

SBE Policy Amendment: Identification of English Learners & Exit Criteria (TEST-011)

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Background Information

English Learner - Multilingual Learner

The US Department of Education uses the term English Learner (EL) for any student —

A.who is aged 3 through 21;

B.who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;

C.(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and

D.whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual — (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in section 1111(b)(3); (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society

Sec. 8101 (page 393) [<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/essa-act-of-1965.pdf>]

English Learner - Multilingual Learner

As of March 21, 2022, NCDPI shifted to "English Learner" for policy and legislation purposes and "Multilingual Learner" for all other purposes as part of its asset-based belief system.

NCDPI now uses "Multilingual Learner" (ML) when referring to students who use other languages in addition to English.

This shift in language takes an asset-based approach to:

- 1) avoid labeling students in terms of the language they do not yet know;
- 2) acknowledge that students' first languages and cultures are a strength; and
- 3) reiterate the importance of literacy and proficiency in multiple languages.

ESSA State Plan

- Each State plan [Every Student Succeeds Act] shall demonstrate that the State has adopted English language proficiency standards that—
 - (i) are derived from the 4 recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing;
 - (ii) address the different proficiency levels of English learners; and
 - (iii) are aligned with the challenging State academic standards.

Public Law 114-95 (December 10, 2015)

[<https://www.congress.gov/114/plaws/publ95/PLAW-114publ95.pdf> [page 1825]]

English Learner Policy Review Process

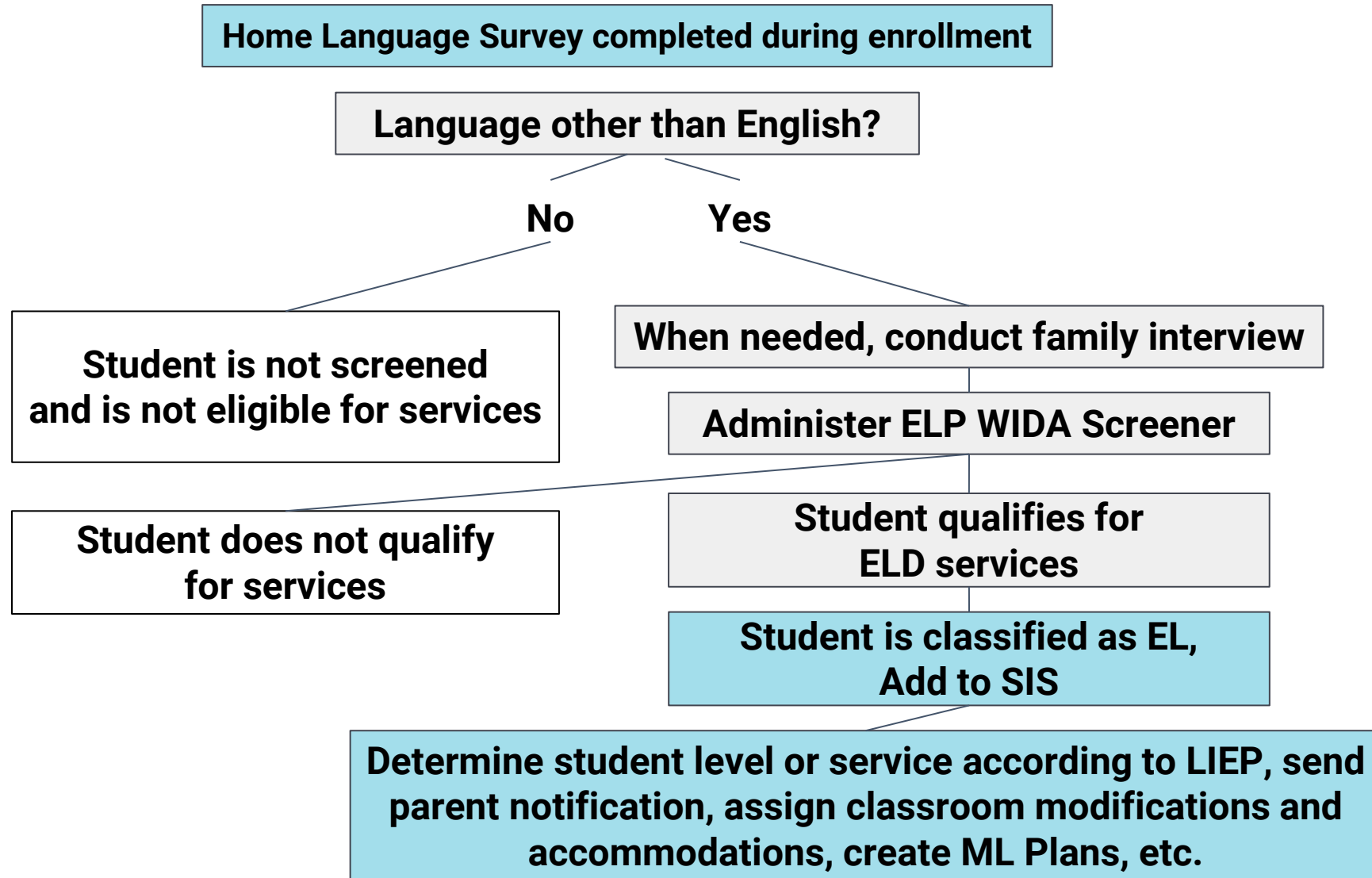
- In May 2024, SBE directed DPI to review policies and procedures
- Internal discussions over the last several months
- Stakeholder group meetings on October 4 and October 22
- Several different aspects of policy and procedure:
 - Home Language Survey
 - Entrance/Identification Criteria
 - Multiple Measure Exit Pathway
 - Exit Criteria
 - Annual Progress Targets

Home Language Survey (HLS) Process

Current Policy and Procedure

- All parents/family caregivers are required to complete a home language survey when students first enroll in a North Carolina school
- Each public school unit (PSU) develops their own HLS form
- Must include the following three questions per Department of Justice:
 - What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?
 - What is the language most often spoken by the student?
 - What is the language that the student first acquired?

EL Identification Flow Chart



Proposed Policy and Procedure

- Update TEST-011
 - Include the process, not just form
 - Standardized
 - Statewide
- We are working on getting this entered into the Student Information System
- Would go into effect for the 2025–26 school year

North Carolina Home Language Survey

North Carolina is committed to embracing families from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Being multilingual is a significant advantage that enriches the community and enhances educational opportunities. This Home Language Survey (HLS) fulfills the obligations of school districts to make programs, services, and activities accessible for all students, as required by state and federal law.* This form is confidential and will not be shared outside the North Carolina public school system.

Student Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

- What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?

- What is the language most often spoken by the student? _____
- What is the language that the student first learned to speak? _____
- Has your student ever attended any schooling (Kindergarten through 12th grade) in the United States?
• ____ Yes ____ No If yes, how many years? _____

This information will be reviewed by designated staff to determine if an English language proficiency screening should be administered.

Parent/Caregiver Signature: _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
If more than one language is indicated on the HLS, designated staff should complete a parent, family, or caregiver interview and review available documents that provide evidence of language background or previous identification as an English Learner (EL).

If a student transfers schools or PSUs within North Carolina and completes an additional HLS at the time of registration, the answers submitted on the first HLS will prevail for purposes of EL status.
Was a parent interview completed? Yes ____ No ____

Completed by: _____ Date: _____

Based on the information collected and reviewed, it is determined that this student:
_____ will be screened _____ will not be screened

Office Review by: _____ Date: _____ (Please Print)

*Per 3113(b)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and as indicated in 16 NC Admin Code 06D .0106 C(c): Upon initial enrollment in a NC public school, a Home Language Survey (HLS) must be completed for each student. If more than one language is indicated on the HLS, English as a Second Language (ESL) staff may complete a parent, family, or caregiver interview and review available documents that provide evidence of language background or previous identification as an EL.

Shared by the ML/Title III Team
Office of Academic Standards

Rationale

- Consistent statewide
- Uniform information is collected during the first step of EL identification
- Reliable and comparable data
- The process allows the PSU to identify missing elements or clarity for certain responses
- Common data can follow the student if they move PSUs

Entrance/Identification Criteria

Current Policy and Procedure

WIDA Screener for Kindergarten

GRADE	DOMAINS	QUALIFIES FOR SERVICE	DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR SERVICE
Kindergarten (1st Semester)	Listening and Speaking (L/S)	Any domain score below 5.0	All domain scores are 5.0 or above
Kindergarten (2nd Semester) Grade 1 (1st Semester)	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Any domain score below 5.0	All domain scores are 5.0 or above

WIDA Screener

GRADE	DOMAINS	QUALIFIES FOR SERVICE	DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR SERVICE
Grade 1 (2nd Semester) Grades 2–12	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Any domain score below 5.0	All domain scores are 5.0 or above

Proposed Policy and Procedure

WIDA Screener for Kindergarten

GRADE	DOMAINS	QUALIFIES FOR SERVICE	DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR SERVICE
Kindergarten (1st Semester)	Listening and Speaking (L/S)	Oral Language Composite score below 4.5	Oral Language Composite score 4.5 or above
Kindergarten (2nd Semester) Grade 1 (1st Semester)	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Overall Composite score below 4.5	Overall Composite score 4.5 or above

WIDA Screener

GRADE	DOMAINS	QUALIFIES FOR SERVICE	DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR SERVICE
Grade 1 (2nd Semester) Grades 2–12	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Overall Composite score below 4.5	Overall Composite score 4.5 or above

Rationale

- Each state establishes the entrance criteria that students must meet on English language screener tests to determine their eligibility for English language services
- Reflects equity between entrance/identification criteria and the exit criteria
- Moving to a composite score that reflects the exit criteria
- Would go into effect for the 2025–26 school year

Multiple Measures Pathway Considerations

What is a Multiple Measure Pathway?

- Multiple measures is the practice of using various forms of evidence and assessments to determine when an EL student is ready to exit an ELD program, rather than relying solely on one score on an English proficiency test
- Some states use multiple measures for students within a specified range of the established exit criteria
- This is not for all students who do not meet the exit score, but for students statistically close to the exit score

Rationale and Future Plan

- Using multiple measures creates a more nuanced picture of a student's English language proficiency and ensures that decisions about exiting ELD programs are based on a comprehensive evaluation of their abilities
- Multiple measures balance the limitations of any single assessment and provides a fairer assessment of a student's readiness to transition out of ELD support
- DPI would create an observation protocol with stakeholder input and feedback
- Would tentatively go into effect for the 2025–26 school year

Exit Criteria

Federal Requirements

- Each State must—
 - (i) Develop a uniform, valid, and reliable statewide assessment of English language proficiency, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills; and
 - (ii) Require each LEA to use such assessment to assess **annually** the English language proficiency, including **reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills**, of all English learners in kindergarten through grade 12 in schools served by the LEA.
- Each state must set (1) entrance/exit criteria and (2) progress targets for students to exit EL status within five years.

Exit Criteria

- Each state sets the exit criteria on the English language proficiency assessment to determine when a student no longer is identified as an English learner.
 - Once exited, students are monitored for four years.
 - Monitoring ensures language supports were not removed too early and that any academic challenges are addressed.
 - Exited students can be reclassified using the grade appropriate WIDA Screener.

Timeline

- Today's recommendation is for the 2024–25 school year only
 - A new edition of the English language proficiency assessment will be implemented in the 2025–26 school year
 - With the new assessment, a standard setting process will occur and a new exit criteria will be recommended for the State Board of Education approval.

WIDA English Language Proficiency Levels



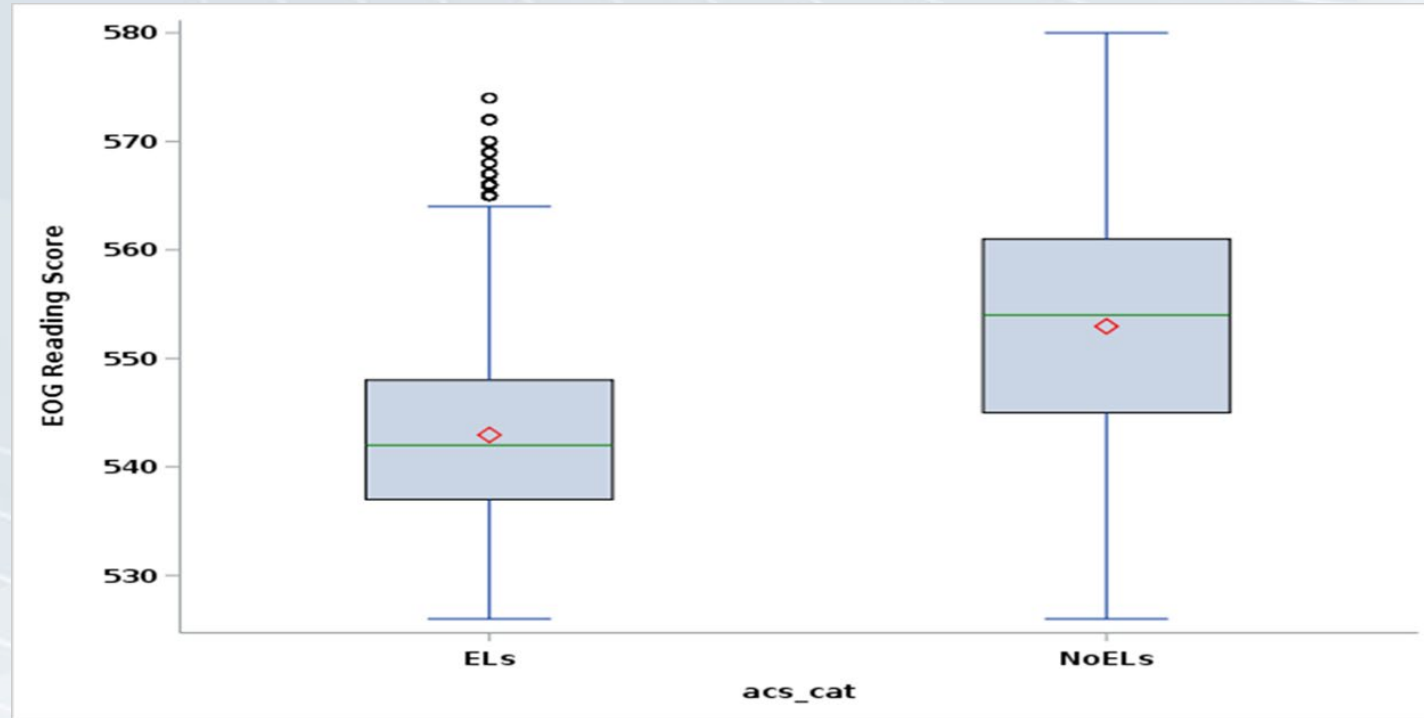
Proficiency Level Scores

- Range from 1.0 to 6.0
 - Whole number reflects the student's proficiency level based on WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards and Performance Definitions.

4.8

- The number after the decimal reflects how far the student has progressed within that level.

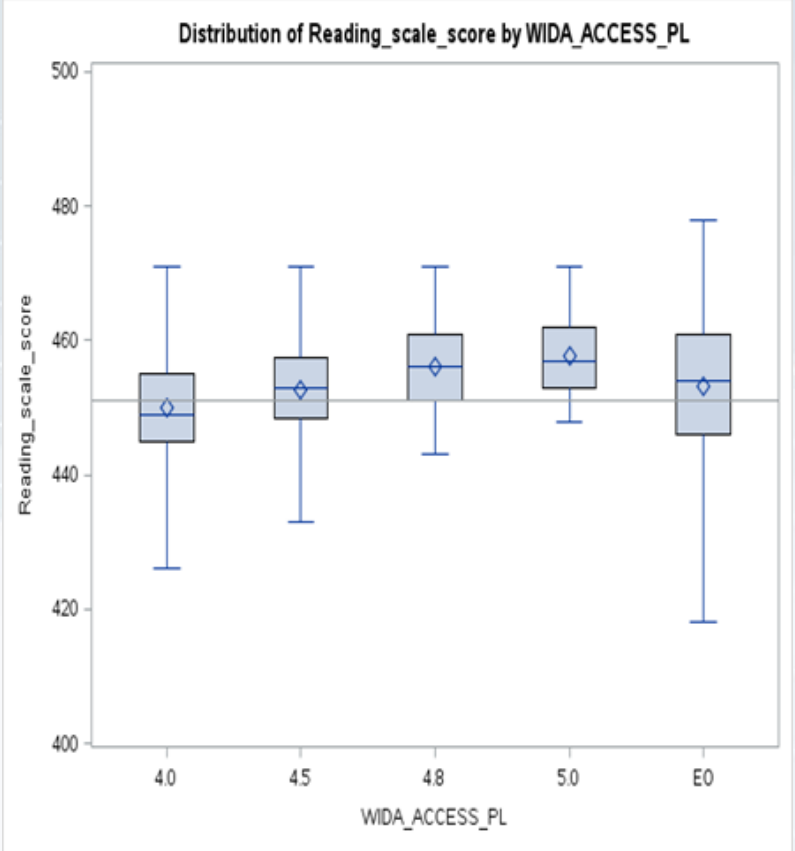
Box and Whisker Plot Descriptions (Grade 7 Reading)



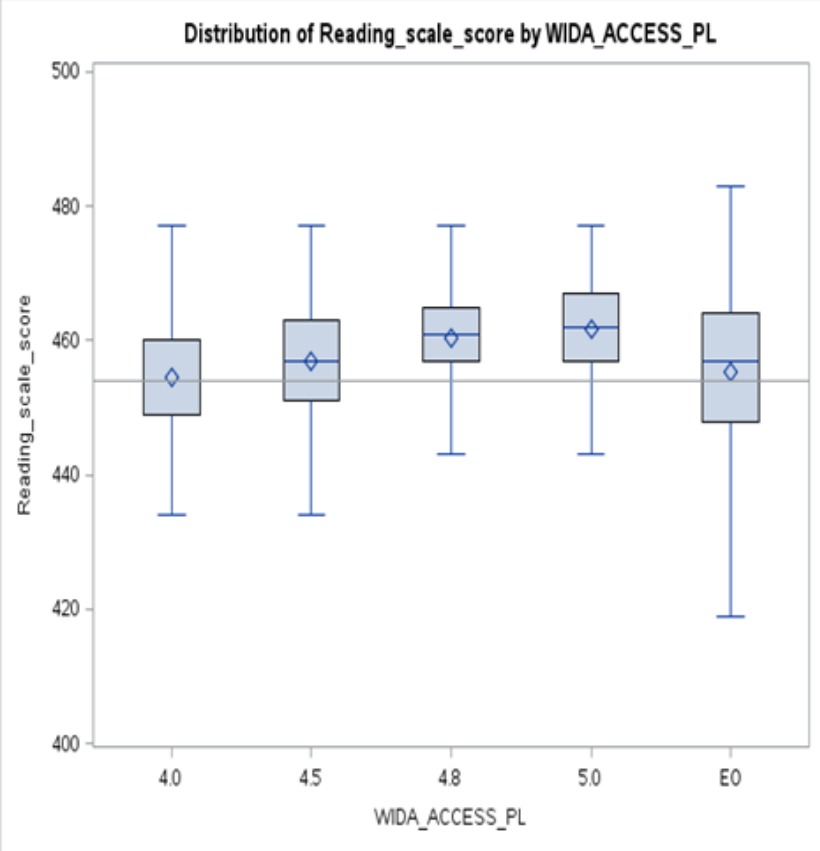
EL Type	N	Mean (Diamond)	Percentile			Min	Max
			25th (Q1)	50th (Median)	75th (Q3)		
Els	11,754	542.94	537	542	548	521	565
NoELs	102,791	552.96	545	554	561	521	585

Grades 6–8 Performance in Reading: EL vs non-EL with conditions applied

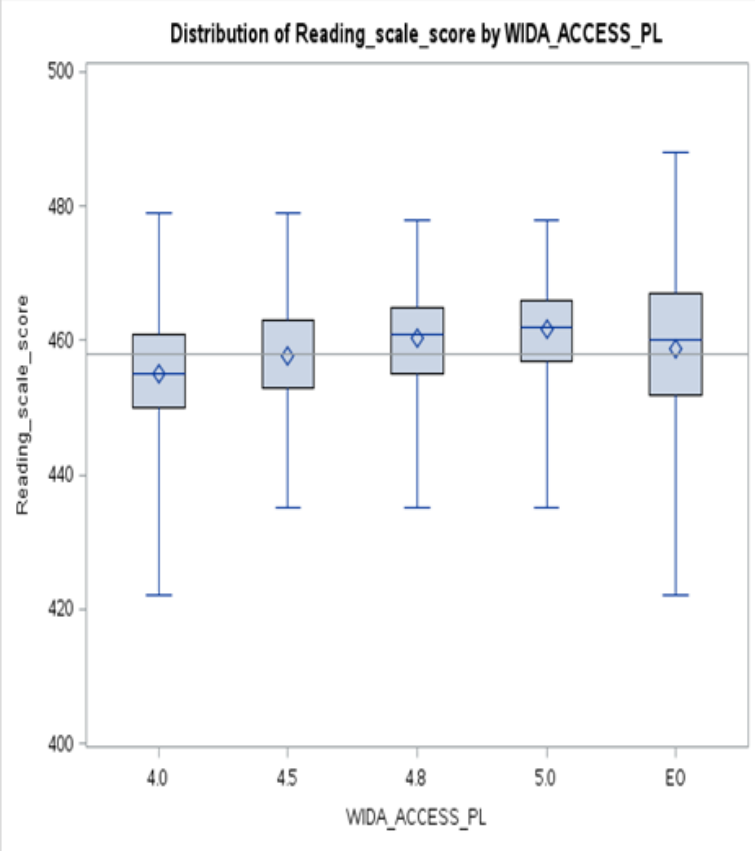
Grade 6



Grade 7



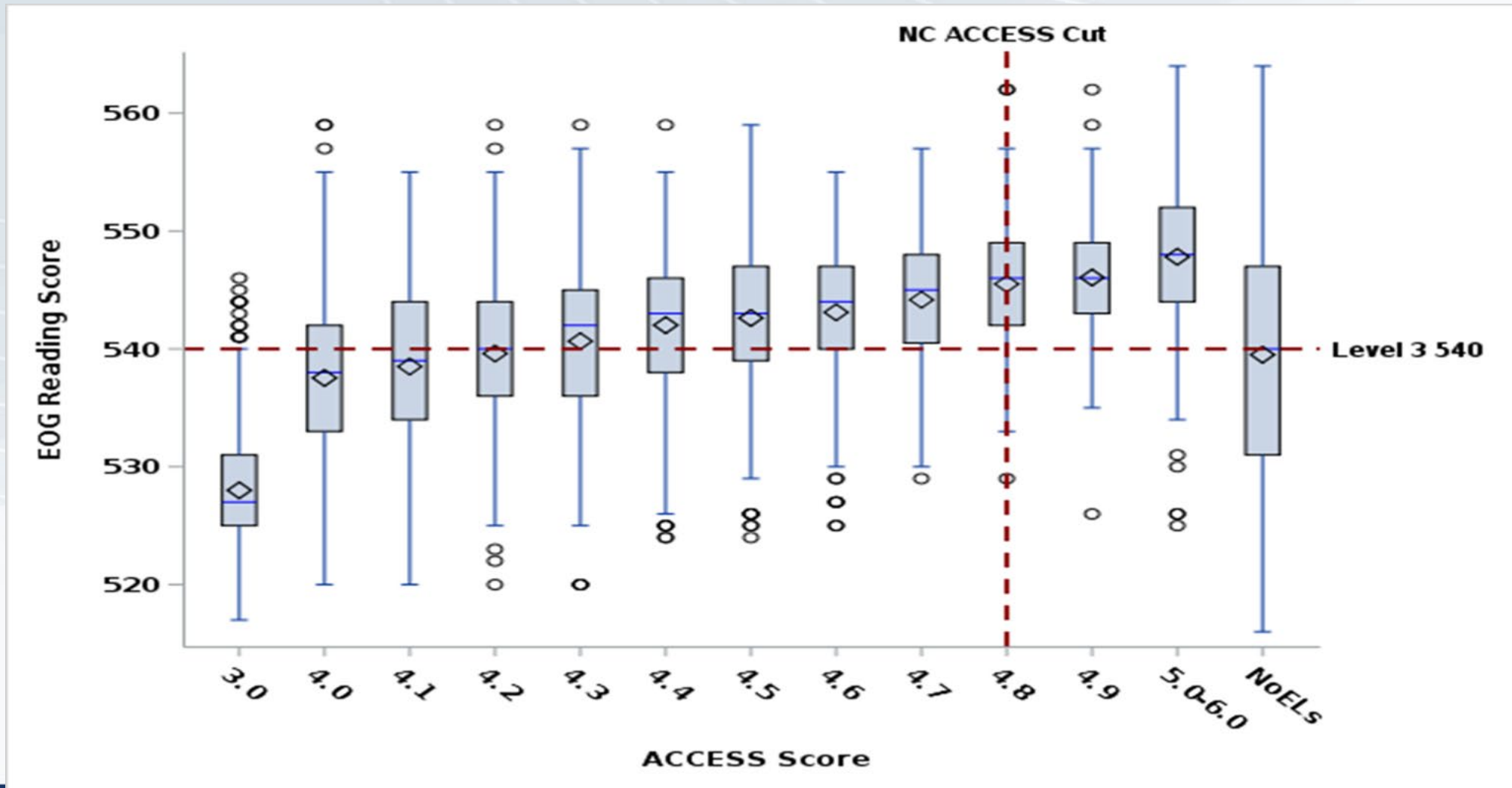
Grade 8



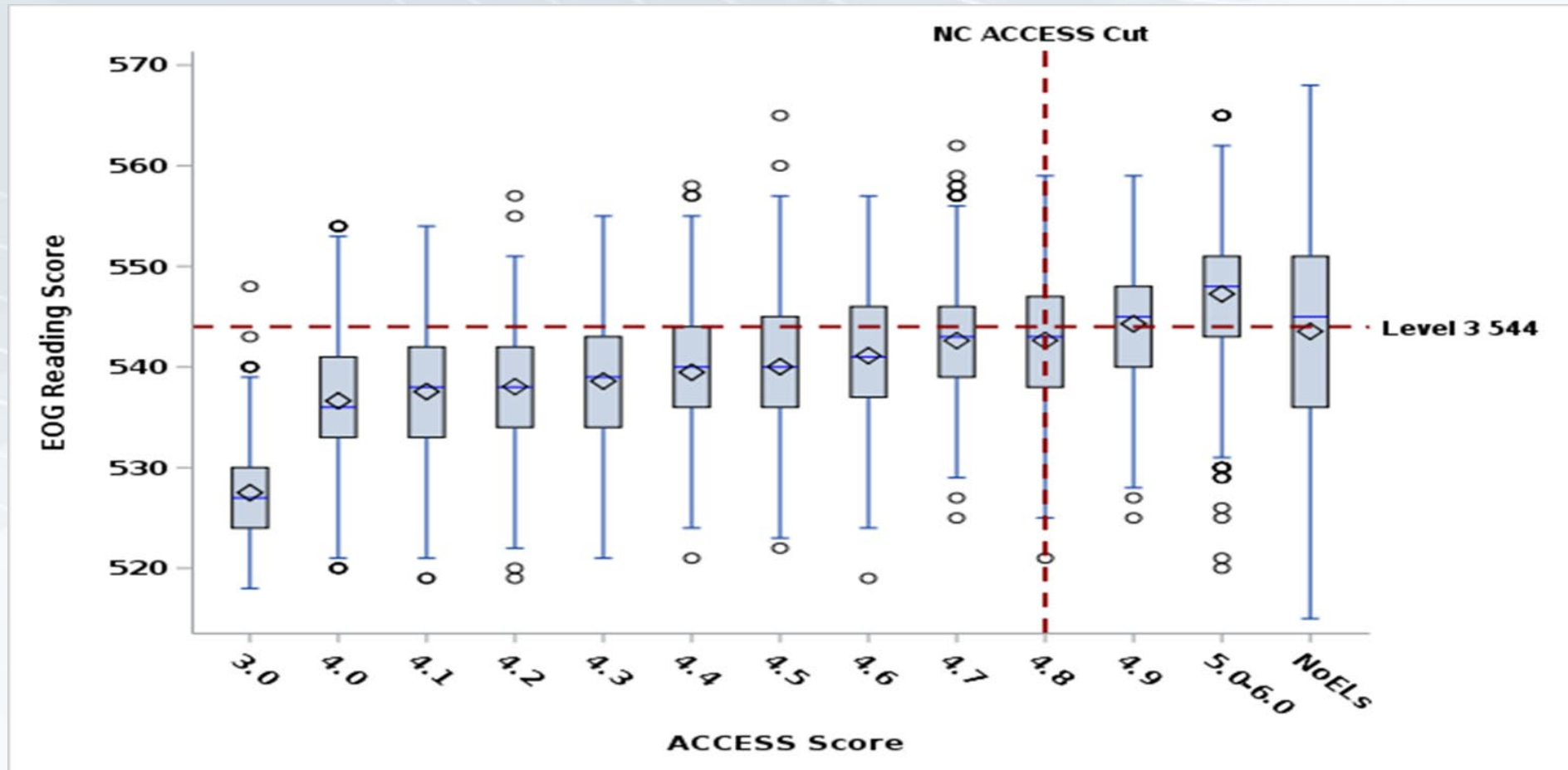
WIDA Access 2019 Exit Criteria Analysis

- In 2019, North Carolina compared student performance on the English proficiency tests with their performance on the statewide reading and mathematics tests, as statistical evidence to recommend appropriate exit criteria for EL students.
- Conclusions from the 2019 analyses, indicated EL students with a WIDA Access composite score of 4.8 or higher had a score distribution on the statewide reading and mathematics test that was similar or higher than the average student who met grade level proficiency.

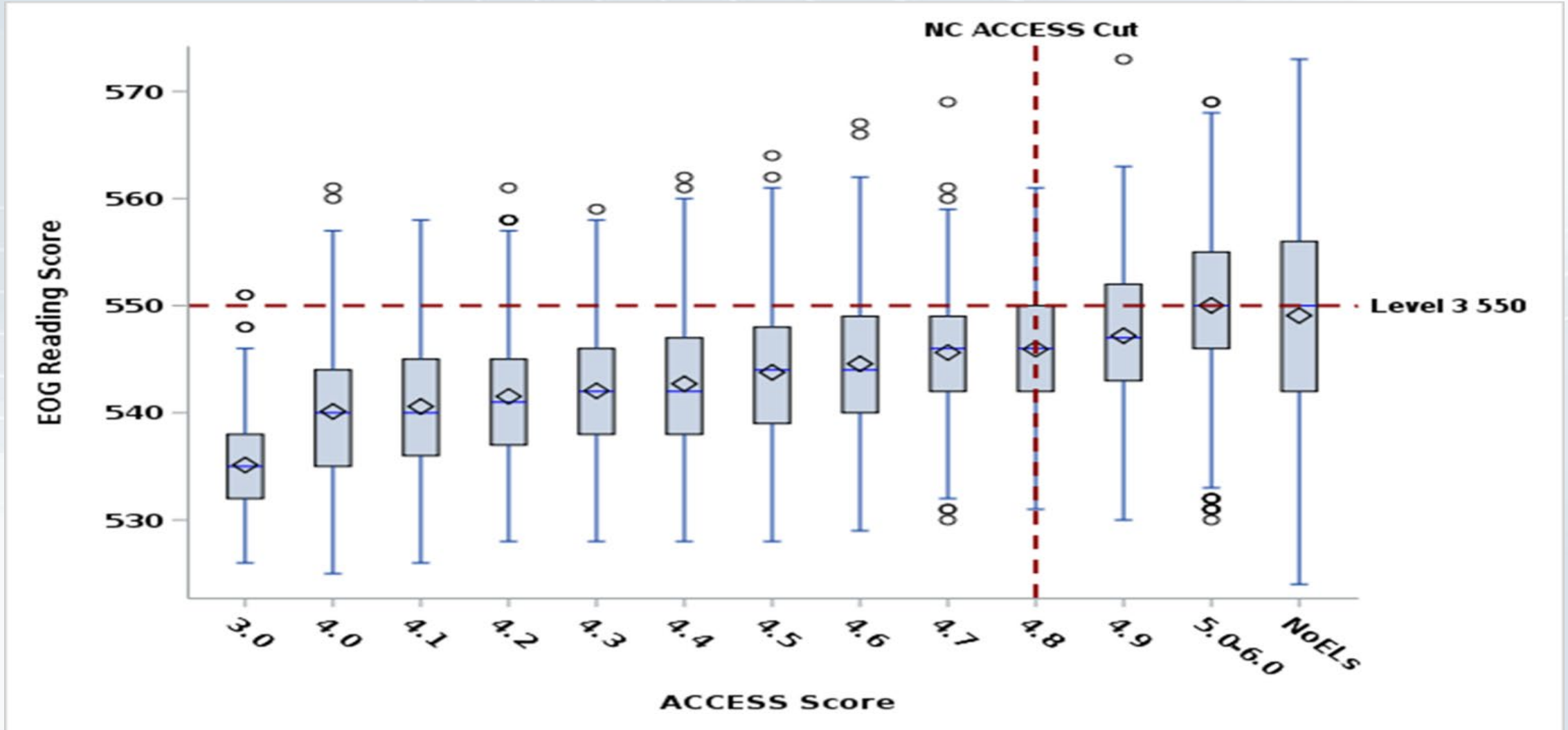
Grade 3 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



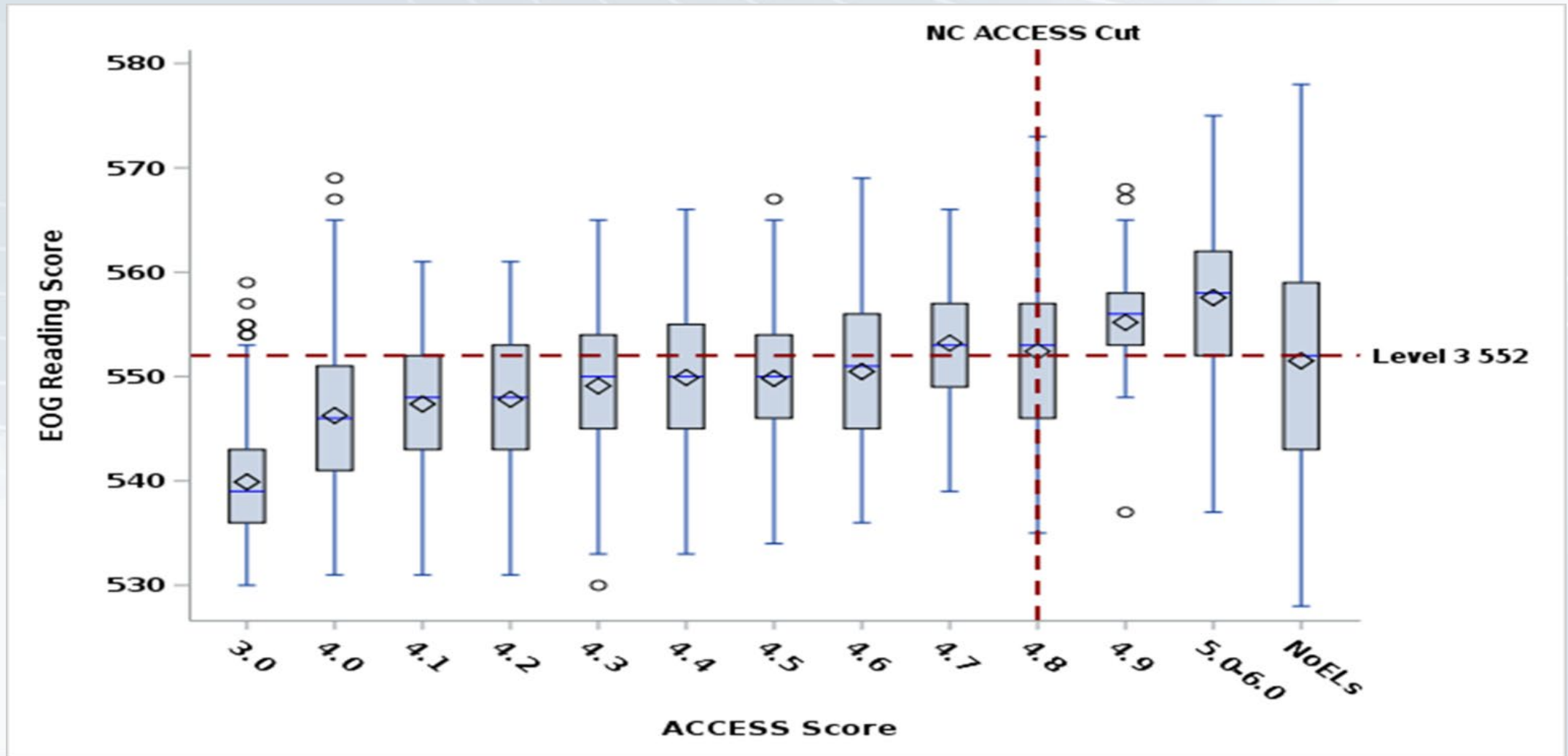
Grade 4 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



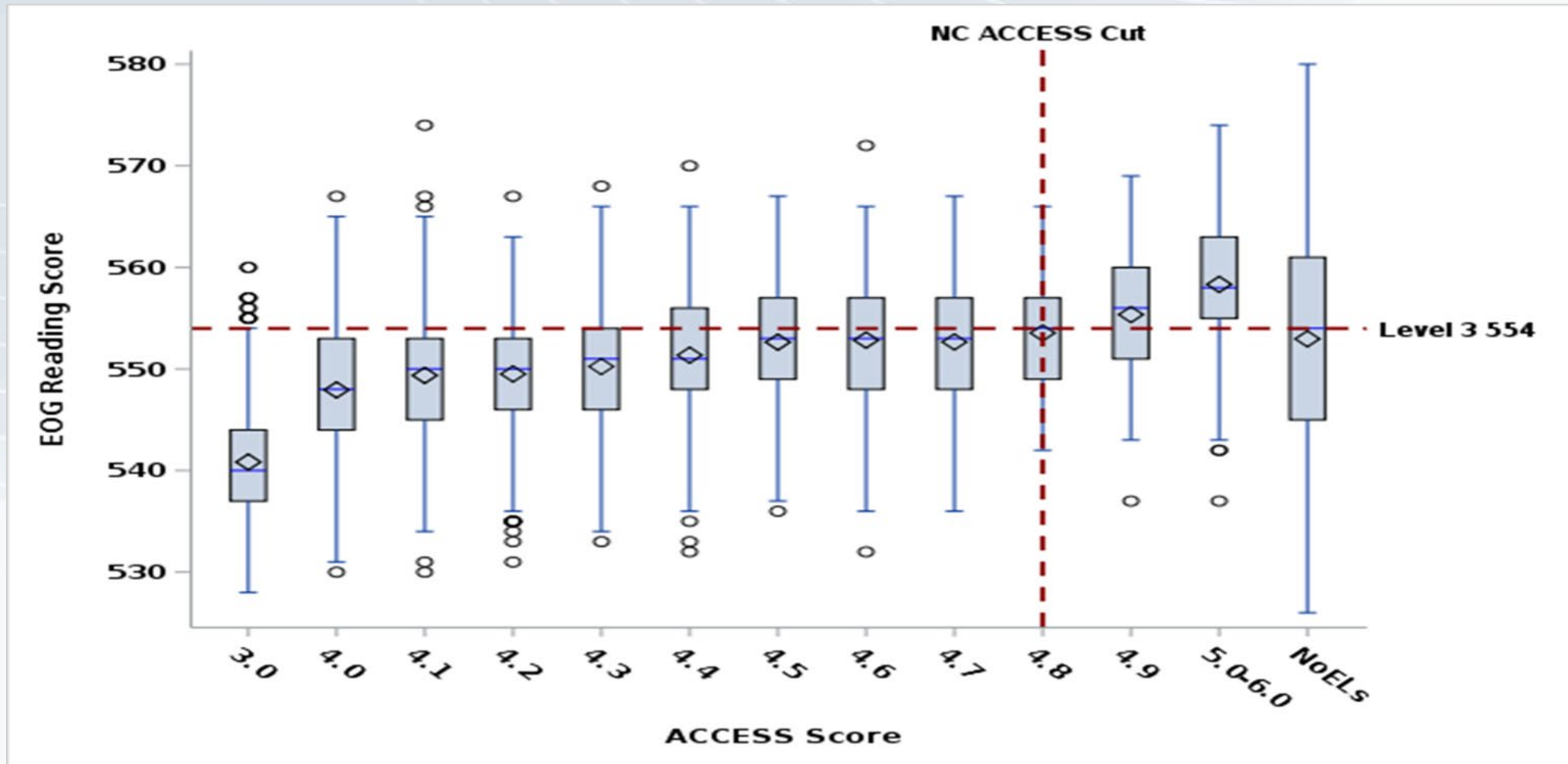
Grade 5 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



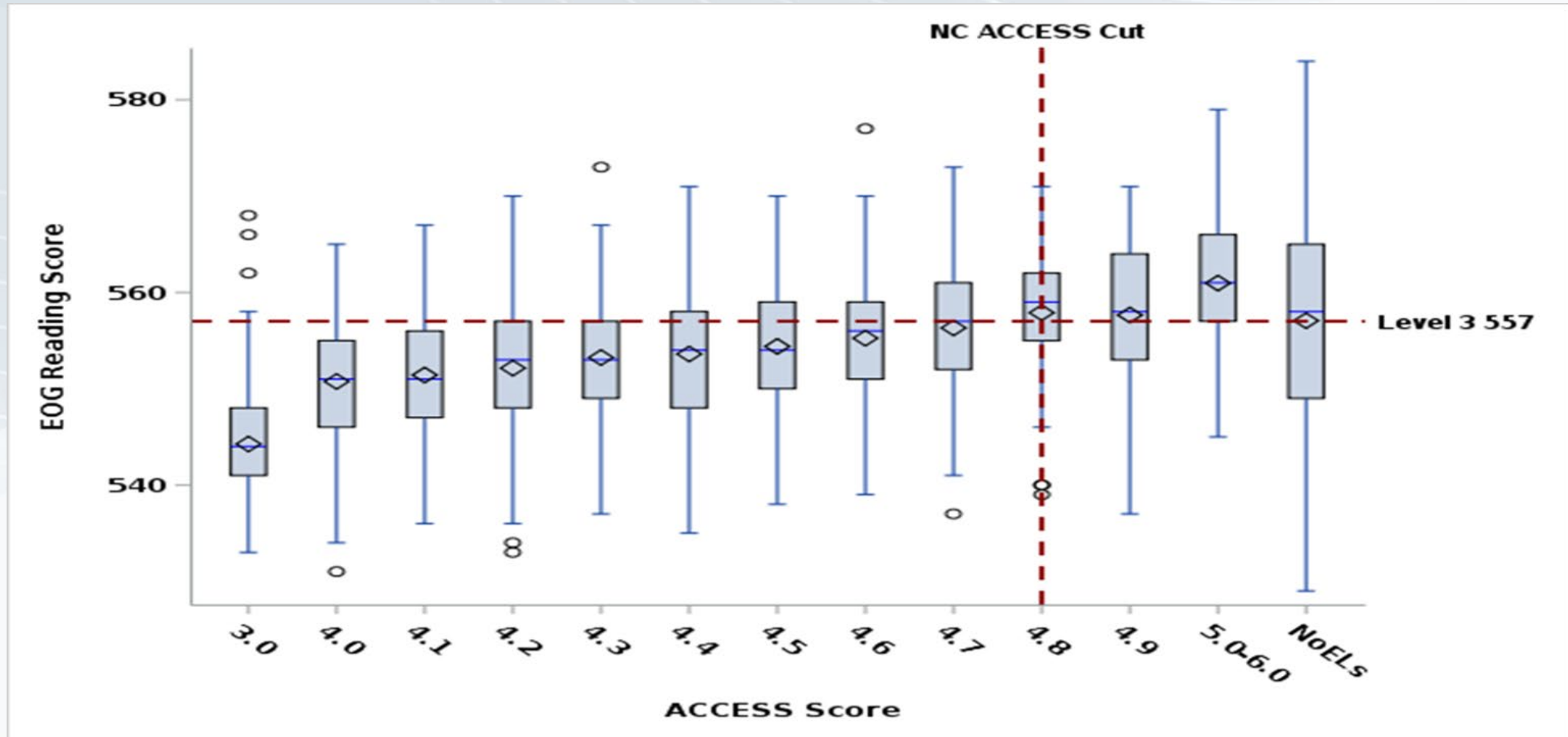
Grade 6 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



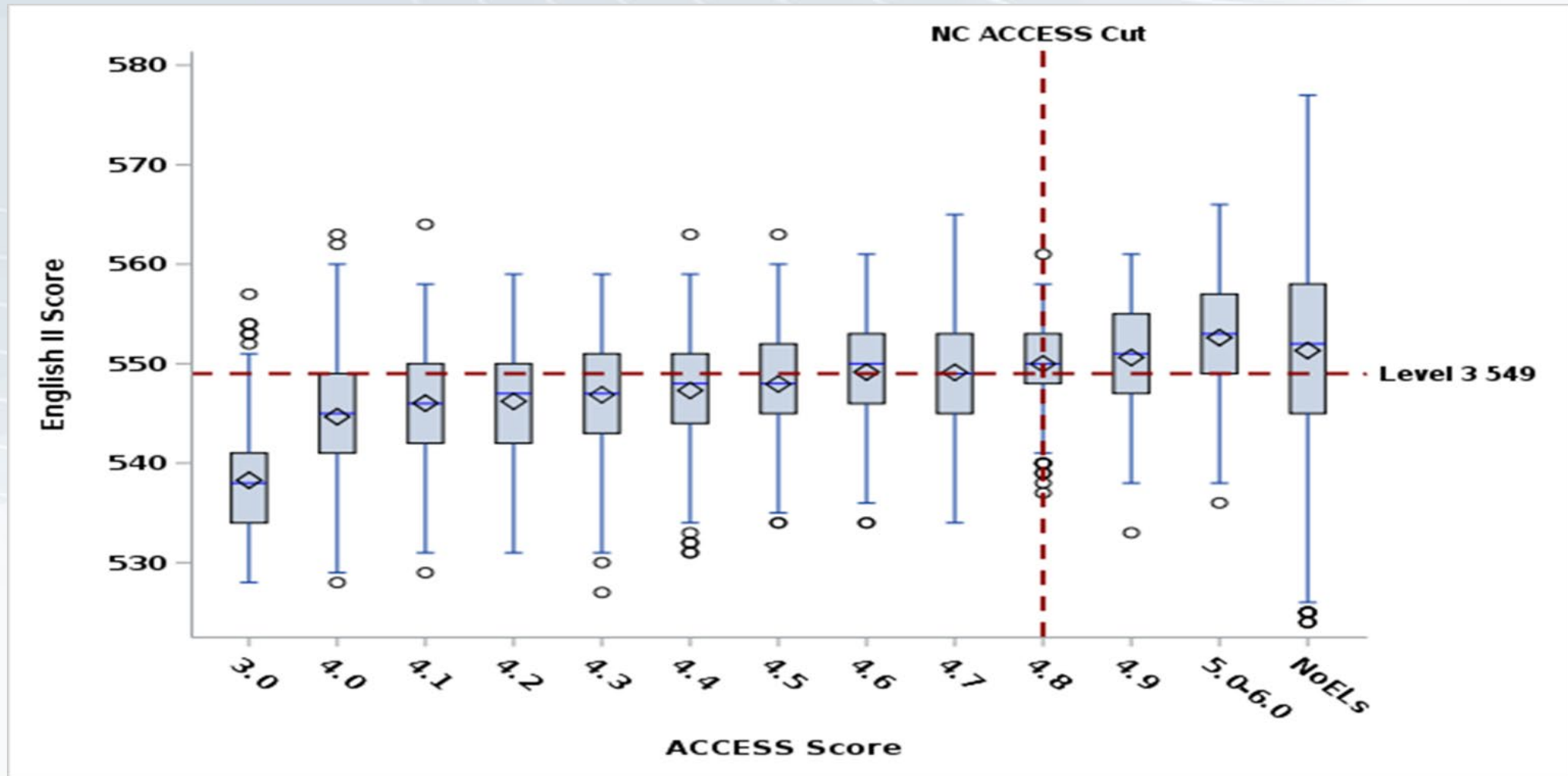
Grade 7 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



Grade 8 EOG Reading Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



English II Scale Score for Selected ACCESS Score 2023–24



North Carolina WIDA ACCESS Exit Criteria Recommendation Summary

WIDA ACCESS Range	G3RD		G4RD		G5RD		G6RD		G7RD		G8RD		HS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-3.9	10,517	75.9%	7,435	53.5%	6,644	52.3%	9,486	84.1%	9,436	80.3%	9,148	77.3%	8,576	77.5%
4-4.3	1,617	11.7%	2,027	14.6%	1,866	14.7%	1,216	10.8%	1,364	11.6%	1,481	12.5%	1,310	11.8%
4.4	305	2.2%	449	3.2%	459	3.6%	127	1.1%	202	1.7%	224	1.9%	210	1.9%
4.5	278	2.0%	633	4.6%	582	4.6%	119	1.1%	221	1.9%	273	2.3%	186	1.7%
4.6	219	1.6%	421	3.0%	431	3.4%	87	0.8%	108	0.9%	165	1.4%	187	1.7%
4.7	208	1.5%	421	3.0%	428	3.4%	82	0.7%	131	1.1%	160	1.4%	136	1.2%
4.8-6	717	5.2%	2,506	18.0%	2,287	18.0%	169	1.5%	292	2.5%	380	3.2%	455	4.1%
Total ACCESS	13,861	100.1%	13,892	99.9%	12,697	100.0%	11,286	100.1%	11,754	100.0%	11,831	99.9%	11,060	100.0%
NoELs	97,265		99,776		101,560		102,913		102,798		104,884		111,827	

Recommendation for 2024–25

- Based on analysis and discussions with stakeholders from public school units the recommendation today is to adjust the current exit criteria from 4.8 to 4.5 for grades K through 12.
- This recommendation will apply to the 2024–25 administration of WIDA ACCESS for ELLs.
- Further consideration of a multiple measure will be included in the standard setting for the new edition of the assessment implemented in the 2025–26 school year.

Questions?