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SUPERINTENDENT

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Cobb Eighth Grade Writing Test Scores Continue To Top State, Metro Averages

Key Subgroups Continue to Show Improvement

Eighty-five percent of Cobb County eighth graders met or exceeded state standards on the 2010 Eighth Grade Writing Assessment, increasing the scale score by two points over last year's average. The district-wide average score of 219 is six points higher than the state average score and two points higher than the average of other metro Atlanta districts. The percentage of Cobb students ranked in either the "Meets" or "Exceeds" categories is six points higher than the statewide percentage and two points higher than other metro districts. (See Table I).

Two key student subgroups, Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELL), continued to improve their performance on the writing test this year. Scores for SWD have climbed 11 points since 2007, while the percentage of SWD meeting or exceeding standards has increased by 20 percentage points over the same period. The performance of English Language Learners has also improved, with scale scores increasing by 14 points since 2007. While the percentage of ELLs meeting or exceeding standards decreased by one percent from 2009, the percentage has increased from 30 percent to 50 percent in just four years (Charts I, II).

The progress made on Cobb's Eighth Grade Writing Assessment can be partially attributed to a continuous improvement approach taken by the District and schools to identify and address the needs of these students. Middle schools have given mock writing tests to students in sixth and seventh grades, providing early feedback to students and teachers about how Cobb students' writing skills compare to state standards. The mock tests also allow teachers time to help students strengthen writing skills before they reach eighth grade.

Barry Harris, principal at Garrett Middle School, attributes his school's success in raising writing performance to having students write on different topics in all content areas twice a month. In addition, the school conducted a *Parent Write With Me Night* to engage parents in helping their children improve writing skills. At Pine Mountain Middle School, where scores have steadily increased over the past four years, teachers are collaboratively reading student writing three times a year and giving students immediate feedback about their strengths and areas for growth. According to Lisa Jackson, principal at Pine Mountain, staff development for

writing is ongoing for school staff members and several of the teachers have worked with Kennesaw State University in a National Writing Project to find better ways to teach writing to students.

A majority of Cobb schools topped the state scale scores, with scores ranging from 170 to 238. Highest scores were for Dodgen (238), Dickerson (237), Hightower Trail and Mabry (234). At several schools more than 90 percent of students met or exceeded standards (Daniell, Dickerson, Dodgen, Hightower Trail, Imagine International Academy of Smyrna, Lost Mountain, Mabry, and Simpson).

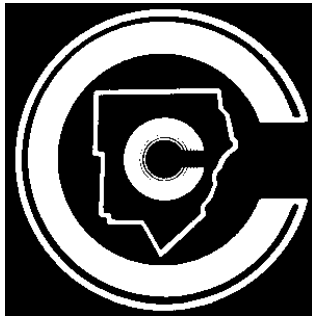
Cobb's overall scores were strong, but District academic officials remain concerned about the continued gap between the performance of regular education students and students in special populations (Special Education and English Language Learners). This same gap is apparent on other assessments at both the state and district levels. Although both the Special Education and ELL subgroups made significant gains on scale scores this year, the percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards in both groups remains significantly smaller than that of students in the regular education program (Table II).

As a part of the statewide testing program, the Eighth Grade Writing Assessment was administered in January and requires students to write a composition on an assigned topic. The assessment provides eighth graders with a measurement of their writing performance. This information can help students, parents, and teachers understand areas where students may need to focus their efforts to improve writing skills before taking the writing portion of the Georgia High School Graduation Test in their junior year.

Each student paper is scored by professionals who have been trained to evaluate writing. Evaluators score student compositions on four domains, or qualities of effective writing, including ideas, organization, style, and convention. Domains are rated on a scale of 1 to 5. The performance of Cobb students was similar across all domains, ranging from 3.1 in organization, ideas, and conventions to 3.2 in style. The scale score range for the new Grade 8 Writing Assessment is 100 to 350. Writing scores are reported in the following performance levels: *Does Not Meet* (100-199), *Meets* (200-249), and *Exceeds* (250-350).

More information about the Cobb County School District's testing programs is available on the District Web site at www.cobbk12.org.

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COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

TESTING BRIEF

Eighth Grade Writing Assessment

Winter 2010

Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-281) states “writing assessments shall be administered to students in grades three, five, eight, and eleven.” The purpose of the Grade 8 Writing Assessment is to assess student achievement in the Georgia Performance Standards in writing and to improve writing and writing instruction. The Grade 8 Writing Assessment provides predictive information to eighth graders about their future writing performance in advance of taking the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT).

The percentage of Cobb County School District students achieving the Meets and Exceeds standards in 2010 ranged from 50 percent for English Language Learners (ELL) to 90 percent for Asian students. The mean scaled scores for Cobb students ranged from 195 for ELL students to 232 for Asian students.

The scale score range for the Grade 8 Writing Assessment is 100 to 350. Writing scores are also reported in the following performance levels: Does Not Meet (100-199), Meets (200-249), and Exceeds (250-350).

KEY FINDINGS

- A total of **7733** Cobb students were assessed in the 2010 Grade 8 Writing Assessment. **Eighty-five (85)** percent of all students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standards set for writing with a mean scaled score of **219**. This group includes all students with scorable papers. This represents a 2% increase from last year in the number of students meeting/exceeding standards and a two point increase in the average scale scores for the district.
- A total of **865** Special Education students were assessed in writing. **Sixty (60)** percent of students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standards set for writing with a mean scaled score of **200**. There was a 5% increase in the percent of students meeting/exceeding standards from the previous year and a three point increase in the average scale score for the group.
- A total of **275** English Language Learner (ELL) students were assessed in writing. **Fifty (50)** percent of students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standards set for writing with a mean scaled score of **195**. There was a 2 point increase in the scale score (from 193 to 195) and a slight decrease (1%) of ELL students meeting/exceeding standards.

KEY FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

- **Six Cobb Schools had increases of 5% or greater in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards from 2009 to 2010.**

Awtrey (7%)	Devereux (22%)	Griffin (11%)
Lindley (7%)	Pine Mtn. (5%)	Imagine Inter. Smyrna (49%)

- **Twelve Cobb Schools had increases between 1 and 4% in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards from 2009 to 2010.**

Campbell (4%)	Daniell (1%)	Dodgen (3%)	Durham (1%)
East Cobb (2%)	Garrett (3%)	Lovinggood (4%)	Mabry (2%)
Palmer (2%)	Smitha (4%)	Tapp (2%)	Imagine Inter. Mableton (1%)

- **Three Cobb middle schools remained the same in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards as in the previous year.**

Dickerson	Hightower Trail	Simpson
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- **All other middle schools showed decreases of 1% to 7% in the number of students meeting or exceeding standard from 2009-2010.**

- **Sixteen (16) of Cobb's middle schools had overall mean scale scores higher than the state mean scale score of 213.**

Barber	Durham	Lovinggood	Palmer
Daniell	East Cobb	Mabry	Pine Mountain
Dickerson	Hightower Trail	McCleskey	Simpson
Dodgen	Lost Mountain	McClure	Tapp

Fourteen (14) of Cobb's middle schools had overall mean scale scores equal to or higher than the mean scale score of 217 for Metro RESA.

Barber	Durham	Mabry	Pine Mountain
Daniell	Hightower Trail	McCleskey	Simpson
Dickerson	Lost Mountain	McClure	
Dodgen	Lovinggood	Palmer	

- **Twelve (12) of Cobb's middle schools had mean scale scores equal to or higher than the mean scale score of 219 for Cobb.**

Daniell	Hightower Trail	McCleskey	Simpson
Dickerson	Lost Mountain	McClure	
Dodgen	Lovinggood	Pine Mountain	
Durham	Mabry		

- **Eighteen (18) of Cobb's middle schools had higher percentages then did the state for students meeting or exceeding standards (79%).**

Barber	Durham	Imagine Int. Smyrna	McCleskey	Simpson
Daniell	East Cobb	Lost Mountain	McClure	Tapp
Dickerson	Garrett	Lovinggood	Palmer	
Dodgen	Hightower Trail	Mabry	Pine Mountain	

- **Thirteen (13) of Cobb's middle schools had higher percentages of students meeting or exceeding standards when compared to the overall percentages for Cobb (85%).**

Daniell	Hightower Trail	Mabry	Simpson
Dickerson	Imagine Int. Smyrna	McClure	
Dodgen	Lost Mountain	Palmer	
Durham	Lovinggood	Pine Mountain	

**Cobb County School District
Eighth Grade Writing Assessment: 2010
All Students**

Table I

	# Tested	Mean Scale Score	% DNM	% M	% E	% M+E	WRITING DOMAINS**			
							Ideas	Organization	Style	Conventions
Cobb	7,733	219	15.0	75.0	10.0	85.0	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1
Metro Resa*	44,087	217	17.0	74.0	9.0	83.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0
Georgia	119,816	213	21.0	73.0	6.0	79.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9
							3.0			
Awtrey	294	210	21.0	77.0	2.0	79.0	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.0
Barber	304	217	15.0	80.0	5.0	85.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Campbell Middle	364	203	34.0	65.0	1.0	66.0	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6
Cooper	296	207	32.0	65.0	2.0	67.0	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8
Daniell	299	222	8.0	83.0	9.0	92.0	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1
Devereux Academy	13	170	69.0	31.0	0.0	31.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	1.8
Dickerson	402	237	2.0	74.0	24.0	98.0	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7
Dodgen	368	238	2.0	74.0	24.0	98.0	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.7
Durham	361	220	14.0	77.0	9.0	86.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.2
East Cobb	383	214	16.0	79.0	5.0	84.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
Floyd	248	207	32.0	66.0	2.0	68.0	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7
Garrett	258	213	18.0	78.0	4.0	82.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
Griffin	274	208	25.0	72.0	3.0	75.0	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8
Hightower Trail	325	234	3.0	77.0	20.0	97.0	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6
Imagine Intl Acad of Mableton	45	212	22.0	76.0	2.0	78.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0
Imagine Intl Acad of Smyrna	30	210	7.0	90.0	3.0	93.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0
Lindley	387	207	26.0	73.0	1.0	74.0	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7
Lost Mountain	344	224	9.0	76.0	15.0	91.0	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.4
Lovinggood	420	221	12.0	78.0	11.0	89.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.2
Mabry	297	234	3.0	75.0	22.0	97.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.6
McCleskey	256	219	16.0	74.0	10.0	84.0	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1
McClure	350	223	13.0	75.0	12.0	87.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2
Palmer	353	218	14.0	78.0	8.0	86.0	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2
Pine Mountain	245	219	11.0	82.0	7.0	89.0	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1
Simpson	307	232	5.0	75.0	20.0	95.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Smitha	248	205	28.0	72.0	0.0	72.0	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7
Tapp	262	215	15.0	80.0	5.0	85.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

*RESA: Atlanta, Buford, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett and Rockdale Counties, Decatur, and Marietta City systems

DNM = Did Not Meet Standards (Score of 100 - 199)

M = Met Standards (Score of 200 - 249)

E = Exceeded Standards (Score of 250 - 350)

% M+E = Percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards

**Scoring Information for Domains

Range 1 (low) to 5 (high)

Cobb County School District
Eighth Grade Writing Assessment: 2010
Percentages of Students in Performance Levels by Program Type

Table II

	# Tested	Average Scale Score	Percentages		
GEORGIA			DNM	M	E
All Students	119,816	213	21	73	6
Regular Program Students	107,662	216	17	76	7
Limited English Proficient	2,297	196	51	49	0
Special Education	12,154	188	57	42	1
COBB COUNTY			DNM	M	E
All Students	7733	219	15	75	10
Regular Program Students	6868	221	12	77	11
Limited English Proficient	275	195	50	50	0
Special Education	865	200	40	58	2
AWTREY			DNM	M	E
All Students	294	210	21	77	2
Regular Program Students	269	212	18	80	2
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	25	190	56	44	0
BARBER			DNM	M	E
All Students	304	217	15	80	5
Regular Program Students	267	220	11	83	6
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	37	197	43	57	0
CAMPBELL			DNM	M	E
All Students	364	203	34	65	1
Regular Program Students	334	205	31	68	1
Limited English Proficient	33	189	67	33	0
Special Education	30	184	73	27	0
COOPER			DNM	M	E
All Students	296	207	32	65	2
Regular Program Students	253	211	25	72	3
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	43	190	74	26	0
DANIELL			DNM	M	E
All Students	299	222	8	83	9
Regular Program Students	261	225	5	85	10
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	38	199	26	71	3
DEVEREUX ACADEMY			DNM	M	E
All Students	13	170	69	31	0
Regular Program Students	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC

TFC = Too Few To Report (If a school had fewer than 10 students scores are not listed.)

DNM = Did Not Meet Standards

M = Met Standards

E = Exceeded Standards

Cobb County School District
Eighth Grade Writing Assessment: 2010
Percentages of Students in Performance Levels by Program Type

Table II

	# Tested	Average Scale Score	Percentages		
DICKERSON			DNM	M	E
All Students	402	237	2	74	24
Regular Program Students	358	239	1	73	26
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	44	224	7	84	9
DODGEN			DNM	M	E
All Students	368	238	2	74	24
Regular Program Students	328	240	1	72	27
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	40	218	10	88	3
DURHAM			DNM	M	E
All Students	361	220	14	77	9
Regular Program Students	326	222	10	80	10
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	35	206	51	46	3
EAST COBB			DNM	M	E
All Students	383	214	16	79	5
Regular Program Students	352	215	14	81	5
Limited English Proficient	20	203	30	70	0
Special Education	31	196	42	58	0
FLOYD			DNM	M	E
All Students	248	207	32	66	2
Regular Program Students	217	209	28	69	3
Limited English Proficient	17	195	65	35	0
Special Education	31	196	58	42	0
GARRETT			DNM	M	E
All Students	258	213	18	78	4
Regular Program Students	237	214	16	79	4
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	21	203	33	67	0
GRIFFIN			DNM	M	E
All Students	274	208	25	72	3
Regular Program Students	248	210	22	75	3
Limited English Proficient	43	188	56	44	0
Special Education	26	183	50	50	0
HIGHTOWER TRAIL			DNM	M	E
All Students	325	234	3	77	20
Regular Program Students	276	238	1	75	24
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	49	217	10	88	2

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E = Exceeded Standards

Cobb County School District
Eighth Grade Writing Assessment: 2010
Percentages of Students in Performance Levels by Program Type

Table II

	# Tested	Average Scale Score	Percentages		
IMAGINE INTL ACAD OF MABLETON			DNM	M	E
All Students	45	212	22	76	2
Regular Program Students	41	214	17	80	2
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
IMAGINE INTL ACAD OF SMYRNA			DNM	M	E
All Students	30	210	7	90	3
Regular Program Students	28	218	0	96	4
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
LINDLEY			DNM	M	E
All Students	387	207	26	73	1
Regular Program Students	358	210	22	77	1
Limited English Proficient	42	198	40	60	0
Special Education	35	183	66	34	0
LOST MOUNTAIN			DNM	M	E
All Students	344	224	9	76	15
Regular Program Students	309	228	4	80	16
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	35	193	54	40	6
LOVINGGOOD			DNM	M	E
All Students	420	221	12	78	11
Regular Program Students	379	223	9	79	12
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	41	202	32	68	0
MABRY			DNM	M	E
All Students	299	234	3	75	22
Regular Program Students	265	238	1	75	24
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	32	203	22	78	0
McCLESKEY			DNM	M	E
All Students	256	219	16	74	10
Regular Program Students	213	223	13	76	12
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	43	204	33	67	0
MCCLURE			DNM	M	E
All Students	350	223	13	75	12
Regular Program Students	313	226	9	78	13
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	37	198	49	51	0

TFC = Too Few To Report (If a school had fewer than 10 students scores are not listed.)

DNM = Did Not Meet Standards

M = Met Standards

E = Exceeded Standards

Cobb County School District
Eighth Grade Writing Assessment: 2010
Percentages of Students in Performance Levels by Program Type

Table II

	# Tested	Average Scale Score	Percentages		
PALMER			DNM	M	E
All Students	353	218	14	78	8
Regular Program Students	318	220	12	79	9
Limited English Proficient	17	198	29	71	0
Special Education	35	205	29	70	0
PINE MOUNTAIN			DNM	M	E
All Students	245	219	11	82	7
Regular Program Students	217	221	9	83	7
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	28	199	29	68	4
SIMPSON			DNM	M	E
All Students	307	232	5	75	20
Regular Program Students	257	235	2	76	22
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	50	214	20	72	8
SMITHA			DNM	M	E
All Students	248	205	28	72	0
Regular Program Students	216	209	20	80	0
Limited English Proficient	29	194	55	45	0
Special Education	32	178	81	19	1
TAPP			DNM	M	E
All Students	262	215	15	80	5
Regular Program Students	230	217	11	84	5
Limited English Proficient	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC	TFC
Special Education	32	199	47	47	6

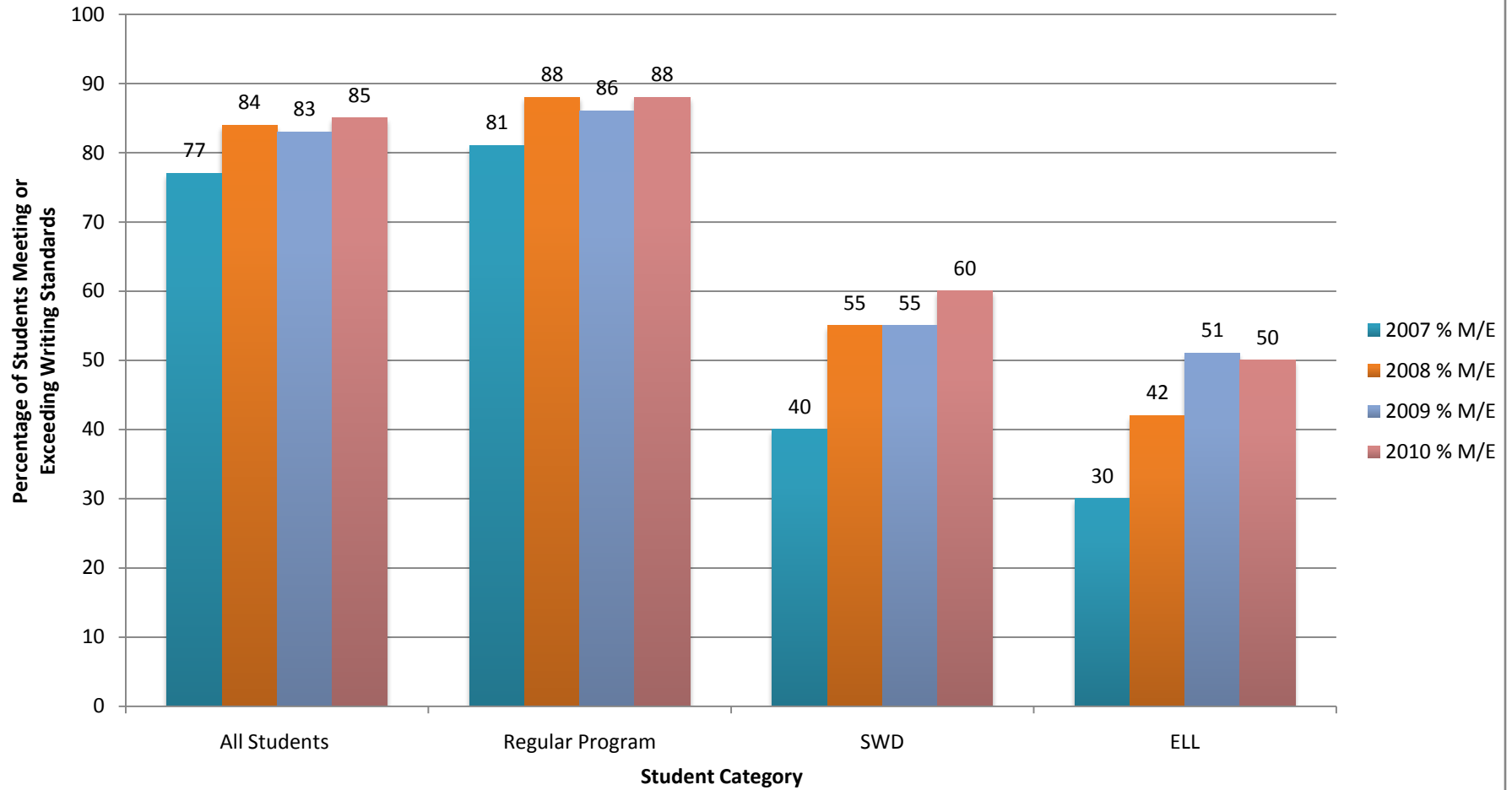
TFC = Too Few To Report (If a school had fewer than 10 students scores are not listed.)

DNM = Did Not Meet Standards

M = Met Standards

E = Exceeded Standards

Cobb County School District Eighth Grade Writing Assessment (2007-2010) Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding State Standards in Writing



Cobb County School District Eighth Grade Writing Assessment (2007 - 2010) Mean Scale Score Comparison

