

Henderson County Middle School Math Scores Scale Greater Heights

District sees sustained improvement on the state test with support from *i-Ready Personalized Instruction*.

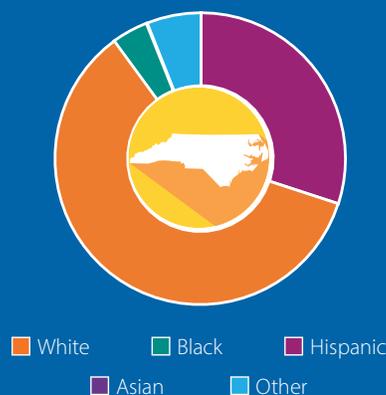


In the wake of a catastrophic hurricane and the long road of pandemic recovery, HCPS, nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, shows what's possible when growth becomes a shared expectation. Achievement here is the result of building a culture where progress is celebrated and supported at every level.

With *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* for Mathematics fueling that culture, the commitment is paying off. Data-informed leadership, targeted instruction, and recognition of student effort have delivered steady gains, with middle school proficiency rates climbing consistently since the district's 2018–2019 implementation.

Henderson County
Public Schools (HCPS)
Hendersonville, NC

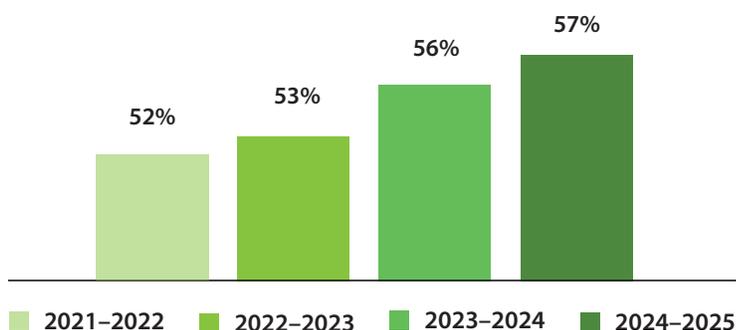
12,122 Grades K–12 Students



53% Students with Socioeconomic Disadvantages



Percentage of HCPS Grades 6–8 Students Performing at Level 3 and Above on North Carolina's End-of-Grade (EOG) Mathematics Test



HCPS middle school proficiency rates on the NC EOG Mathematics Test have climbed steadily since first implementing *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* for Mathematics with Grades 6–8 students in the 2018–2019 school year.

"i-Ready assessments were the most accurate predictor of our proficiency. The data lined up almost perfectly with our state end-of-grade proficiency, within tenths of a point. *i-Ready* gives me a heads-up of where teachers should target, and an idea of how to prepare for next year."

—Brent Stepp, Principal,
Flat Rock Middle School

Making Every Lesson Count

HCPS middle school leaders gain a clear view of student learning through *i-Ready*, which uses assessment data to pinpoint the specific skills each student is ready to learn and show teachers where focused instruction will make the greatest difference.

In their professional learning communities, teachers turn those insights into action—planning lessons that build on students’ strengths and reinforcing skills through *i-Ready* practice.

Each lesson includes a brief check that helps teachers see how well students demonstrate understanding, then determine next steps to move learning forward.

“It’s about using what we see to make better decisions for kids,” one principal explained.

Creating Responsive Classrooms

What’s taking shape in HCPS across middle school classrooms goes beyond assessment scores.

Math instruction is evolving into something more purposeful and responsive to student needs.

The result is a connected learning experience where instruction, insight, and growth align. Teachers understand how their students learn, where they struggle, and what helps them grow.

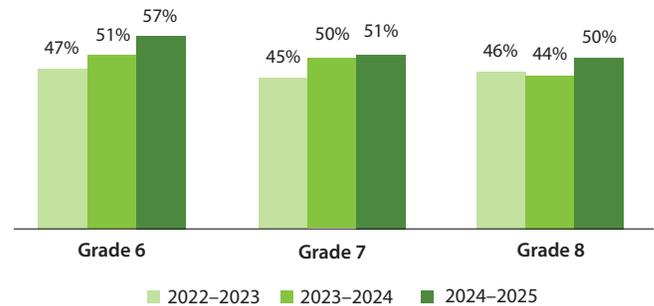
Principals build on the work happening in classrooms to guide coaching and sustain progress schoolwide, and students are beginning to see their effort as the path to measurable academic achievement.

Middle Schools Unlock Math Growth through Powerful Insights

As teachers and leaders gain a clearer picture of learning, students do as well, using their data to track progress and take ownership of growth. Katelyn Davis, principal of Apple Valley Middle School, notes:

“Once students understand where they are and where they need to go, they see *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* as a way to get better at math.”

Henderson County Middle School Students Placing Early On and Above in Mathematics on the *i-Ready* Assessment



Between the 2022–2023 and 2024–2025 school years, the percentage of HCPS Grades 6–8 students reaching Early On Grade Level and Above on the *i-Ready* assessment rose four to 10 points.

Principals and Teachers Transform *i-Ready* Insights into Achievement

HCPS educators share a throughline: every data point drives action that keeps instruction focused. As Brent Stepp, principal of Flat Rock Middle School, said:

“The assessments in *i-Ready* give us a realistic picture of where we stand and allow us to take action with confidence. We can see how far we’ve come, but we also see how far we still have to go.”

Coaching Teachers to Greater Impact

To make the most out of their *i-Ready* data, HCPS teachers and leaders collaborated with Curriculum Associates’ professional learning (PL) to:

1. **Analyze Data.** Review assessment results regularly to identify where students are excelling and where they need support.
2. **Prioritize Skills for Instruction.** Focus on the skills that will have the biggest impact on student growth and model those lessons.
3. **Connect *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* to Tier 1 Instruction.** Adjust lessons based on student needs. Reteach when necessary, enrich when ready, and support every student in accessing Tier 1 instruction.

This approach has transformed teaching and learning across HCPS. “We’ve moved past the idea that data is separate from instruction,” one teacher shared. “Now, it’s all part of the same work.”

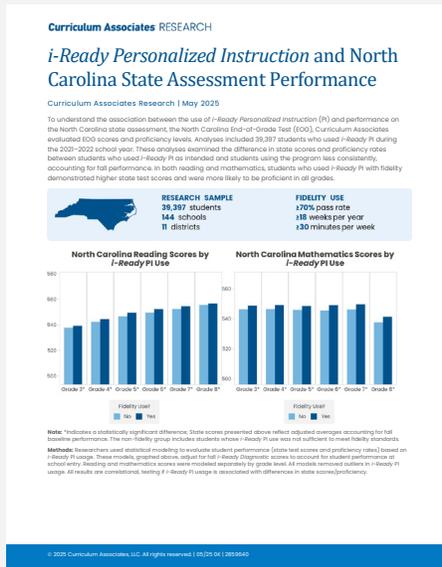
Growth through Partnership

Teacher growth thrives through a partnership that blends Curriculum Associates’ PL support with the district’s instructional leadership.

Director of Middle Schools Dr. Marcie Wilson says this approach keeps training relevant and rooted in practice:

“The professional learning is actionable and aligned to what each school needs. Teachers can keep improving instruction without losing sight of their students.”

In North Carolina, across all grades in both mathematics and reading, students who used *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* as recommended demonstrated higher state test scores and were more likely to be proficient than students who did not.



Read the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Tier 3 research!



Student Goal-Setting Strategies for Middle School Teachers

When middle schoolers see, they believe. Help middle school students thrive by using data to set goals, track progress, and build confidence through visible learning strategies.

[Read the blog!](#)

Celebrating Effort and Achievement to Inspire Student Success

In Henderson County, success doesn’t stay hidden in the numbers—it’s recognized and celebrated.

Principals make student achievement visible, from morning announcements and weekly shoutouts to gift cards, ice cream parties, and bowling trips.

As one principal shared, “We celebrate progress as much as proficiency. It keeps the focus on effort, not just on who’s at the top.”

The result is a middle school community where growth is both expected and honored. Students rise to the challenge, teachers are supported, and leaders foster a culture where math achievement stands as a defining success of Henderson County Public Schools.