AQuESTT for Nebraska

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Nebraska Multi-tiered System of Supports (NeMTSS)

#AQuESTT

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AQuESTT

AQuESTT is: Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow

- A framework for a quality education system
- An opportunity to address "accountability" based on Nebraska's needs

Educational Opportunities & Access

The State Board believes that all students should have access to comprehensive instructional opportunities to be prepared for postsecondary education and career goals.

Areas of Focus

- Early Childhood
- **Comprehensive Learning Opportunities**
- **Expanded Learning Opportunities**
- Blended Learning and Opportunities for credit bearing distance/virtual content

Educator Effectiveness

The State Board believes that students should be surrounded by effective educators throughout their learning experiences such that schools and districts develop effective teachers and leaders that establish a culture of success.

Areas of Focus

- Nebraska Teacher & Principal Performance Framework
- **Professional Development**
- **Building Leadership Supports**
- Effective Local Policy Makers & Superintendents

Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success

The State Board believes that student engagement through positive partnerships and relationships are fundamental to successful schools and districts. The State Board seeks to support schools and districts to implement best practices in student, family and community engagement to enhance educational experiences and opportunities.

Areas of Focus

- **Individualized or Personalized Learning Plans**
- Attendance and Participation
- Family Involvement
- Community and Support Services

Nebraska Multi-tiered System of Supports (NeMTSS)

Nebraska Multi-tiered System of Supports (NeMTSS)

- UNL NeMTSS Implementation Support Team (NeMTSS IST)
  - Andrea Boden & Tanya Ihlo

- Nebraska Department of Education
  - Rose Dymacek & Kelly Wojcik

Today's Discussion

- What is MTSS?
- Key components of an MTSS framework
- What is takes for implementation – Implementation science brief

MTSS

MTSS is not a special education initiative

MTSS is not a general education initiative

MTSS is an EVERY education initiative

-Judy Elliot

What is MTSS?

- A school improvement process focused on using data (instructional and student data) to guide decision making at all levels within districts and schools
  - Includes systems-level decisions related to things like resource allocation, scheduling, curriculum, instructional programs/practices used, infrastructure for professional development and support for teachers in utilizing effective instructional programs/practices, and
  - Student-level decisions related to determining need for intervention support beyond core classroom instruction, determining effectiveness of intervention supports and adjusting support for students (e.g., increasing intensity, fading support, etc.) to meet their needs

- A systems change for all education (general education, special education, Title I, etc.) that requires critical examination of current practices and willingness to adjust/change practices based on data

Components of MTSS

Instruction and intervention

- Core supports for ALL students and intervention supports for those who need them (a continuum of increasing more intensive supports)
- Evidence-based programs and instructional delivery practices
- Increasing intensity/precision of instruction as students needs increase

Assessment system

- Using screening data to determine which students need support and progress monitoring data to determine if the support is working
- Using multiple data sources to make decisions about student progress and next steps for instruction

Fidelity and support system

- Instructional data are used to inform professional development and support needs for instructional staff

Continuous improvement process

- Using data at a systems level to evaluate the implementation of MTSS and make necessary changes

Teaming

- All aspects of implementation of MTSS are the responsibility of leadership/implementation teams

MTSS Components (cont.)

- MTSS focuses on improving skills of teachers to more effectively address **academic** and **behavioral development**
- MTSS provides multiple levels of support for **all learners** (struggling through advanced, including students receiving Special Education supports)
- MTSS also includes a focus on intervention but has a **strong goal of prevention**
- MTSS requires that teachers, administrators, district personnel, and student support specialists **change the way they have traditionally worked together**
  - Requires a greater focus on **collaboration** to provide support to all students **regardless of label**

MTSS components (cont.)

- **Data** are used in MTSS to **inform and improve the quality of instruction** (focus on instructional data)
  - In education we have most often focused on student data and evaluating student progress; we need a shift to combining the student data with instructional data

- MTSS **allocates resources and support** for students receiving instruction **AND** for **teachers** and other support staff who are responsible for instruction

- Strong emphasis **coaching and training support for teachers** to reach high levels of implementation of evidence-based programs and practices

Why are Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports and Early Prevention Important?

- Children come to school with varying early literacy experiences
- Children who are at risk of reading difficulties can be identified as early as preschool
- **Without intervention 90% of struggling first graders will still be struggling at the end of elementary school**
- Struggling readers have a higher risk of academic failure and school dropout
- **Without intervention 74% of students who are poor readers in 3rd grade will be poor readers in 9th grade**
- We have documented the power of early intervention to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students

Al Otaiba & Torgesen, 2007; Hart & Risley, 1995; Felton & Pepper, 1995; Francis, et al., 1996; Juel, 1988; Shaywitz, et al., 1999; Morgan et al., 2008; Torgesen and Burgess, 1998; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007

What does it take to build and implement a MTSS?

Not a quick fix!

- Process of creating a MTSS is an intentional redesign of educational practices and supports
- Requires analyzing and redesigning general education, special education and entitlement program (e.g., Title I) supports to ensure that the individual needs of all students are being met in the most effective and efficient way possible
  - Allocating resources and providing supports based on need, not labels
- Design and implementation of a MTSS is a multi-year effort

Core Beliefs

- What we've been doing has not been working for ALL students
  - There is an urgency to make a change to meet the needs of all students, especially for students who are struggling
- Efforts must focus on PREVENTION
- We must maintain high expectations for ALL students – All students can learn and achieve
- Student performance is influenced most by the quality of the interventions/instruction we deliver and how well we deliver them
- ALL teachers can benefit from training and coaching supports
- Decisions are best made based on data
- We are ALL willing to make necessary changes to what we're doing as the data indicate

What it takes to implement MTSS

- Moving from passive vs. active forms of assistance for ensuring that effective implementation occurs

- Must shift from ‘letting it happen’ and ‘helping it happen’ to ‘making it happen’ approaches

Greenalgh, Robert, MacFarlane, Bate, & Kyriakidou (2004)

"Letting it happen" and "helping it happen"

- "Letting it happen"- A policy or program has been mandated or adopted and, with minimal supports, practitioners (teachers) are expected to make the translation from information to practice and they are held accountable for intended outcomes

- "Helping it happen"-A policy or program has been mandated or adopted and materials, training resources, and websites are provided to support teachers. The teachers are left to figure out how to solve problems that arise, and are held accountable for achieving positive outcomes.

"Making it happen"

"Making it happen" A policy or program has been mandated or adopted and **active purposeful implementation best practices** are provided to help teachers and administrators. An Implementation Team is accountable for developing the implementation support systems, resolving organization and system issues that arise, and achieving positive results

Lack of deep implementation of programs/practices

Some potential barriers to deep implementation include…

- Lack of clear description of programs and practices – evidence-based programs/practices
- Lack of upfront planning for implementation
- Lack of clarity of expectations
- Lack of core beliefs
- Lack of knowledge and skills: underestimation of the amount of support (PD and coaching) needed to develop knowledge and skills
- Haven't established clear indicators of what deep implementation looks like
- Going through the motions, but not truly using data for continuous improvement of the process

How can Implementation Science Research help?

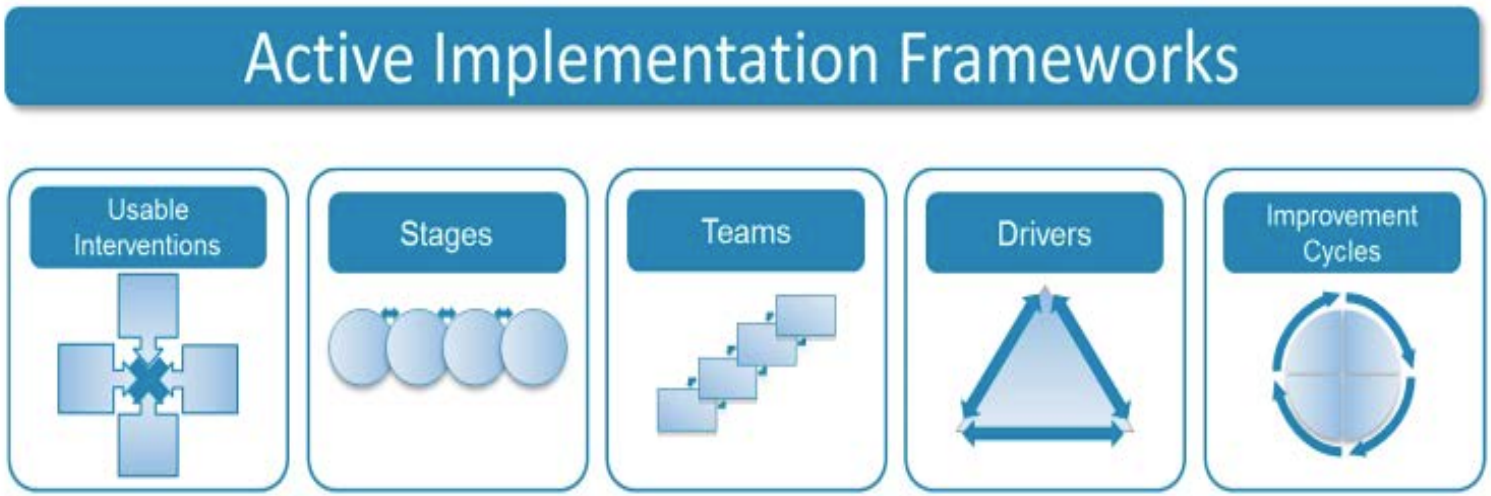
- Deep Implementation of research based programs and practices must occur in order for students to receive the supports they need

- This information should be used when any new program or practice is considered for implementation in the future as getting them fully implemented should always be the goal

Fixen, D.L.; Blase, K. A.; Naoom, S. F.; and, Duda, M. A. (2013). NIRN

Findings from NIRN Research

Five Active Implementation Frameworks found to be essential in implementation of initiatives across a range of fields:



Fixen, D.L.; Blase, K. A.; Naoom, S. F.; and, Duda, M. A. (2013). NIRN

Building and implementing a MTSS

- Establishing a team
- Analyzing current practices and determining a focus area
- Selecting evidence-based programs/practices to implement
- Building an infrastructure for implementation (that includes much more intensive training and support than has typically been provided)
- Establishing indicators of deep implementation of the programs/practices
- Monitoring implementation and problem solving

Exploration

Building and implementing a MTSS

- Establishing a team
  - Implementation team that includes decision makers – responsible for all aspects of implementation
    - Team is only as strong as the weakest implementer (a growth mindset related to the adults and students)
  - Willingness to make decisions about allocation of resources, provision of PD and support based on need and likelihood of success for students
  - Team must be focused on "Making it Happen" – not letting it happen or helping it happen (Fixen, D.L.; Blase, K. A.; Naoom, S. F.; and, Duda, M. A., 2013)

Building and implementing a MTSS (cont.)

- Examining current instruction (across all systems: core, intervention, special education)
  - Student data
  - Current instruction – expectations around use of materials, delivery practices, etc.
  - Gathering of instructional data (e.g., student engagement and active participation in learning)

- Examine current decision making processes at a systems level (e.g., resource allocation (funding, people resources), provision of professional development and support)
  - How are decisions made? Are decisions made based on need, likelihood of the decision leading to success for students, ability to provide support to achieve deep implementation?

Building and implementing a MTSS process (cont.)

- Determine focus area(s)
  - Use combination of student data sources to help guide determination of focus area: Core, Intervention and Special education
- Determining what program(s)/practices(s) you will implement
  - What is your identified need, what need are you trying to address?
  - Select something that has a high likelihood of addressing the need/working for students
- Clearly define the program/practice/strategy
  - anyone asked what it is would have similar responses
  - anyone to whom it's described would be able to walk in a classroom and know if it is present or absent or to what level it's being implemented

Installation

Implementation Drivers

Adapted from Fixsen & Blasé, 2008

Building and implementing a MTSS process (cont.)

Plan for deep implementation

- What are your expectations for implementation?
  - Who is expected to implement it and to what level of implementation?
- What are your indicators that it is deeply implemented?
- Initial and ongoing training and support should be planned before any expectation of implementation
- Plan for and provide initial training
  - First – for those who will be managing/monitoring implementation and those who will be supporting implementation
  - Then – for those who will be implementing
    - Should include opportunities for practice

Building and implementing a MTSS process (cont.)

Plan for deep implementation

- Observation/performance assessment –
  - How will you determine if the program/practice/strategy is being implemented by the implementers
  - How will you use that information to plan further support for those who need it until they reach the expected level of implementation

- Plan to provide support for staff based on need as determined by a combination of instructional data and student data

- What types of support will be provided?
  - Booster training sessions based on need identified through performance assessments/observations
  - Coaching support – feedback, modeling, side-by-side, planning, use of videotapes, etc.

Initial implementation

Building and implementing a MTSS process (cont.)

Begin implementation of the model/program/practice

Follow the implementation plan for providing ongoing professional development and support for implementers

Monitoring implementation and problem solving

- Team needs to monitor progress on indicators of deep implementation and ensure whether or not they meeting the expectations on the indicators
- Team needs to problem solve around any indicators that are not met to plan to get those indicators met

Full implementation

Building and implementing a MTSS process (cont.)

- The full model is implemented (including evidence based instructional programs & practices, applying systematic decision rules to universal screening and progress monitoring data to guide supports for students) as determined by performance on indicators of deep implementation
- Achieving growth/improved results for students
- Implementation team continues to focus on problem solving and planning to sustain MTSS

It requires leadership…

- Making difficult decisions/changes related to:
  - Assessments, instructional materials and delivery methods
  - Resource allocation (including personnel, time, materials, and funding, etc.) based on data and need
- Basing the decisions/changes on data and research NOT adult preference or tradition
- Establishing clear expectations for the change/decision to be implemented and for the things to stop doing
- Providing support to staff to implement decisions/changes (through systematic PD and embedded support)
- "Sticking to" the decisions/holding people accountable to the changes
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the decisions/changes using data

Leadership (cont.)

- Successfully building and implementing a MTSS is a systems change

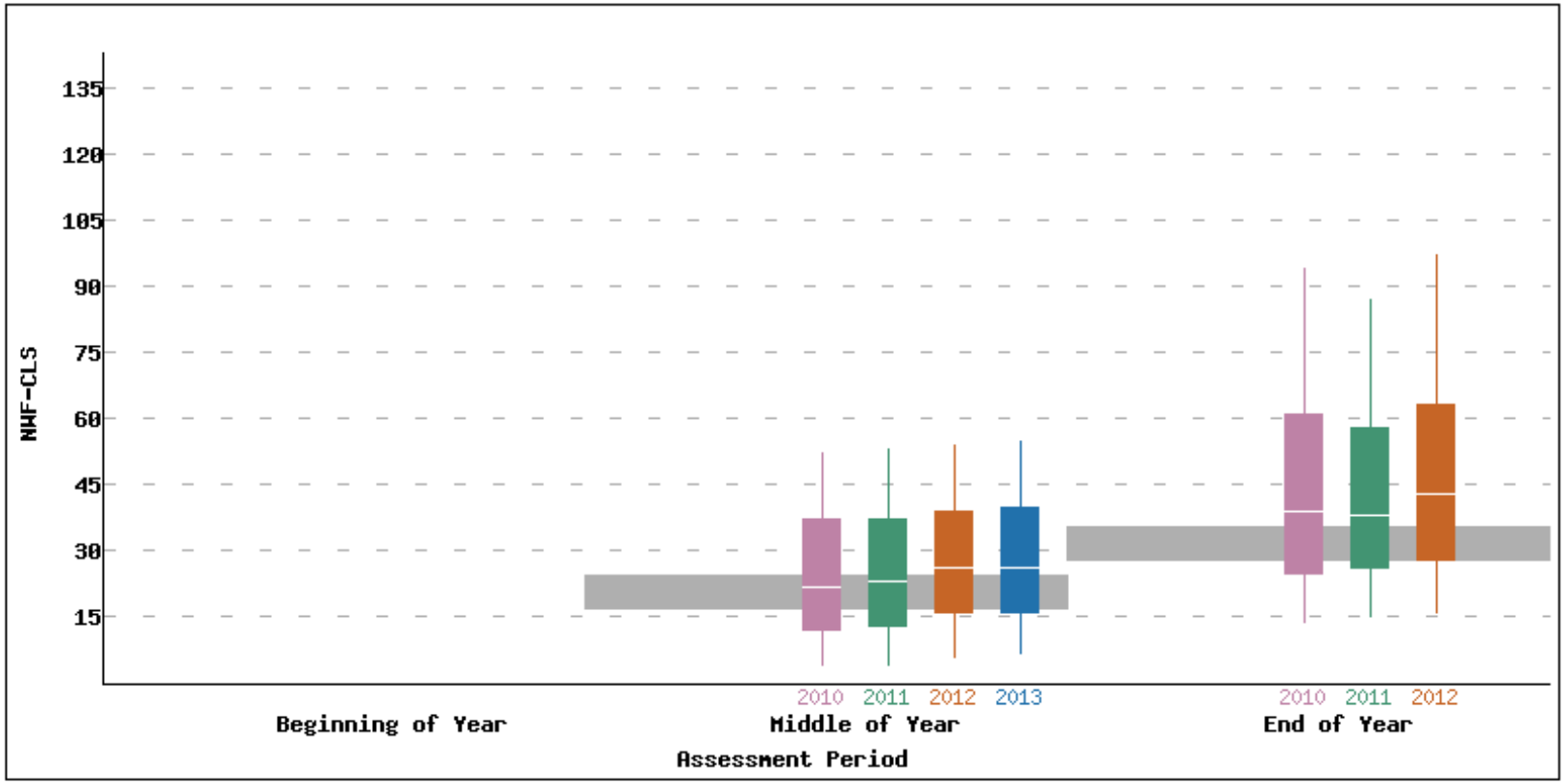
- Transformational leaders make changes that "*disturb every element of the system*." They
  - Break with the past
  - Operate outside of existing paradigms
  - Conflict with prevailing values and norms
  - Find solutions that are emergent, unbounded, and complex

Waters, Marzano, McNulty (2003)

Project-level data

General findings – data from the early grades

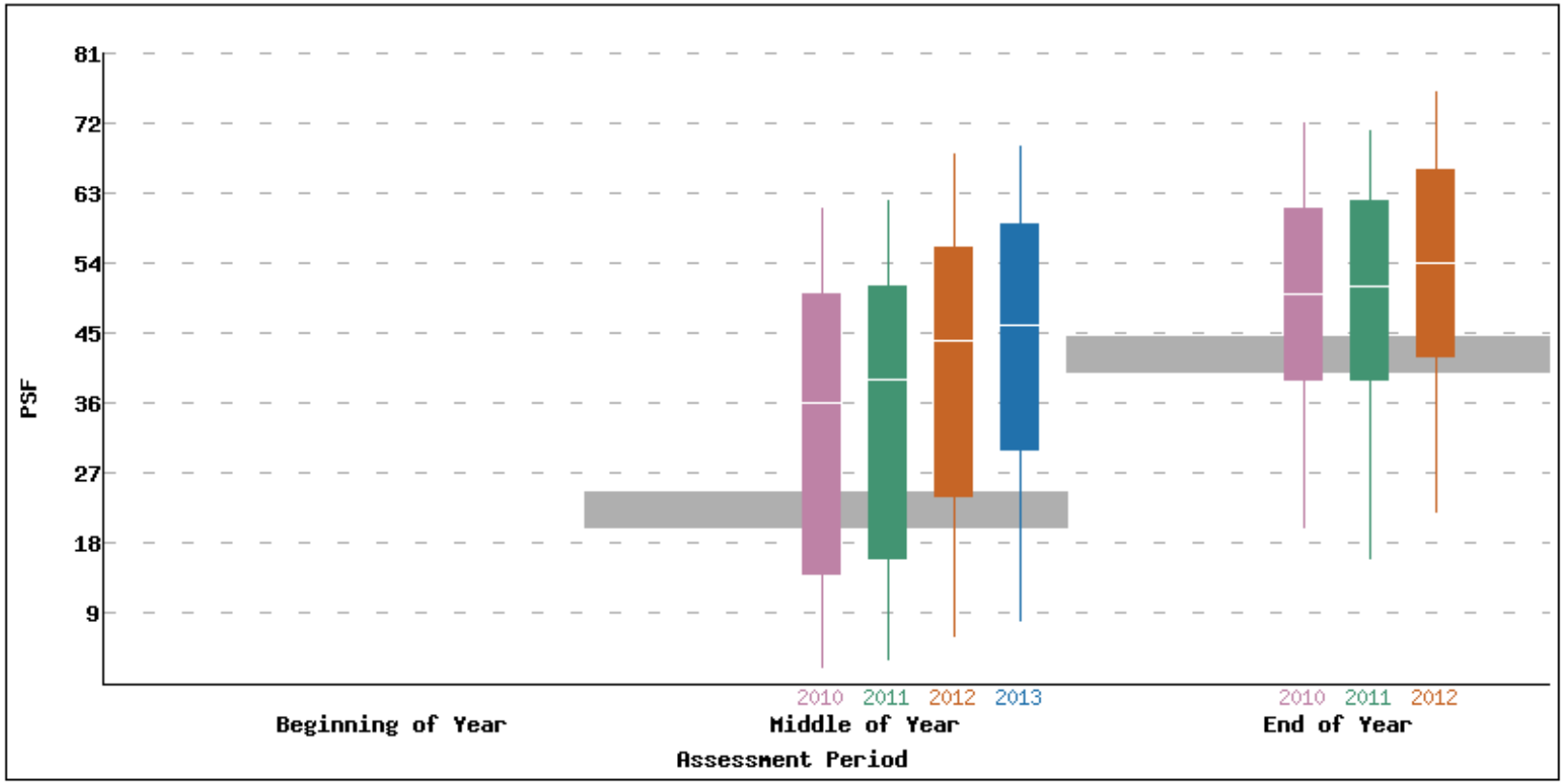
Nonsense Word Fluency - Correct Letter Sounds (NWF-CLS)



Benchmark Goals

- Benchmark Goal for NWF-CLS is 17 at the Middle of Kindergarten
- Benchmark Goal for NWF-CLS is 28 at the End of Kindergarten

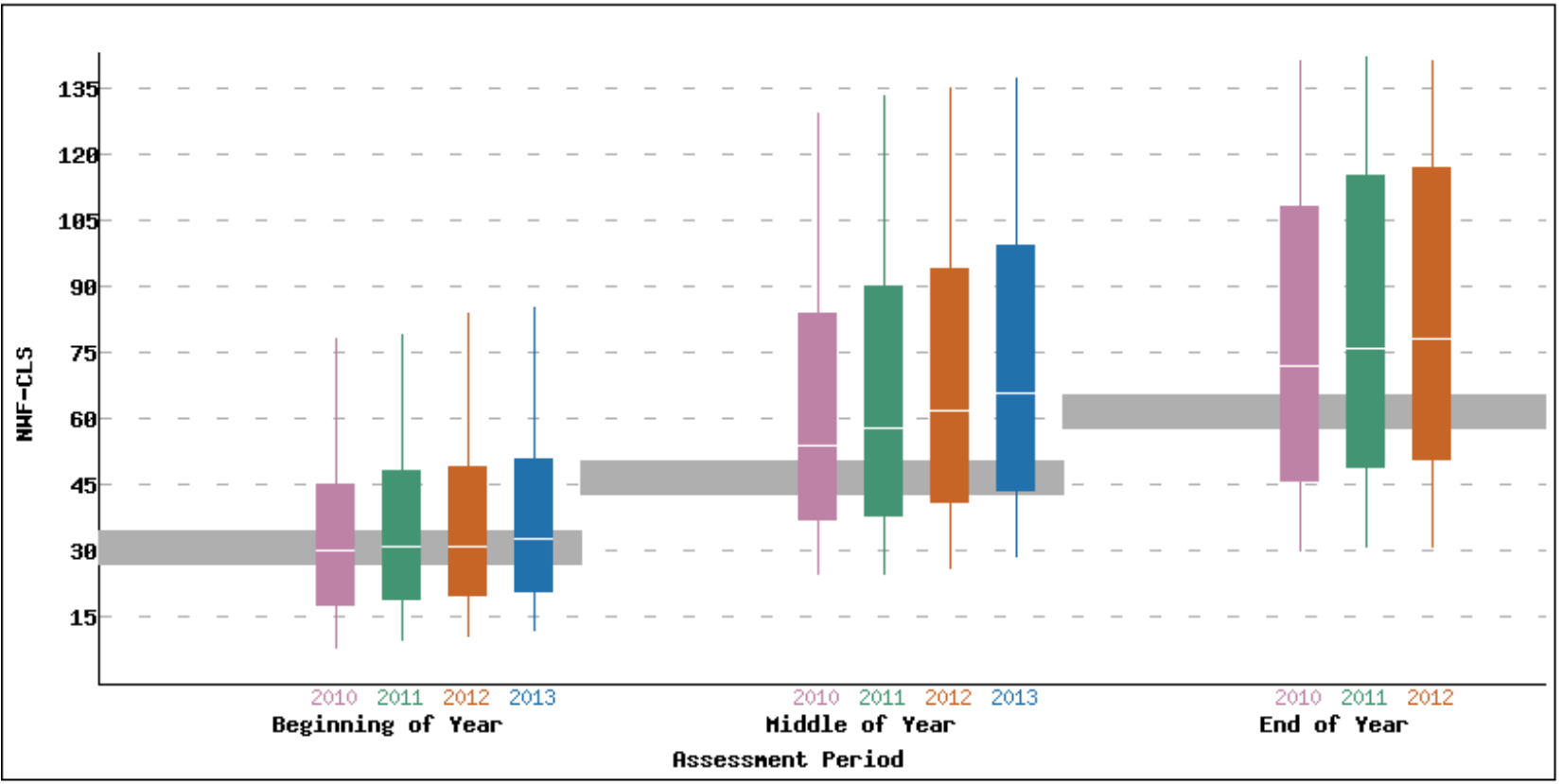
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)



Benchmark Goals

- Benchmark Goal for PSF is 20 at the Middle of Kindergarten
- Benchmark Goal for PSF is 40 at the End of Kindergarten

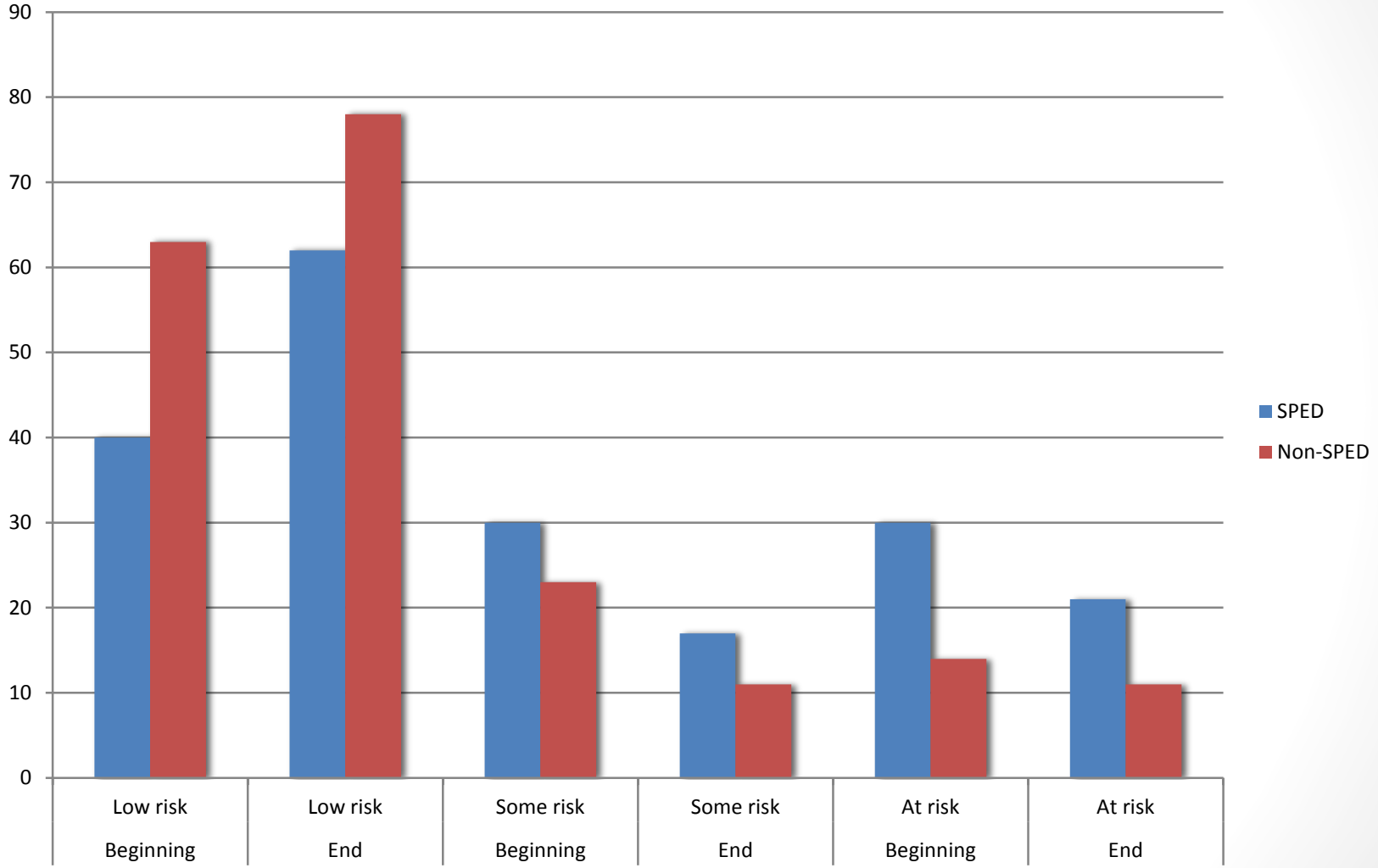
Nonsense Word Fluency - Correct Letter Sounds (NWF-CLS)



Benchmark Goals

- Benchmark Goal for NWF-CLS is 27 at the Beginning of First Grade
- Benchmark Goal for NWF-CLS is 43 at the Middle of First Grade
- Benchmark Goal for NWF-CLS is 58 at the End of First Grade

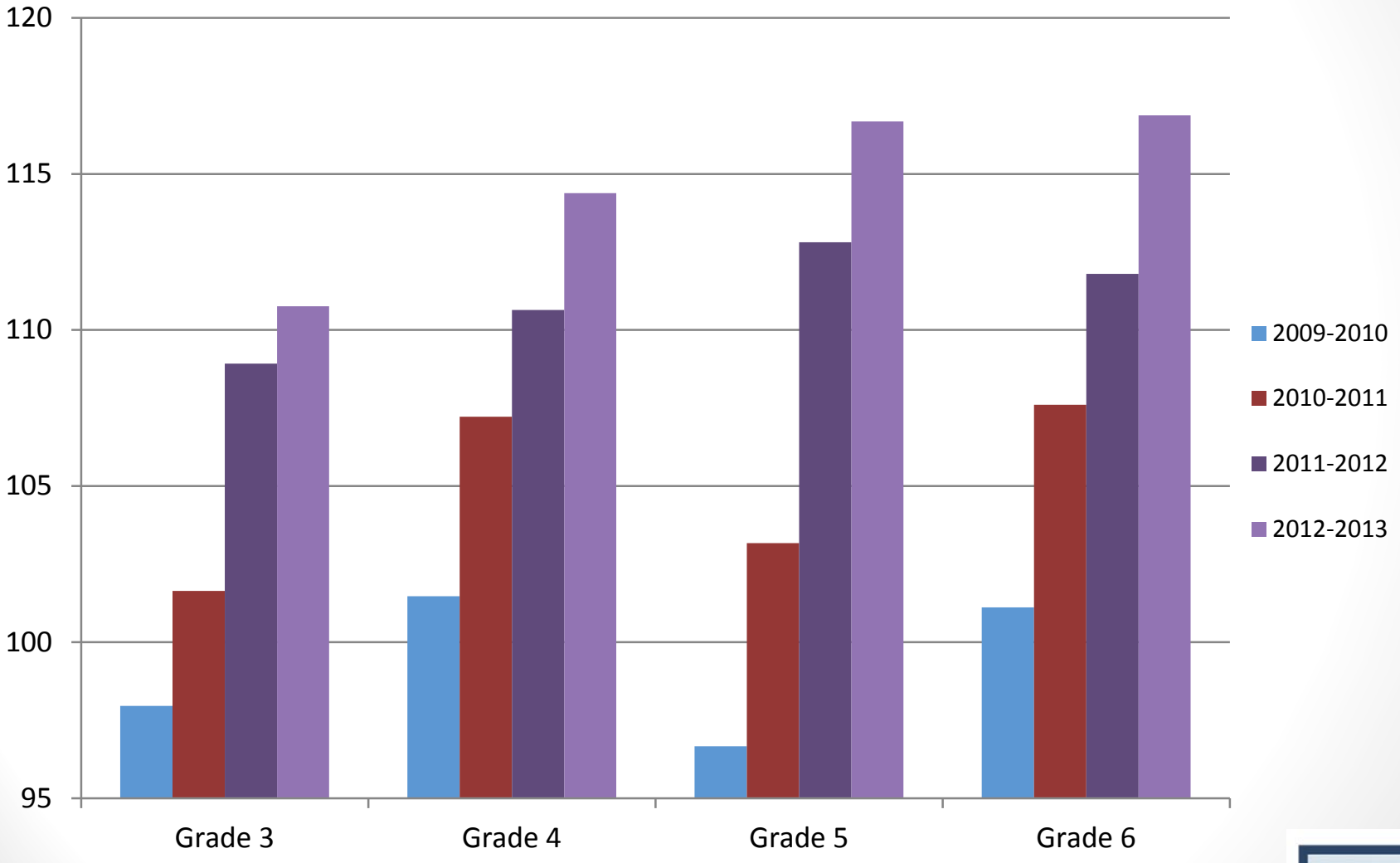
First grade* NWF scores from 2012-2013



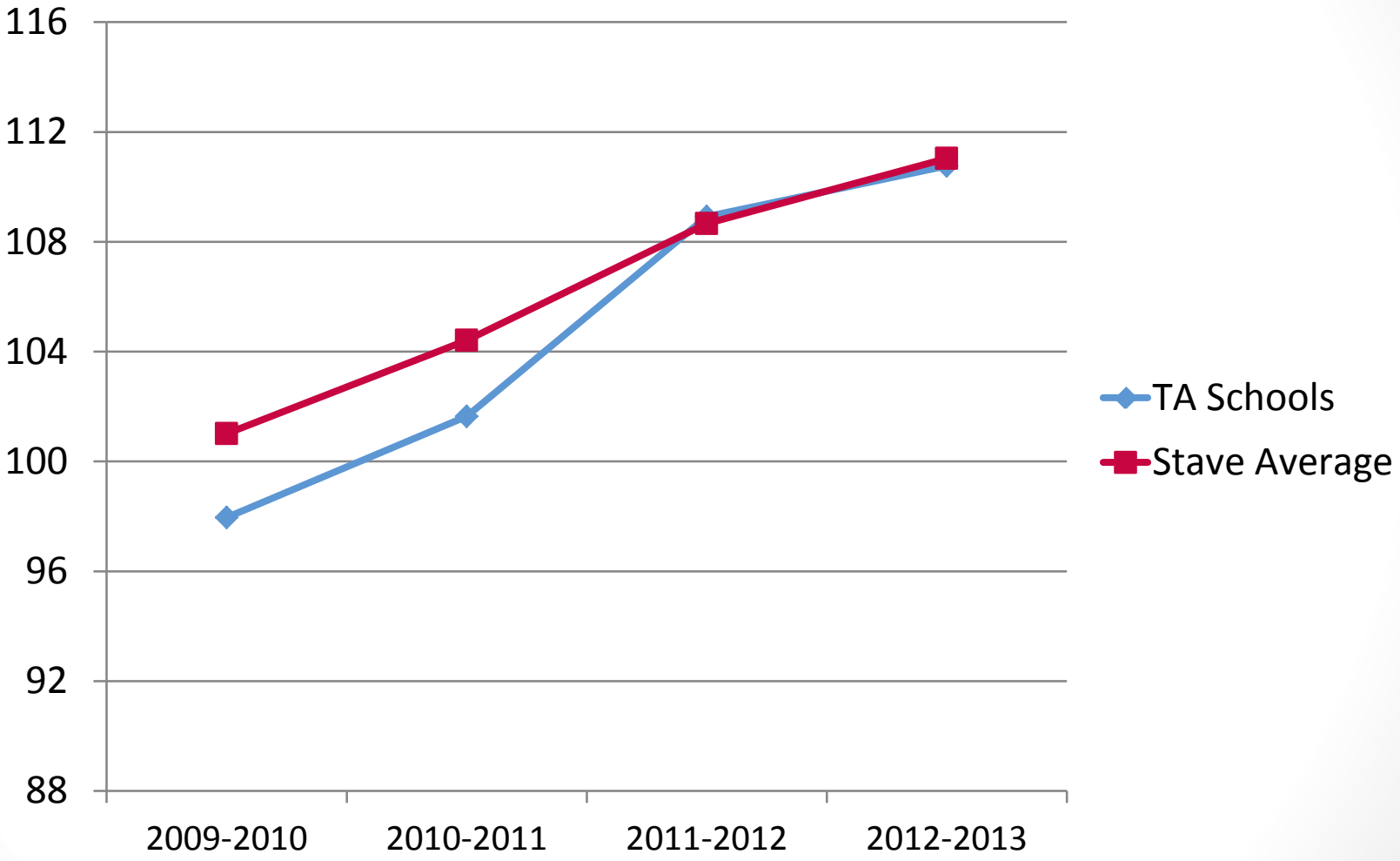
*SPED (n=168); Non-SPED (n=1061)
Not all schools entered demographic data in the data system

General findings – NeSA data

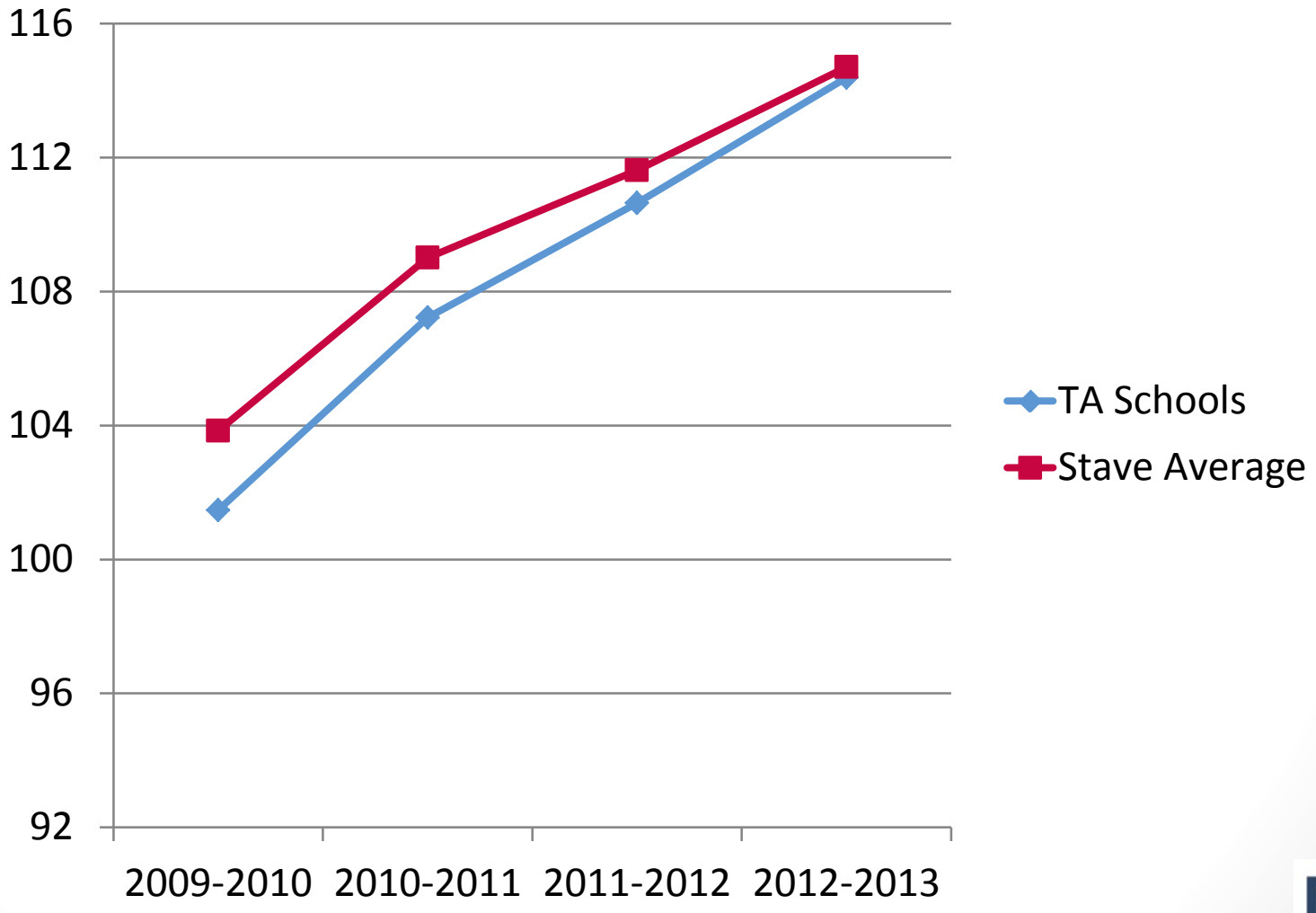
Average NeSA Reading Scores at Each Grade Level across Years for Schools Receiving Technical Assistance (n=64)



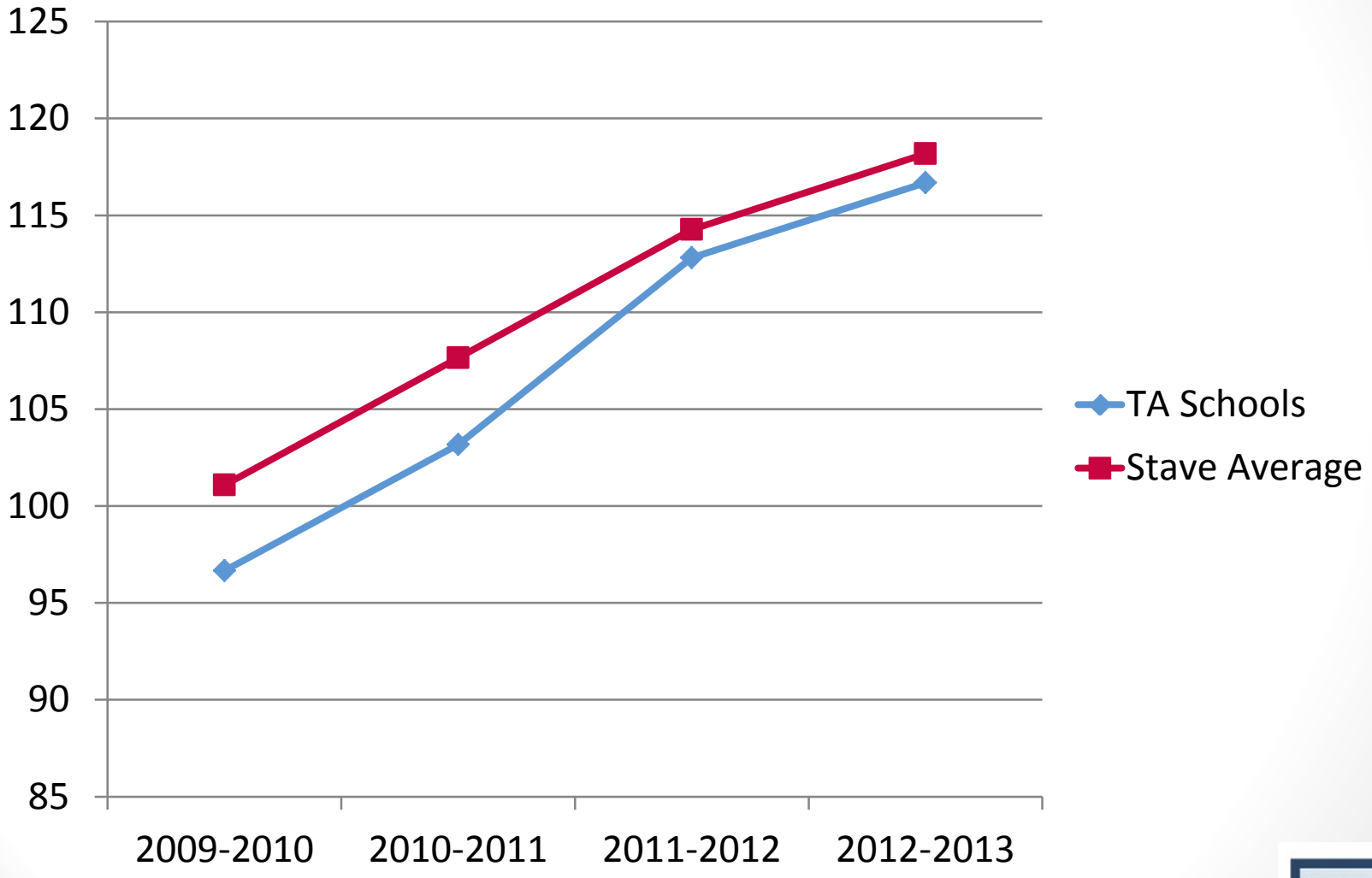
Average Grade 3 NeSA Reading Scores across Years for TA Schools (n=64) Relative to State Averages



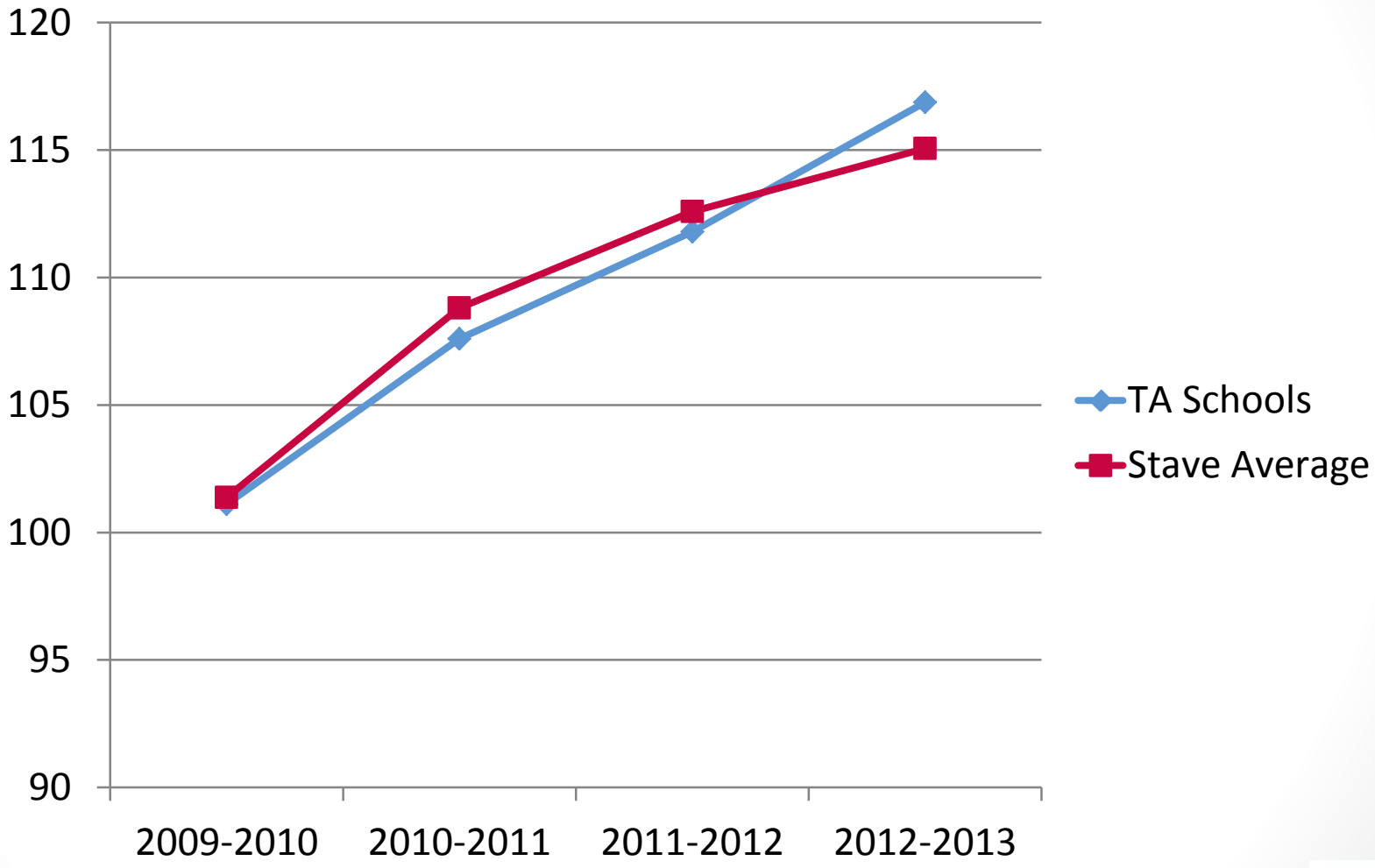
Average Grade 4 NeSA Reading Scores across Years for TA Schools (n=64) Relative to State Averages



Average Grade 5 NeSA Reading Scores across Years for TA Schools (n=64) Relative to State Averages



Average Grade 6 NeSA Reading Scores across Years for TA Schools (n=64) Relative to State Averages



Individual District & School Examples

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Questions & Discussion