# Lowndes County Schools

West Lowndes Elementary and West Lowndes Middle School
Columbus, Mississippi
2006–2011

**Mississippi**

Lowndes County School District, in Columbus, Mississippi, serves approximately 5,400 students, grades K–12, in nine schools. West Lowndes Elementary (WLE) serves approximately 200 students. West Lowndes Middle School (WLM) serves approximately 125 students.

WLE and WLM both utilize aha! Process and the philosophies of Ruby Payne to help transform instructional practice through intensive professional development. WLM has been working with aha! Process since 2006. The first year (2006–2007 school year), all teachers were trained on A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Learning Structures, and Meeting Standards and Raising Test Scores. Each year math and English/language arts teachers at WLM have received four days of academic coaching with aha! Process consultants. The coaching sessions included classroom observations, demonstration lessons, and small group meetings with teachers. English/language arts teachers also received training in Tucker Signing Strategies in 2008. Classroom observations at WLM showed high levels of fidelity to the implementation as measured by achieving a score of 50% or higher on the Instructional Framework Scale – Observation.

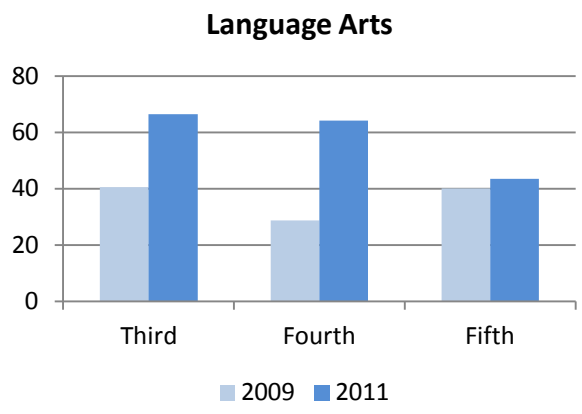
WLE began working with aha! Process in 2009. Teachers were trained on A Framework for Understanding Poverty and Research-Based Strategies in August 2009. Teachers at WLE received four days of academic coaching in both 2009–2010 and 2010–2011. The academic coaching sessions have included classroom observations and small group meetings with teachers.

Moving forward, both WLM and WLE will continue to utilize aha! Process to provide intensive professional development through academic coaching and other professional development trainings.

## West Lowndes Elementary Results

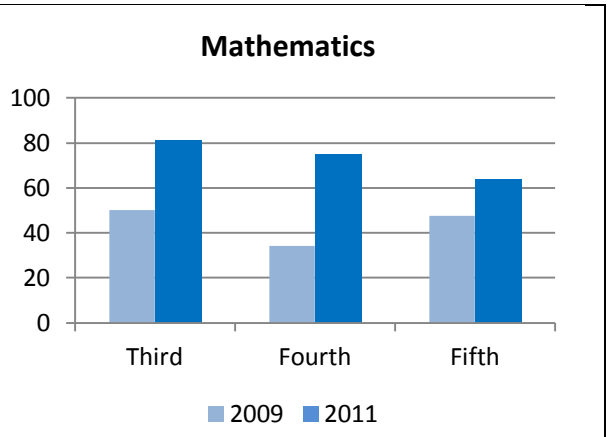
### Achievement gains over time in language arts

In the two years that WLE has been working with aha! Process, third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students have seen increases in language arts achievement on the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2). The percentage of third-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced has increased a total of 26.1%. Fourth grade has increased 35.7%, and fifth grade has increased 3.6%.



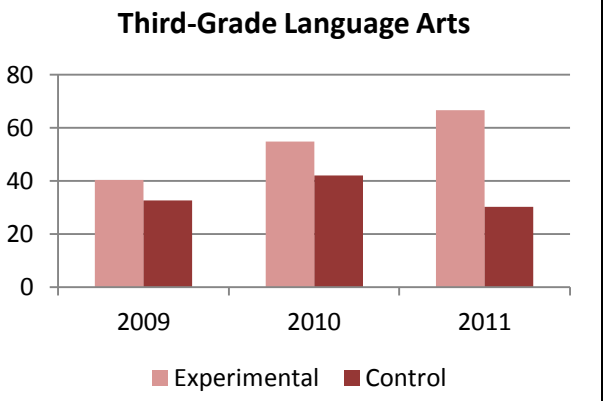
## Elementary students demonstrate gains in mathematics over time

Third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students at WLE have realized increases of 31.5% in third grade, 40.7% in fourth grade, and 16.6% in fifth grade when comparing annual high-stakes test results as measured by the MCT2. Fifty percent of third-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced in 2009, compared with 81.5% in 2011. Similarly, fourth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased from 34.3% to 75%, and fifth-grade students increased from 47.5% to 64.1%.



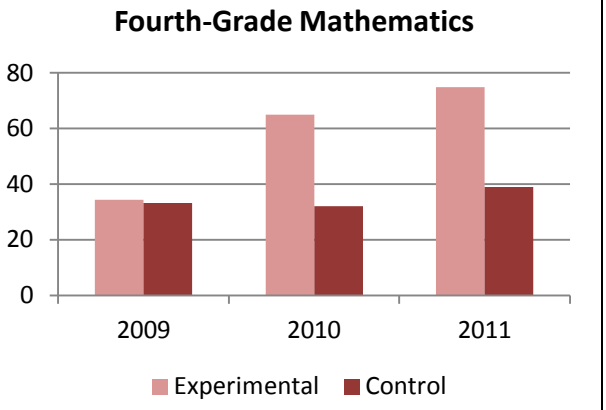

## Third-grade students outperform control group in language arts

The percentage of third-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the MCT2 at WLE in 2011 was 36.4% higher than a control group in literacy. In the three-year period from 2009–2011, there was a 26.1% increase in third-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced at WLE. In the same timeframe, there was a 2.4% decrease in the control group.



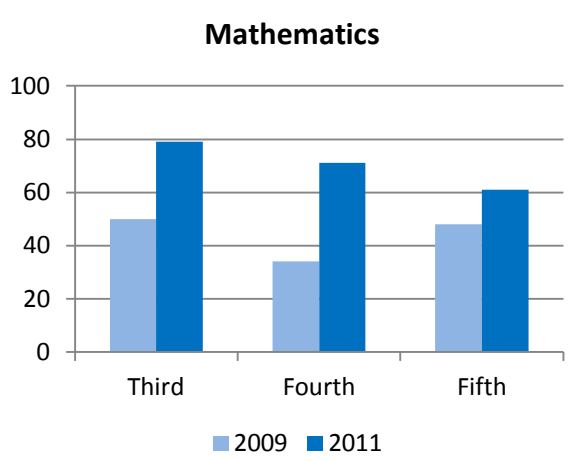

## Fourth-grade students outperform control group in mathematics

The percentage of fourth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the MCT2 at WLE in 2011 was 36% higher than a control group in mathematics. In the three-year period from 2009–2011, there was a 40.7% increase in fourth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced at WLE, compared with a 5.7% increase in the control group during the same timeframe.



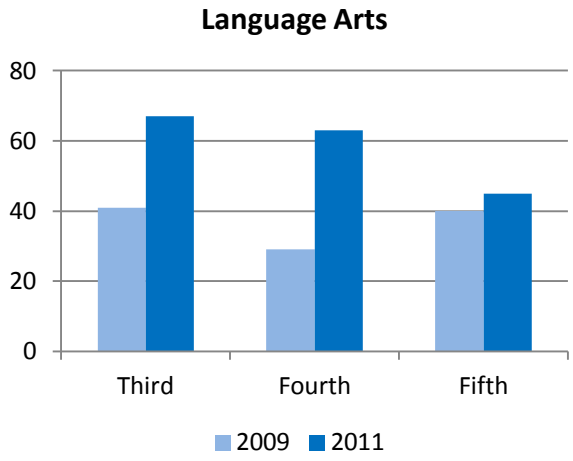
## Economically disadvantaged students display academic gains in math over time

Economically disadvantaged students steadily increased performance in mathematics over the three-year period from 2009–2011. Third-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased 29% (50% to 79%). Fourth-grade students increased 37% (34% to 71%), and fifth-grade students increased 13% (48% to 61%).




## Economically disadvantaged students display language arts gains over time

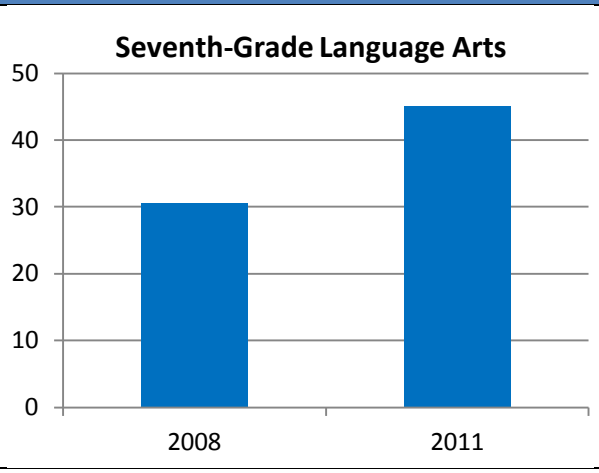
Economically disadvantaged students steadily increased performance in language arts over the three-year period from 2009–2011. Third-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased 26% (41% to 67%). Fourth-grade students increased 34% (29% to 63%), and fifth-grade students increased 5% (40% to 45%).




# West Lowndes Middle School Results

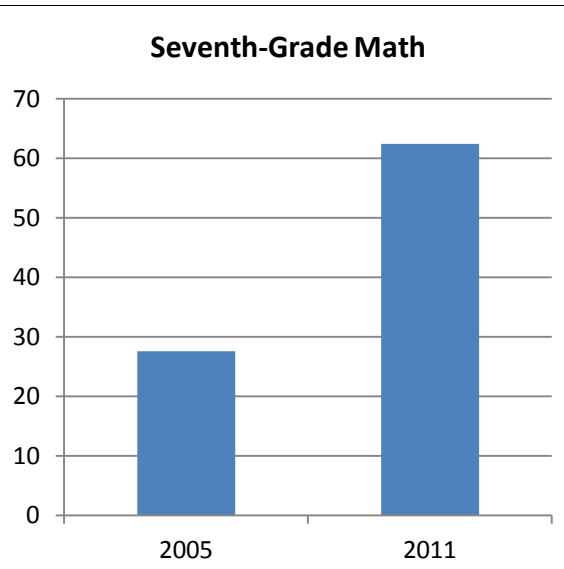
## Seventh-grade students demonstrate gains in language arts over time

Over a four-year period from 2008–2011, seventh-grade students at WLM achieved a 14.4% increase in MCT2 scores. In 2008, 31.1% of seventh-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the MCT2. In 2011, 45% of seventh-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced.



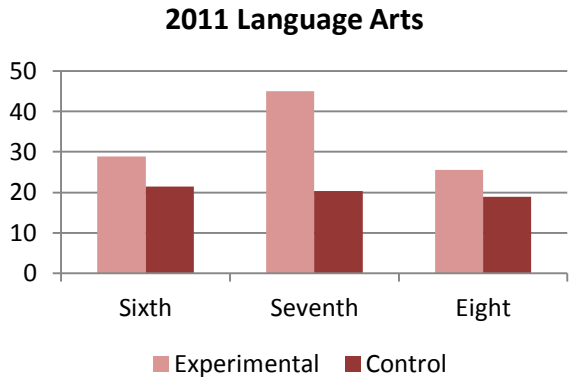
## Seventh-grade students demonstrate gains in mathematics over time

Over a seven-year period from 2005–2011, seventh-grade students at WLM achieved a 34.9% increase in MCT2 scores. In 2005, 27.6% of seventh-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the MCT2. In 2011, 62.5% of seventh-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced.



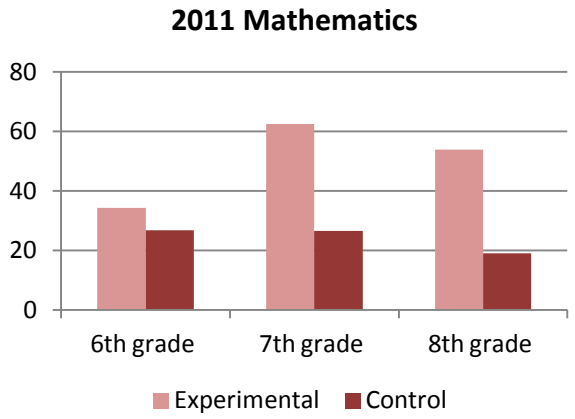

## West Lowndes Middle School students outperform control group in language arts

WLM students outperformed the control group in all three grade levels for language arts. The percentage of sixth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced was 7.5% higher than the control group. In seventh grade, 24.6% more students scored Proficient or Advanced, and 6.7% more eighth-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced.



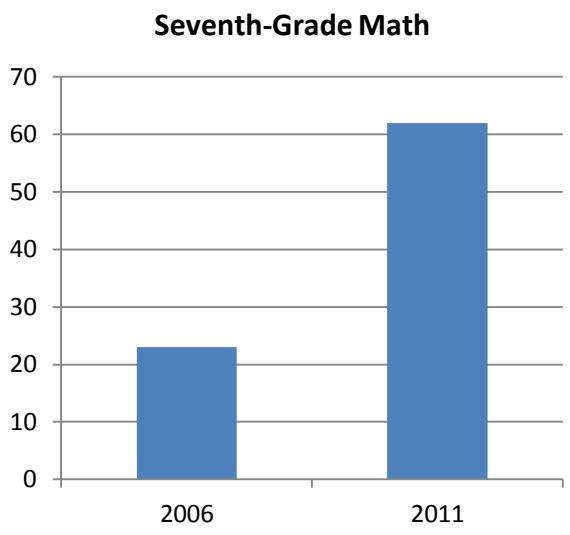

## West Lowndes Middle School students outperform control group in math

WLM students outperformed the control group in all three grade levels for math. The percentage of sixth-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced was 7.4% higher than the control group. In seventh grade, 36% more students scored Proficient or Advanced, and 35% more eighth-grade students scored Proficient or Advanced.



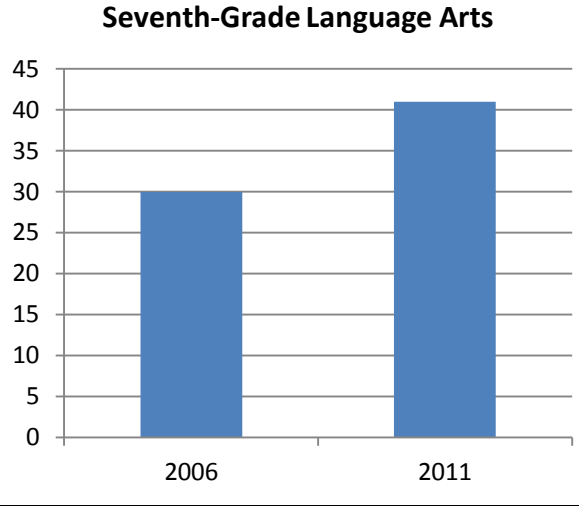
## Economically disadvantaged students display academic gains over time in math

Economically disadvantaged students in seventh grade increased performance in mathematics over the six-year period from 2006–2011. Seventh-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased 39% (23% to 62%).




## Economically disadvantaged students display academic gains over time in language arts

Economically disadvantaged students in seventh grade increased performance in language arts over the four-year period from 2008–2011. Seventh-grade students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased 11% (30% to 41%).



## Report Findings – West Lowndes Elementary School

**Using aha! Process's Advance: School Improvement, West Lowndes Elementary School students increased achievement over time and outperformed a control group in literacy and math.**

WLE students have demonstrated language arts and mathematics gains over time. Data illustrated in this report show that third-grade students realized gains of 26.1% in language arts and 31.5% in math from 2008–2011. WLE fourth-grade students realized gains of 35.7% and 40.7%, respectively, in language arts and math, while fifth-grade students realized gains of 3.6% in language arts and 16.6% in math during the 2008–2011 timeframe.

Furthermore, these students outperformed control group students at a school with similar demographics. Third-graders outperformed their control group counterparts by 36.4% and 25.7%, respectively, in language arts and math, while fourth-graders outperformed the control group by 32.6% in language arts and 36% in math. Fifth-graders outperformed the control group by 18.6% in language arts and 30.7% in math, according to the 2011 test scores reported for the MCT2.

## Report Findings – West Lowndes Middle School

**Using aha! Process's Advance: School Improvement, West Lowndes Middle School students increased achievement over time and outperformed a control group in literacy and math.**

WLM seventh-grade students have demonstrated language arts and mathematics gains over time. Data illustrated in this report show that seventh-grade students realized gains of 14.4% in language arts and 34.9% in math from 2006–2011.

Although there has been greater fluctuation in both sixth- and eighth-grade scores, at all three grade levels students at WLM outperformed control group students at a school with similar demographics. Sixth-graders outperformed their control group counterparts by 7.5% and 7.4%, respectively, in language arts and math, while seventh-graders outperformed the control group by 24.6% in language arts and 36% in math. Eighth-graders outperformed the control group by 6.7% in language arts and 35% in math, according to the 2011 test scores reported for the MCT2.

## Research Profile

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| **School Profile – WLE** | 207 Students, Grades K–5<br>82% Free/Reduced Lunch<br>3% White<br>97% African American<br>0% Hispanic<br>0% Asian American<br>0% Native American |
| **School Profile – WLM** | 123 Students, Grades 6–8 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | 79% Free/Reduced Lunch<br>1% White<br>98% African American<br>0% Hispanic<br>2% Asian American<br>0% Native American |
| **Research Instruments** | State Test Data – Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2)<br>Implementation Report Data<br>Testimonials |
| **Timeframe** | 2006–2011 |

| **Selected Testimonials** |
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| *"We are working very hard to implement aha! Process in Lowndes County Schools. We have a very dedicated and committed staff who are working hard to help our students achieve success."*<br>*–Dr. Peggy Rogers, Assistant Superintendent, Support Services*<br>*Lowndes County School District* |
| *"West Lowndes Middle School students and staff experienced rewarding success and academic growth while working with aha! Process. Our school showed academic growth and met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goal. The data speaks!"*<br>*–Cynthia McMath, Principal, West Lowndes Middle School* |

| **Supporting Evidence** |
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| *DataSpeaks* issue 17 – West Lowndes Middle School, 2010:<br>http://www.ahaprocess.com/files/ResearchResults_School/DataSpeaks17.pdf |