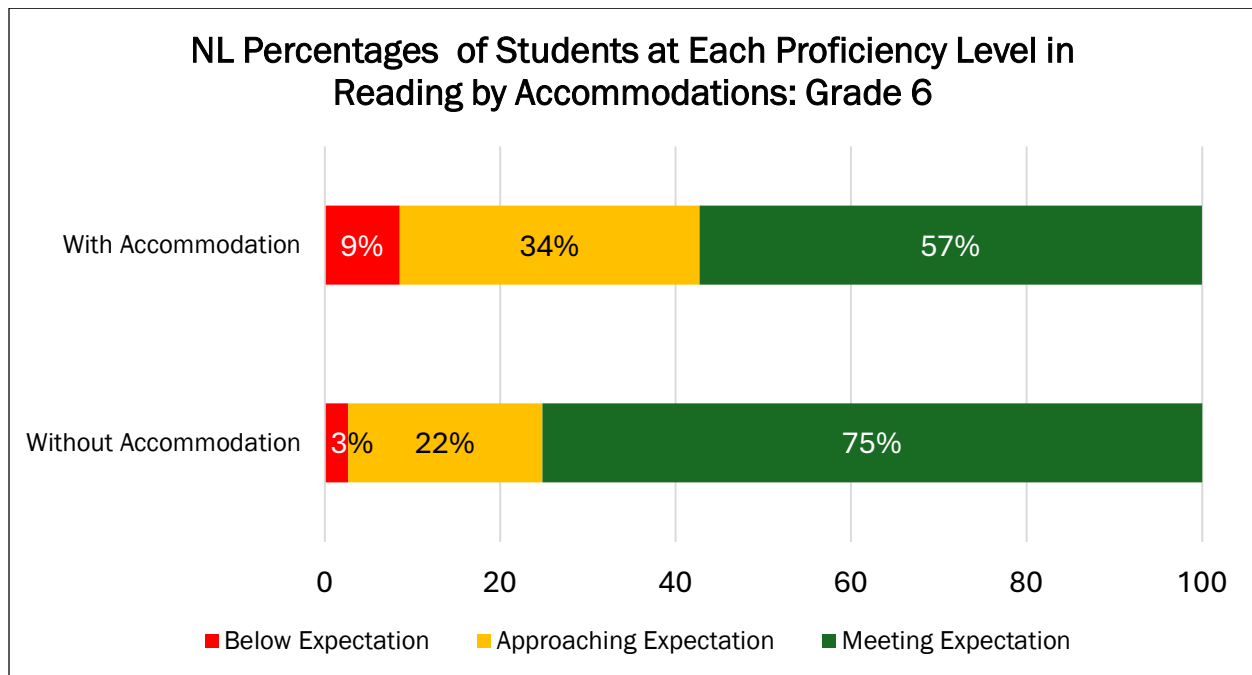


Figure 1.6: Percentage of grade 6 students with and without an accommodation who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Intermediate

Provincial Results

In PRMA 2024, 61% of grade 9 students achieved the expected level of Meeting Expectation in reading. The remaining 39% of students fell below this expected level, with 22.6% approaching expectations and 16.7% below expectations.

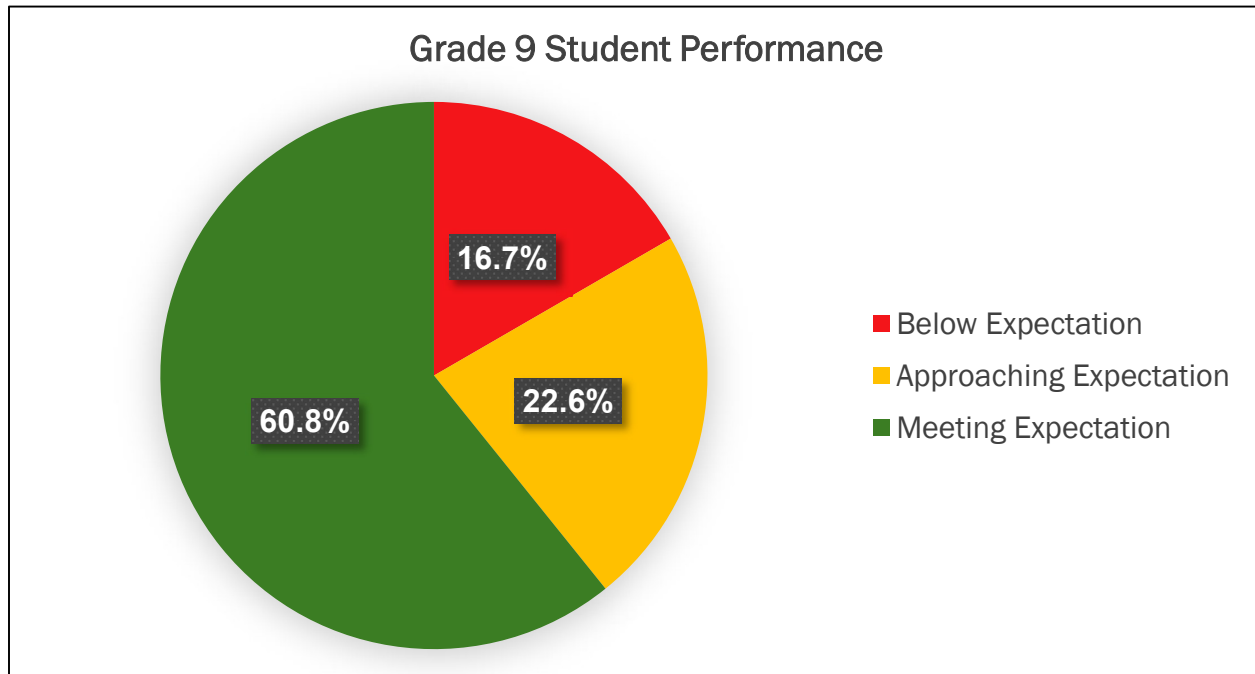


Figure 1.7: Percentage of grade 9 students below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance by Gender

For Grade 9 students, a clear gender gap was observed at the Meeting Expectation level, with a higher percentage of females reaching this proficiency level compared to both males and students identifying with another gender. Conversely, males showed the highest representation at the Approaching Expectation level compared to the other two groups, while the percentages of males and students of another gender identity performing at the Below Expectation level were similar.

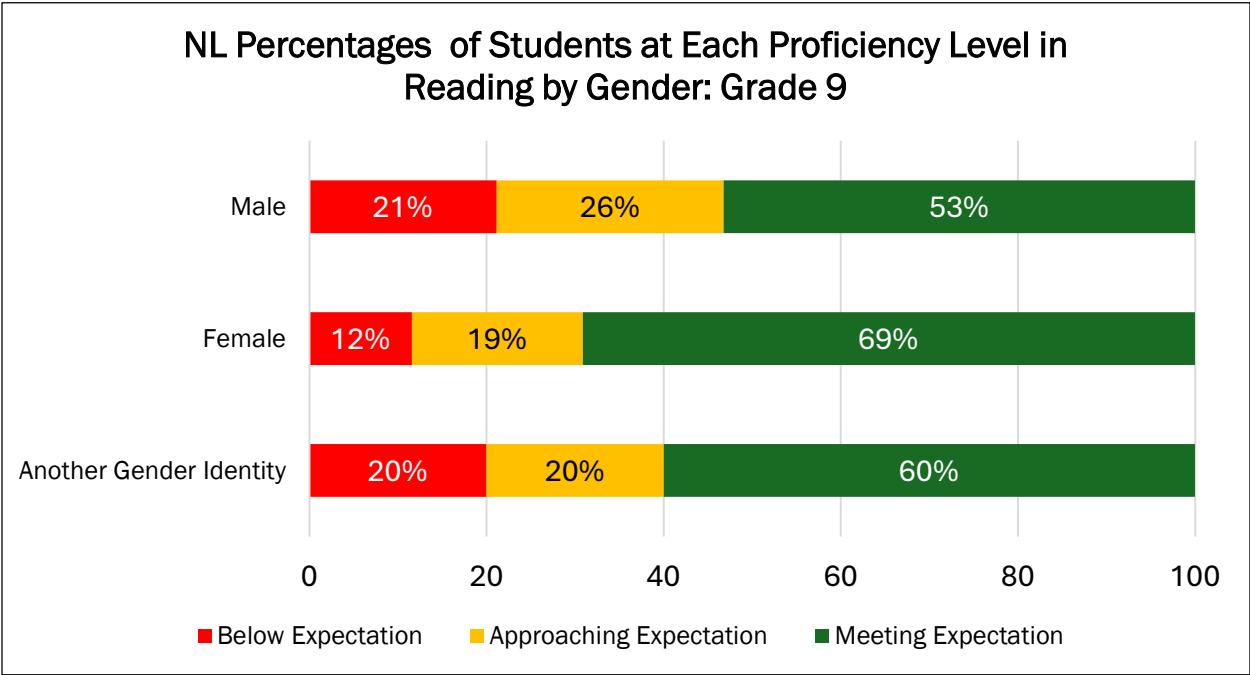


Figure 1.8: Percentage of grade 9 students by gender who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Performance With and Without Accommodation

When comparing students in grade 9 who received accommodations to those who did not, a clear distinction in performance was observed at all three levels. Specifically, 64% of students who did not receive an accommodation achieved the Meeting Expectation level, compared to 35% of students who did receive an accommodation.

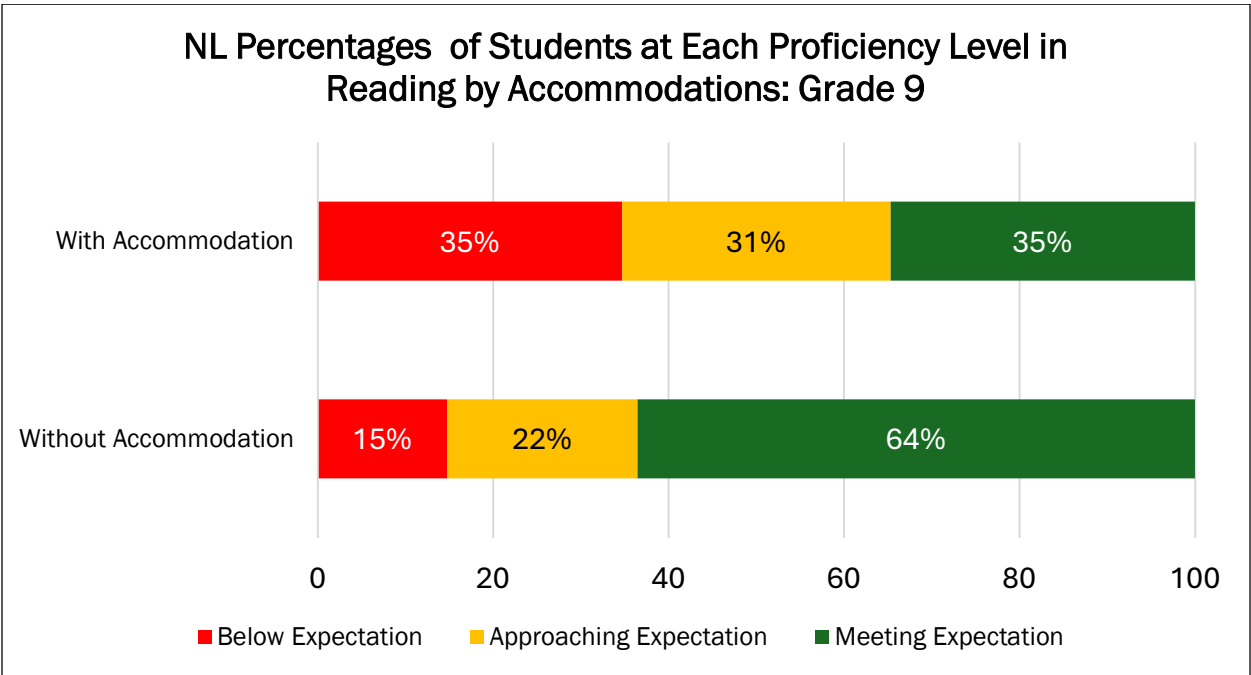


Figure 1.9: Percentage of grade 9 students with and without an accommodation who are below, approaching, and meeting expectations.

Comparison of PRMA Results (reading assessment) for 2022 and 2024

The results for the 2022 and 2024 spring administrations of the PRMA are shown in the figures below. Figure 1.10 shows the results for grade 3 students, Figure 1.11 shows the results for grade 6 students, and Figure 1.12 shows the results for grade 9 students.

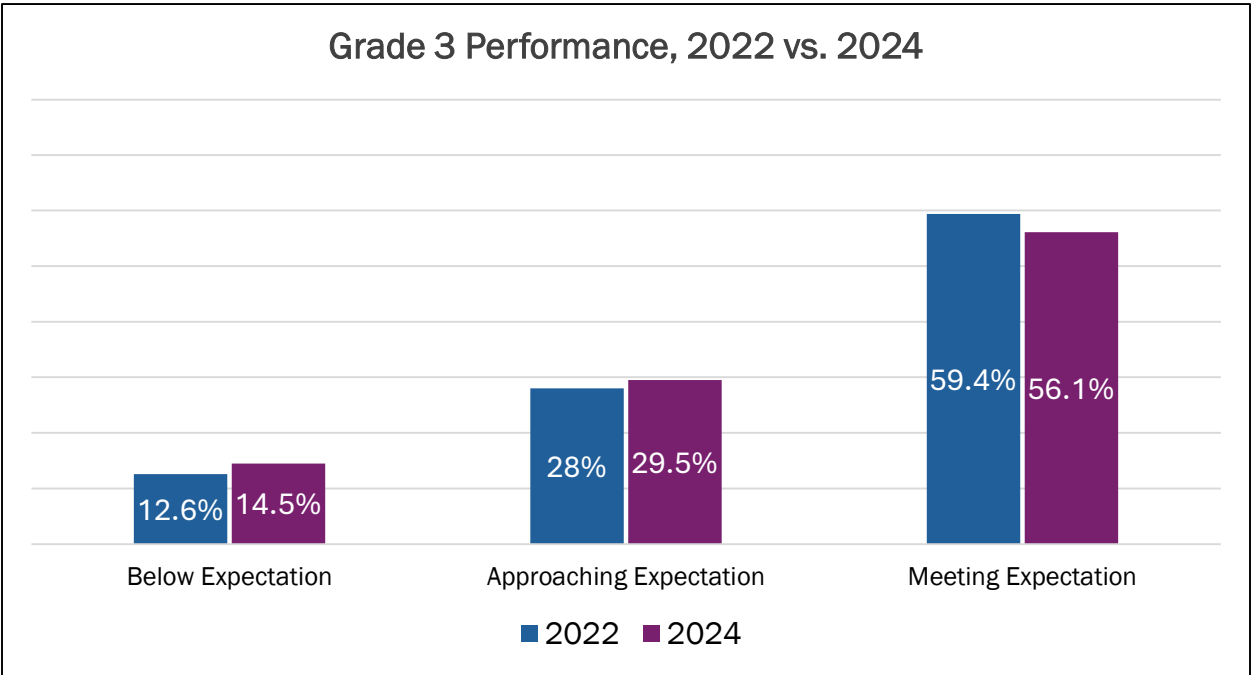


Figure 1.10: Comparison of grade 3 student performance for PRMA 2022 vs. 2024

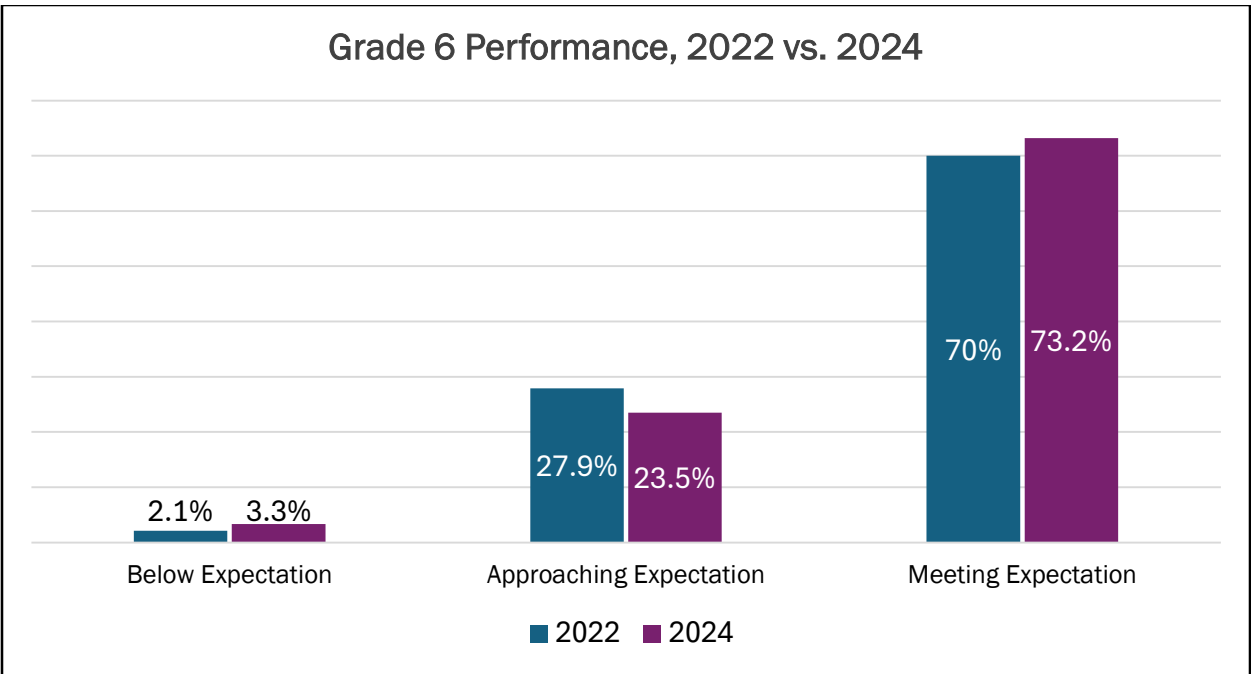


Figure 1.11: Comparison of grade 6 student performance for PRMA 2022 vs. 2024

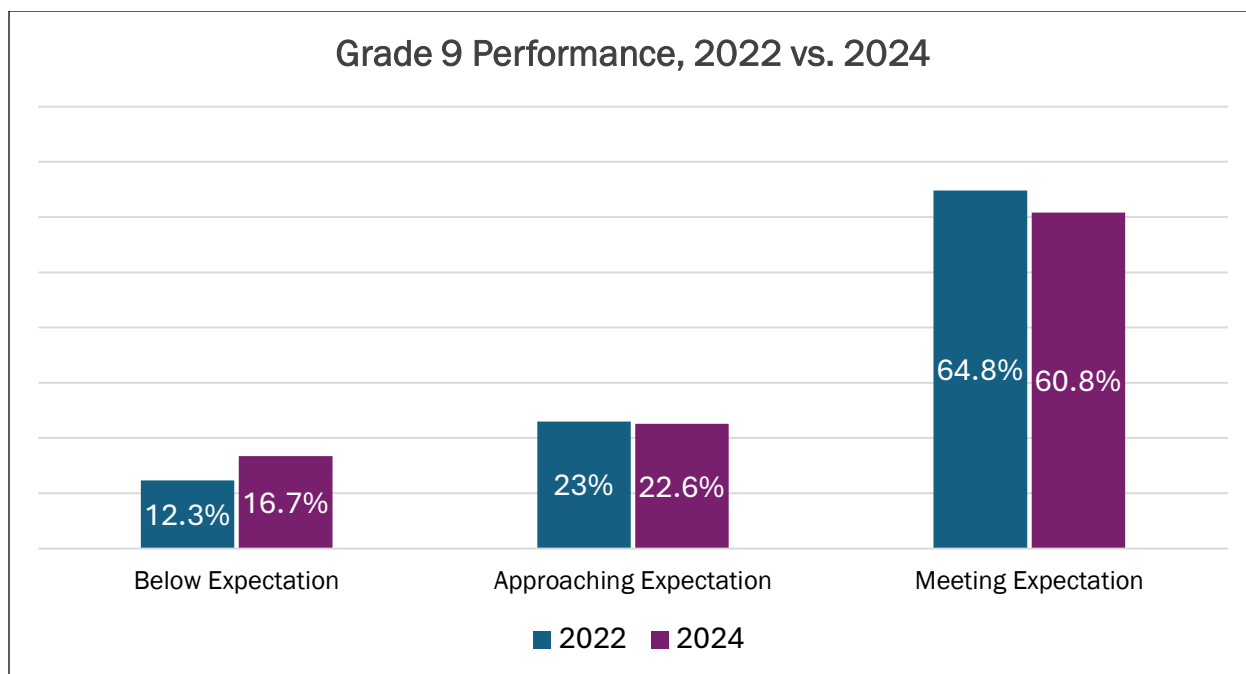


Figure 1.12: Comparison of grade 9 student performance for PRMA 2022 vs. 2024

Summary

The 2024 PRMA is the fourth year of a new assessment cycle, allowing comparison of reading achievement data for grades 3, 6, and 9. Current results cannot be compared to provincial assessments written before 2022 due to significant differences in assessment type and methodology. However, the 2022 and 2024 assessments are equated, allowing the comparison of reading achievement. The PRMA data will inform policy development and identify growth and challenge areas. Future assessments will enable trend analysis. Teachers, administrators, school districts, and the Department of Education will use this data to develop strategies and initiatives to support and enhance student learning.