Start Strong:
Fall 2021 Administrations

Cliffside Park
December 22, 2021

Support in Identifying Student Needs

Start Strong Assessment Overview

Start Strong Fall 2021 assessments:

- Produced information to be used as a standards-based complement to the resources used by educators in their classrooms to evaluate the needs of students.
- Were administered quickly, in person, and provided immediate results.
- As determined by the U.S. Department of Education, the administration of Start Strong satisfied federal statewide assessment requirements to administer general assessments in English language arts, mathematics, and science only for the 2020-2021 school year. The spring NJSLA schedule will resume for the 2021-2022 school year.

Start Strong Fall 2021 assessments do not:

- Replace local standards-based benchmark assessments districts may already have in place.
- Replace the spring 2022 New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) statewide summative assessments or are predictive of their results.

Start Strong Test Design

- Based on a **subset** of prioritized **prior-year** academic standards to provide a data point on the level of support a student may need to engage in grade-level content.
  - Example: Grade 5 ELA Start Strong assessment is aligned to a subset of the NJSLS for Grade 4 ELA.
  - Example: Algebra I Start Strong assessment is aligned to Grade 8 learning standards relevant to algebraic concepts.
- Used **released** high-quality items from the NJSLA item bank
- Contained efficient question types to produce on-demand results for educators
- Could be administered in 45–60 minutes

Note: The test design, which allowed for shortened testing time and immediate results, means that Start Strong results must be interpreted and used differently than NJSLA results. They do not cover the breadth and depth of standards as seen on the NJSLA and do not support the same comparisons or inferences about student proficiency.

Start Strong Grade And Content Alignment

Content Area	Grade/Course in SY 2021 - 2022	Content of the Assessment
English Language Arts (ELA)	• Grade 4 • Grade 5 • Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8 • Grade 9 • Grade 10	• Grade 3 • Grade 4 • Grade 5 • Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8 • Grade 9
Mathematics	• Grade 4 • Grade 5 • Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8 • Algebra 1 • Geometry • Algebra 2	• Grade 3 • Grade 4 • Grade 5 • Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8* • Grade 8* • Algebra 1
Science	• Grade 6 • Grade 9 • Grade 12	• Grades 3–5 • Grades 6–8 • Grades 9–11

*Students beginning Algebra I, Geometry, and/or Algebra II in the 2021–2022 school year may have taken different mathematics courses depending on their individual course pathways. The Start Strong Assessments for Algebra I and Geometry are based on the Grade 8 learning standards and, therefore, measure some of the same concepts. The Start Strong Assessment for Algebra 1 contains more items from the Grade 8 learning standards relevant to algebraic concepts, and the Start Strong Assessment for Geometry contains more items from the Grade 8 learning standards relevant to geometry concepts.

Start Strong Result Interpretation Considerations

- When publicly reporting assessment results, consider the impacts of COVID-19 on learning and testing conditions, as well as the impact on student participation in the assessments, which were administered in person.
- Districts **should not** compare any individual student/school/district Start Strong data to any state-level data for Start Strong, nor should comparisons be made to any NJSLA data.
- Please note that the Start Strong assessments were **not** designed to predict future student performance on the NJSLA, nor was it designed to estimate what score a student would have received if they had taken the NJSLA in spring 2021.

Start Strong Result Interpretation Considerations, Continued

Start Strong assessments provide a data point to support:

- District-level curriculum planning and revisiting prerequisite concepts and skills
- Evaluating scope and sequence based on distribution of student support needs
- Providing professional learning supports for differentiation and scaffolding based on student results, aligned to principles and practices outlined in the NJDOE Learning Acceleration Guide
- Using the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) for conversations between parents and educators on where their child might need support at the beginning of the school year

District And School Context That Impacted Start Strong Data

- The Department encourages districts to clearly and prominently provide information about the context of Start Strong data, including its limitations as a result of the pandemic or other factors.
- The results should include clearly worded context that such data are incomplete and/or not representative of the make-up of the district or school population.
  - For example, if a district sees:
    - Low participation rates at a school as a result of school quarantine.
    - Skewed results at school/grade level as a result of large numbers of individual student quarantines.
- As always, assessment data should be analyzed alongside other important measures of student outcomes, like benchmark assessments, teacher-created formative assessments, and attendance data to provide a more complete perspective on resources, support, and student success.

Section 1
District Analysis

Breakdown by Subject and Grade Level

Cliffside Park's
Number of Students Tested
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations

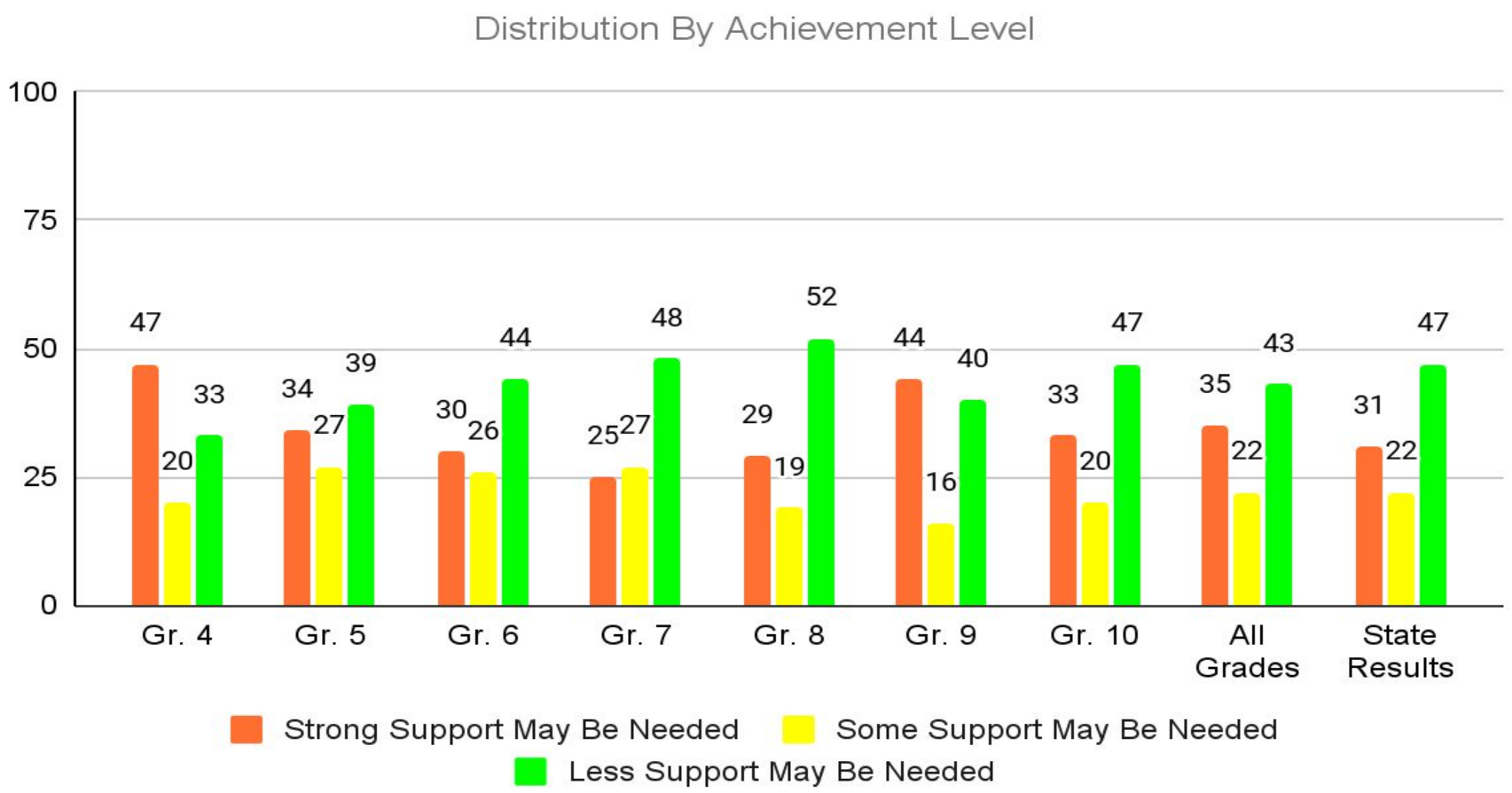
English Language Arts	Students Tested	Mathematics	Students Tested	Science	Students Tested
ELA04	193 - 100%	MAT04	194 - 100%		
ELA05	184 - 99.5%	MAT05	185 - 100%		
ELA06	182 - 98.4%	MAT06	184 - 99.5%	SC06	181 - 97.8%
ELA07	210 - 96.3%	MAT07	217 - 98.6%		
ELA08	183 - 97.9%	MAT08	160 - 98.8%		
ELA09	282 - 86.5%	Algebra I	278 - 92.4%	SC09	286 - 88.0%
ELA10	268 - 88.7%	Geometry	307 - 91.1%		
		Algebra II	188 - 95.9%	SC12	254 - 91.0%
Total	1502 - 94.1%	Total	1713 - 96.2%	Total	721 - 91.4%

Note: "Students Tested" value represents individual valid test scores for English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. The percentage value represents the number of students that took the assessment versus eligible test takers at that level.

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
English Language Arts – Support Levels

Grade	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
4	91	**47**	39	20	**63**	**33**
5	63	**34**	50	27	**71**	**39**
6	55	**30**	47	26	**80**	**44**
7	52	**25**	57	27	**101**	**48**
8	53	**29**	35	19	**95**	**52**
9	123	**44**	45	16	**114**	**40**
10	88	**33**	53	20	**127**	**47**

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
English Language Arts – Support Levels by Percentage

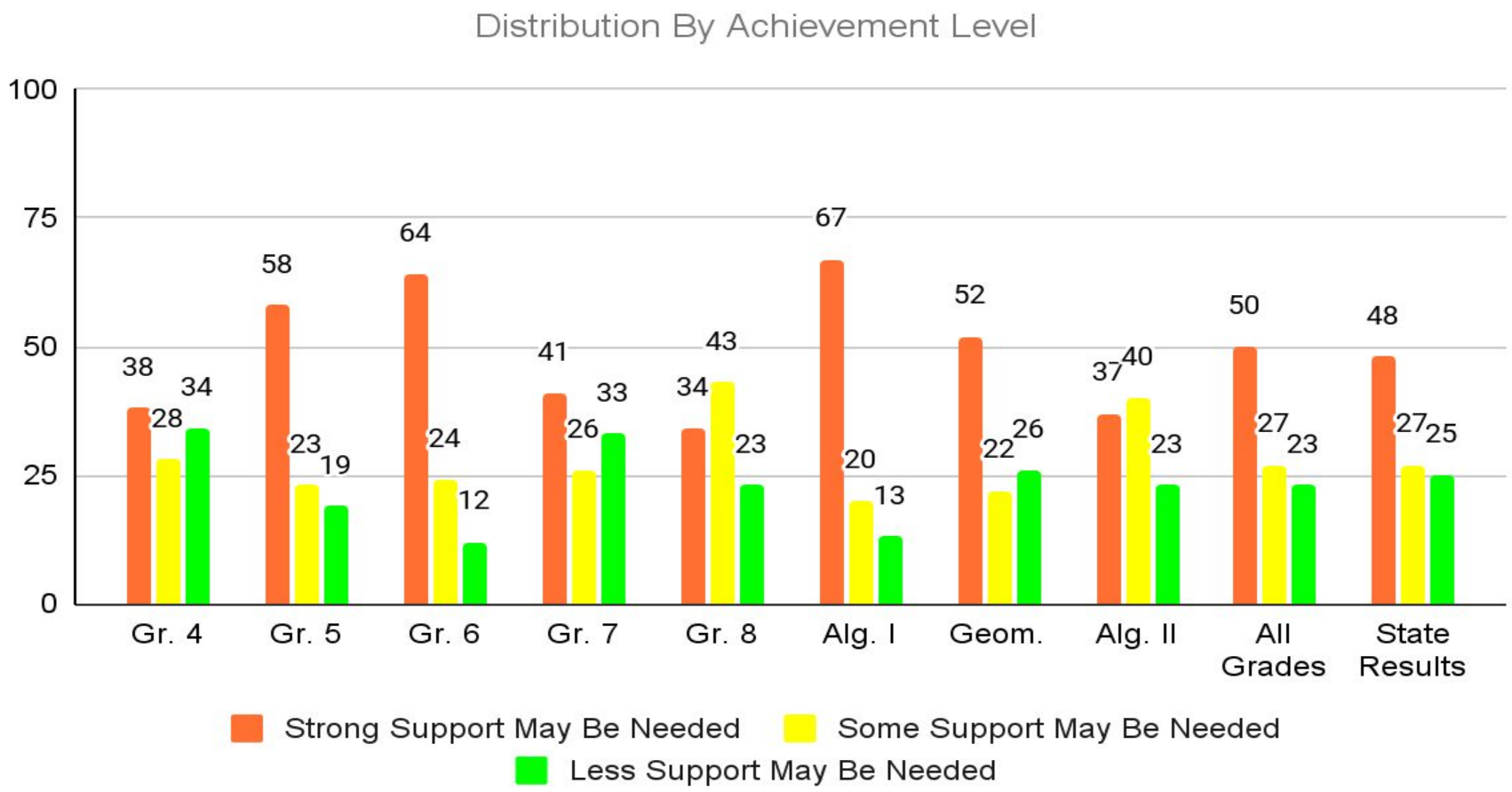


Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
Mathematics – Support Levels

Grade	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
4	74	**38**	55	28	**65**	**34**
5	107	**58**	43	23	**35**	**19**
6	118	**64**	44	24	**22**	**12**
7	90	**41**	56	26	**71**	**33**
8*	55	**34**	69	43	**36**	**23**
Algebra I	187	**67**	55	20	**36**	**13**
Geometry	159	**52**	68	22	**80**	**26**
Algebra II	69	**37**	76	40	**43**	**23**

*Approximately 30,000 New Jersey students in grade 8 participated in the Algebra I assessment. Thus, Math 8 outcomes are not representative of grade 8 performance as a whole.

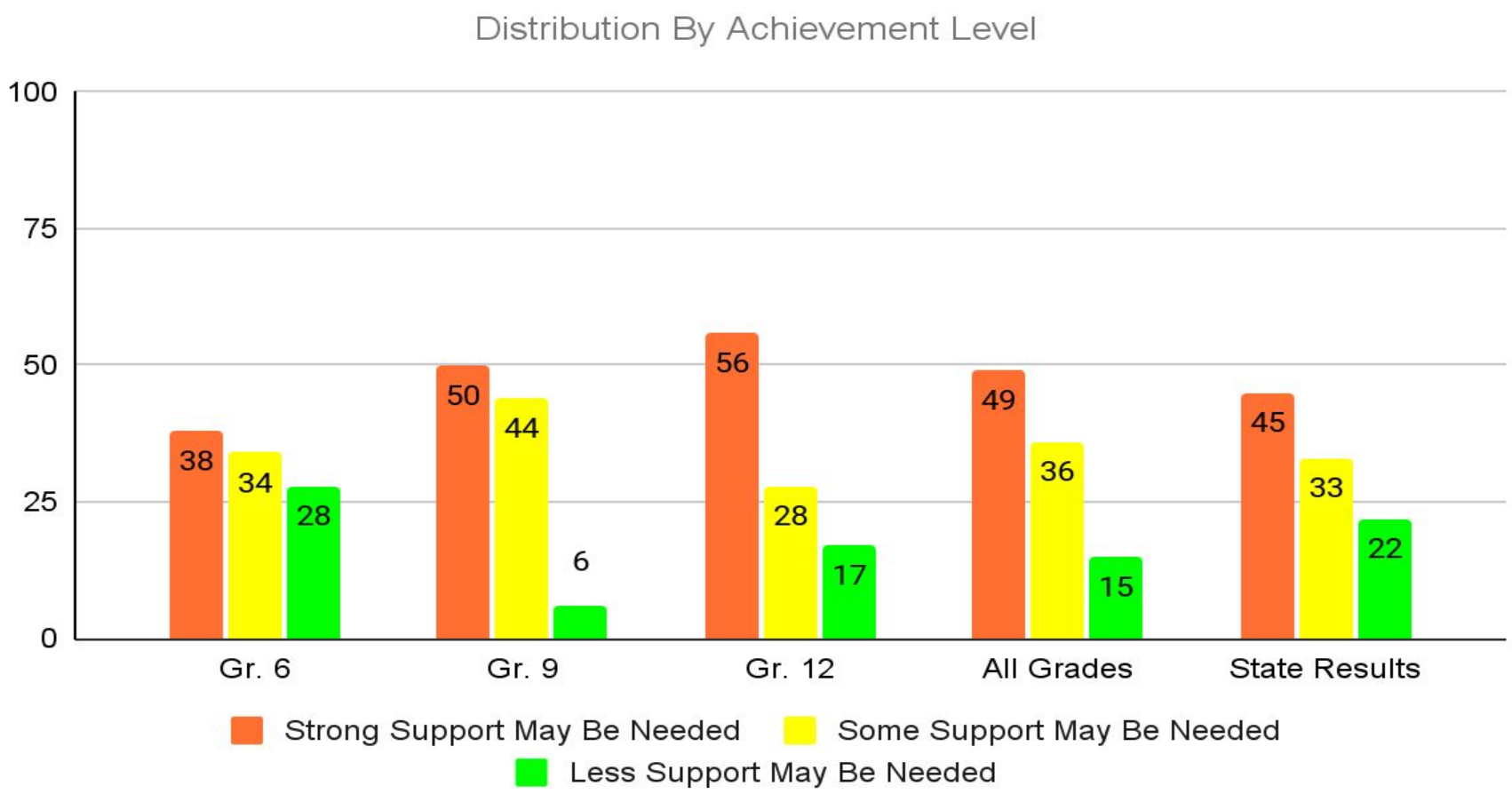
Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
Mathematics – Support Levels by Percentage



Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
Science – Support Levels

Grade	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
6	69	**38**	62	34	**50**	**28**
9	142	**50**	126	44	**18**	**6**
12	141	**56**	70	28	**43**	**17**

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations
Science – Support Levels by Percentage



Section 2
School Analysis

Breakdown by School, Subject, and Grade Level

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 School- & Grade-Level Outcomes
English Language Arts Grade 4 – Support Levels

ELA04	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
School #3	31	45	16	23	22	32
School #4	43	50	14	16	29	34
School #5	17	45	9	24	12	32

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 School- & Grade-Level Outcomes
English Language Arts Grade 5 – Support Levels

ELA05	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
School #3	3	100	0	0	0	0
School #4	26	33	24	30	30	38
School #6	34	34	26	26	41	41

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 School- & Grade-Level Outcomes
Mathematics Grade 4 – Support Levels

MAT04	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
School #3	27	39	18	26	25	36
School #4	30	35	26	30	30	35
School #5	17	45	11	29	10	26

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 School- & Grade-Level Outcomes
Mathematics Grade 5 – Support Levels

MAT05	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
School #3	3	100	0	0	0	0
School #4	44	54	18	22	19	23
School #6	60	59	25	25	16	16

Cliffside Park's
Start Strong Fall 2021 School- & Grade-Level Outcomes
Science Grade 6 – Support Levels

SC06	More Support Needed (Count)	More Support Needed (Percentage)	Some Support Needed (Count)	Some Support Needed (Percentage)	Less Support Needed (Count)	Less Support Needed (Percentage)
School #6	69	38	62	34	50	28

Comparison of School #3's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **English Language Arts** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	45	**47**	23	**20**	32	**33**
5	100	**34**	0	**27**	0	**39**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #4's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **English Language Arts** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	50	**47**	16	**20**	34	**33**
5	33	**34**	30	**27**	38	**39**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #5's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **English Language Arts** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	45	**47**	24	**20**	32	**33**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #6's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **English Language Arts** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
5	34	**34**	26	**27**	41	**39**
6	30	**30**	26	**26**	44	**44**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #3's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Mathematics** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	39	**38**	26	**28**	36	**34**
5	100	**58**	0	**23**	0	**19**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #4's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Mathematics** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	35	**38**	30	**28**	35	**24**
5	54	**58**	22	**23**	23	**19**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #5's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Mathematics** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
4	45	**38**	29	**28**	26	**24**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #6's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Mathematics** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
5	59	**58**	25	**23**	16	**19**
6	64	**64**	24	**24**	12	**12**
7	41	**41**	26	**26**	33	**33**
8	34	**34**	43	**43**	23	**23**
Algebra I	4	**67**	25	**20**	71	**13**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of School #6's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Science** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
6	38	**38**	34	**34**	28	**28**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Comparison of High School's Start Strong Fall 2021 Administration **Science** to **Cliffside Park's** Percentages

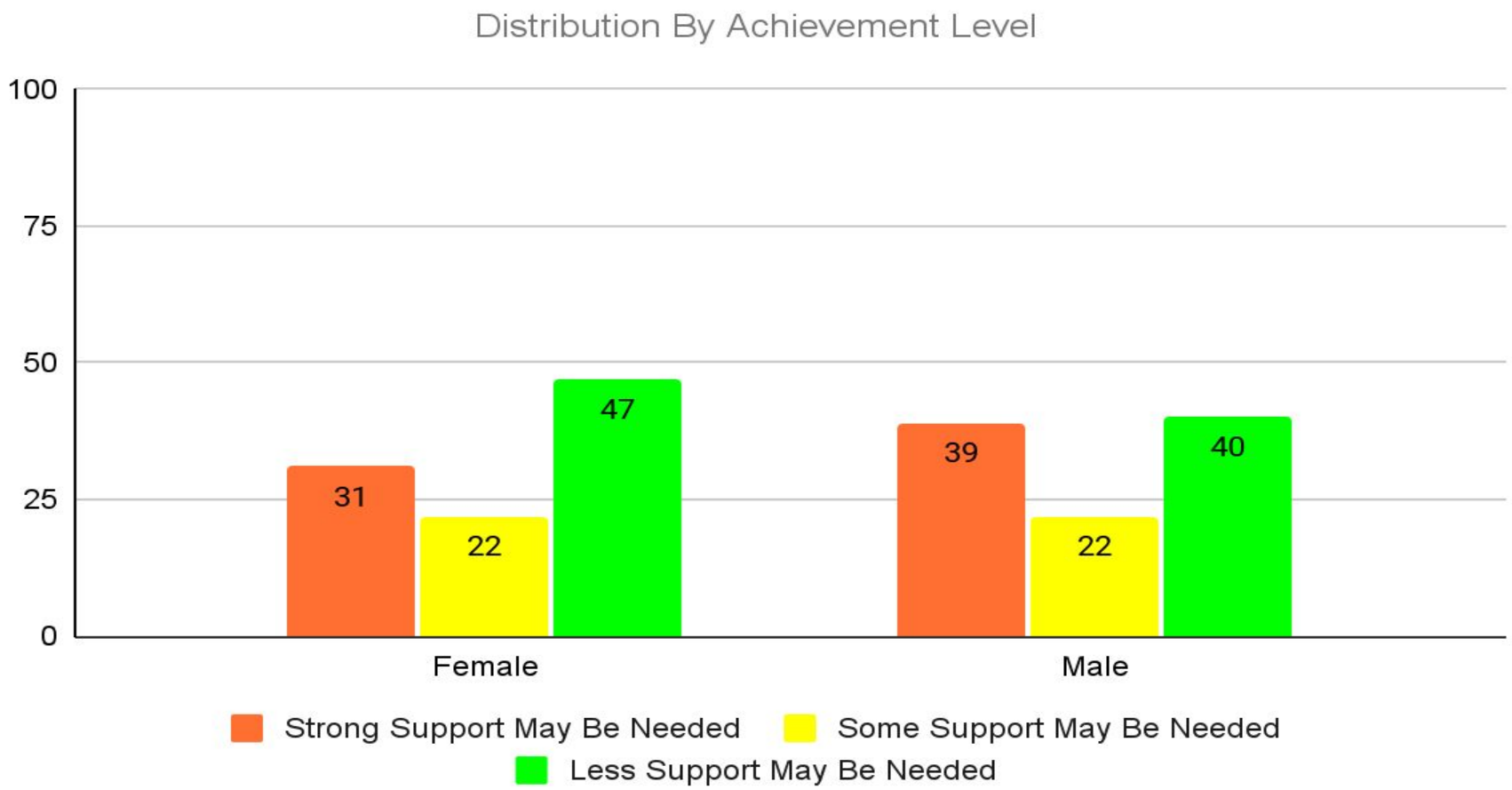
Grade	School: More Support Needed	District: More Support Needed	School: Some Support Needed	District: Some Support Needed	School: Less Support Needed	District: Less Support Needed
9	50	**50**	44	**44**	6	**6**
12	56	**56**	28	**28**	17	**17**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Section 3
Demographic Analysis

Breakdown by Subgroup

Cliffside Park's
Gender Subgroup Performance
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - ELA

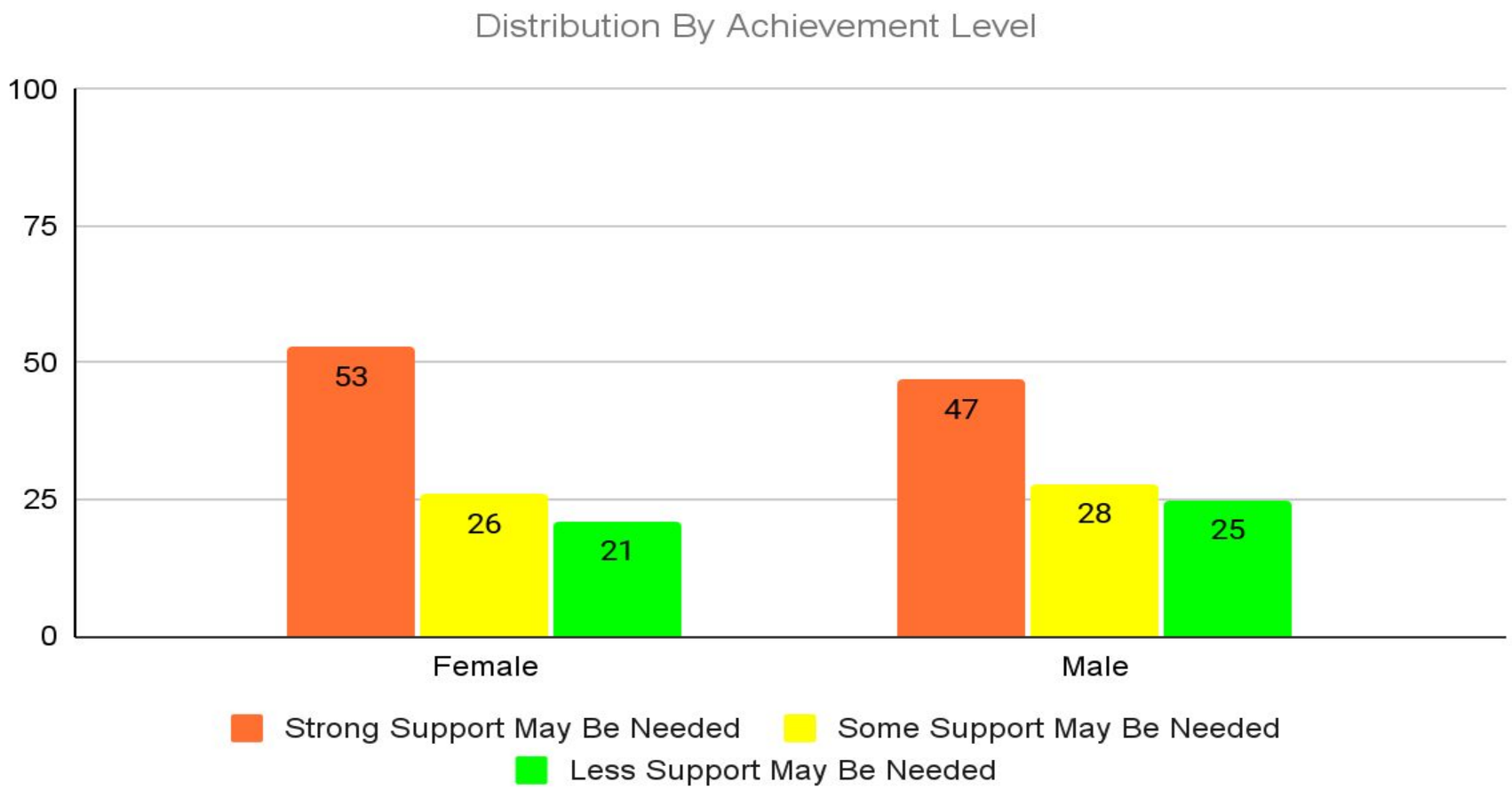


*Non-Binary Population N<10

Cliffside Park's

Gender Subgroup Performance Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Mathematics

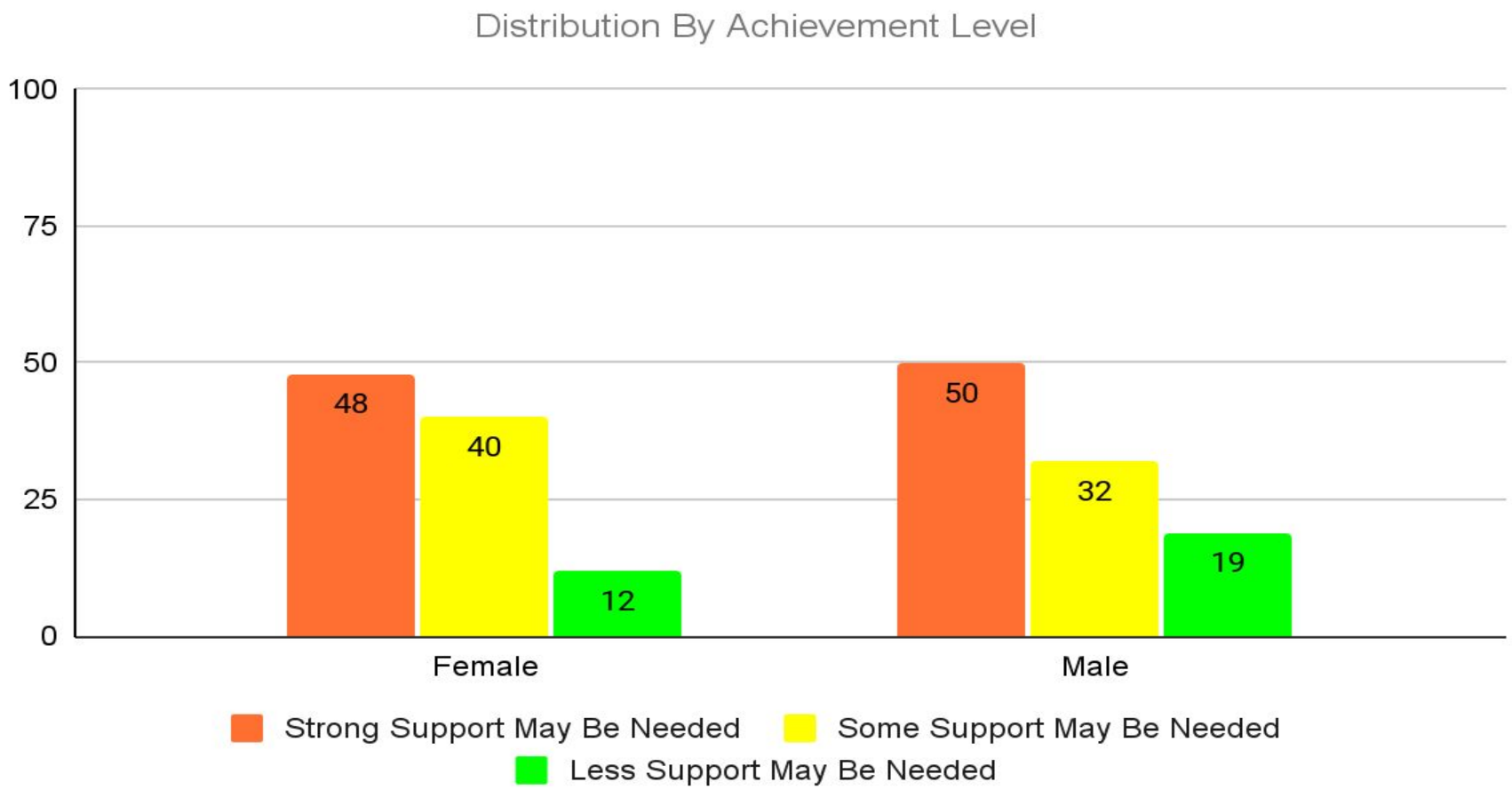


*Non-Binary Population N<10

Cliffside Park's

Gender Subgroup Performance Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Science

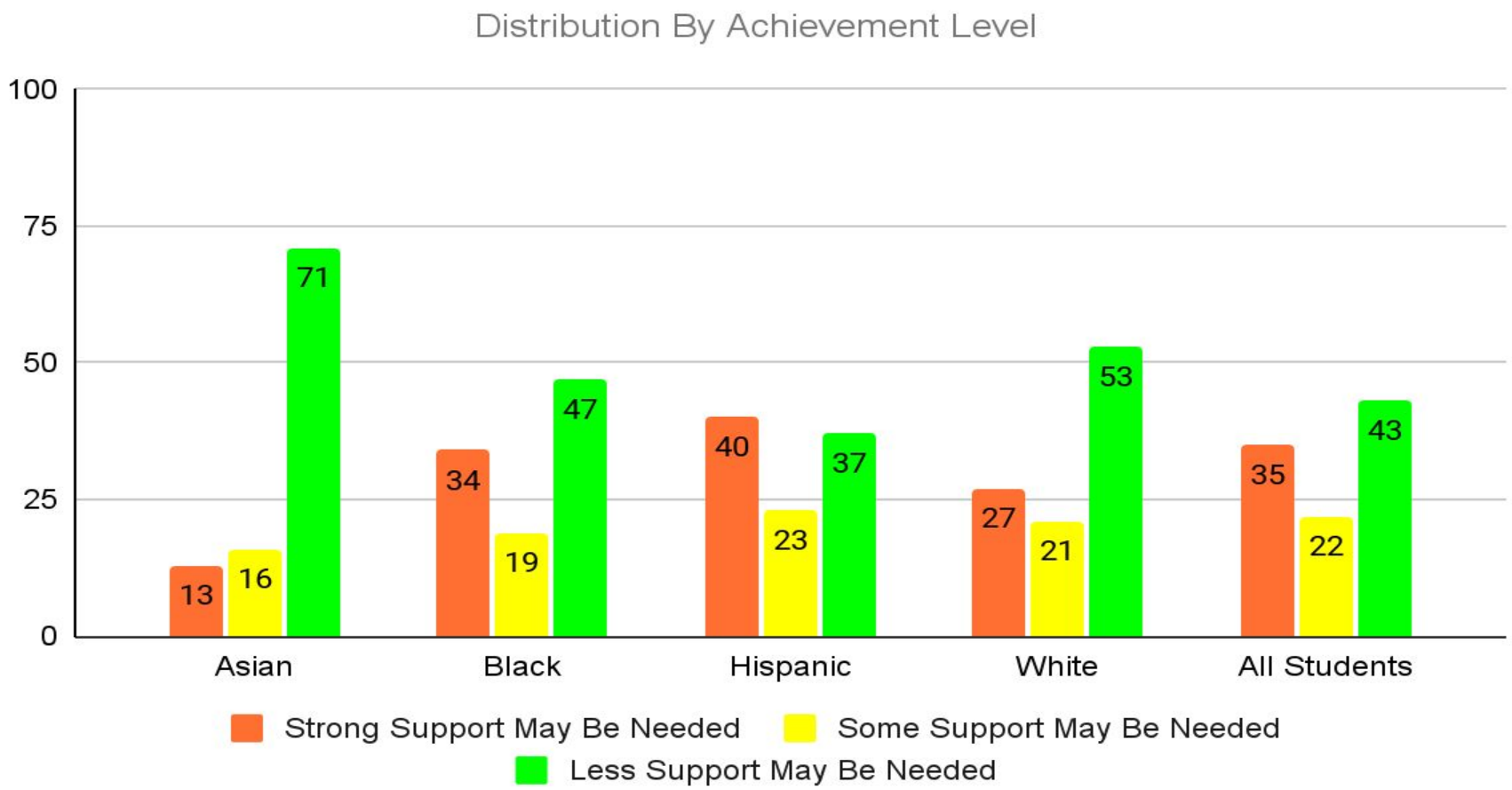


*Non-Binary Population N<10

Cliffside Park's

Ethnicity Subgroup Performance Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - ELA

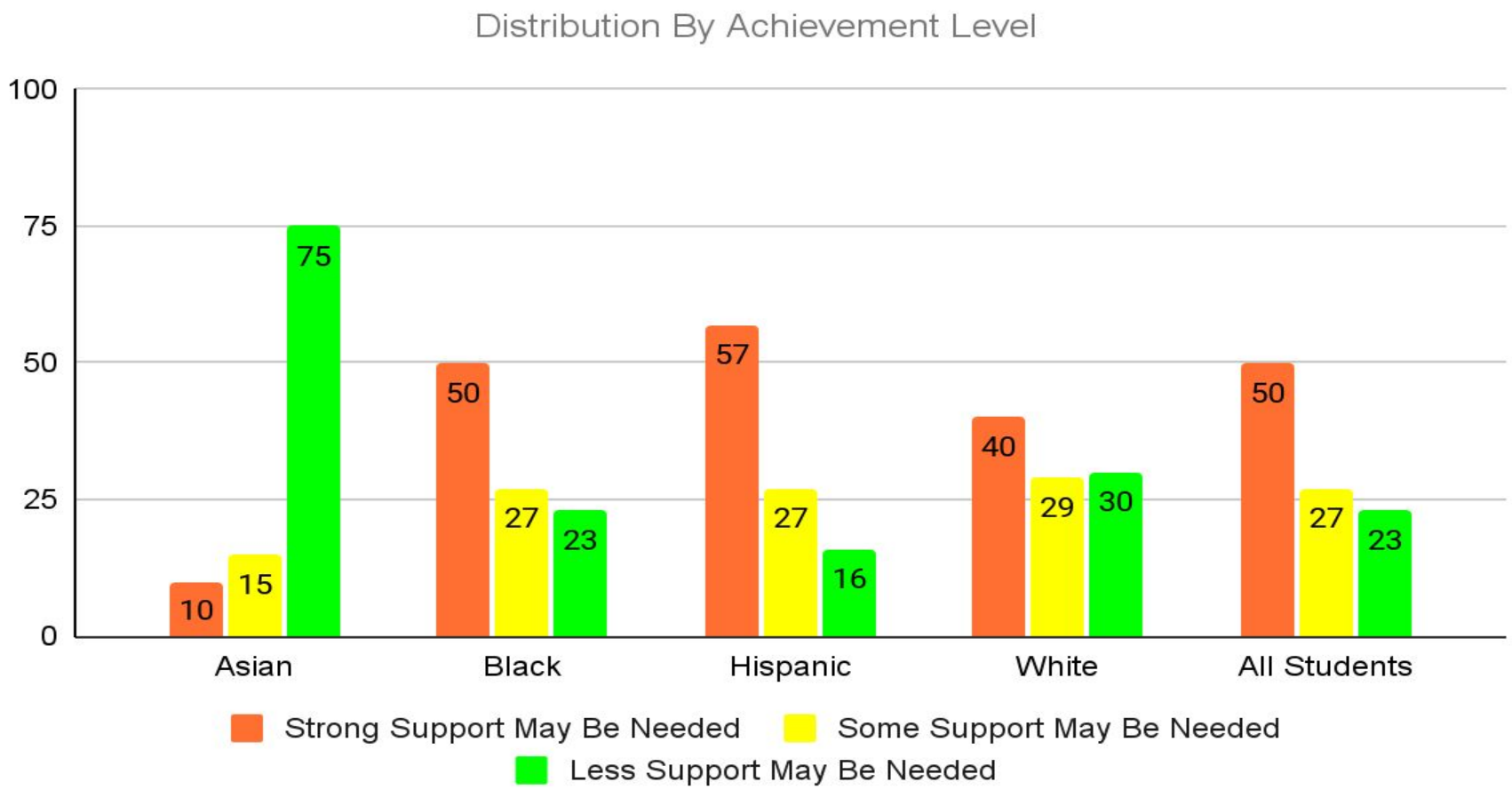


*American Indian / Hawaiian / Pacific Islander / Two or More Race Populations ALL N<10

Cliffside Park's

Ethnicity Subgroup Performance Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Mathematics

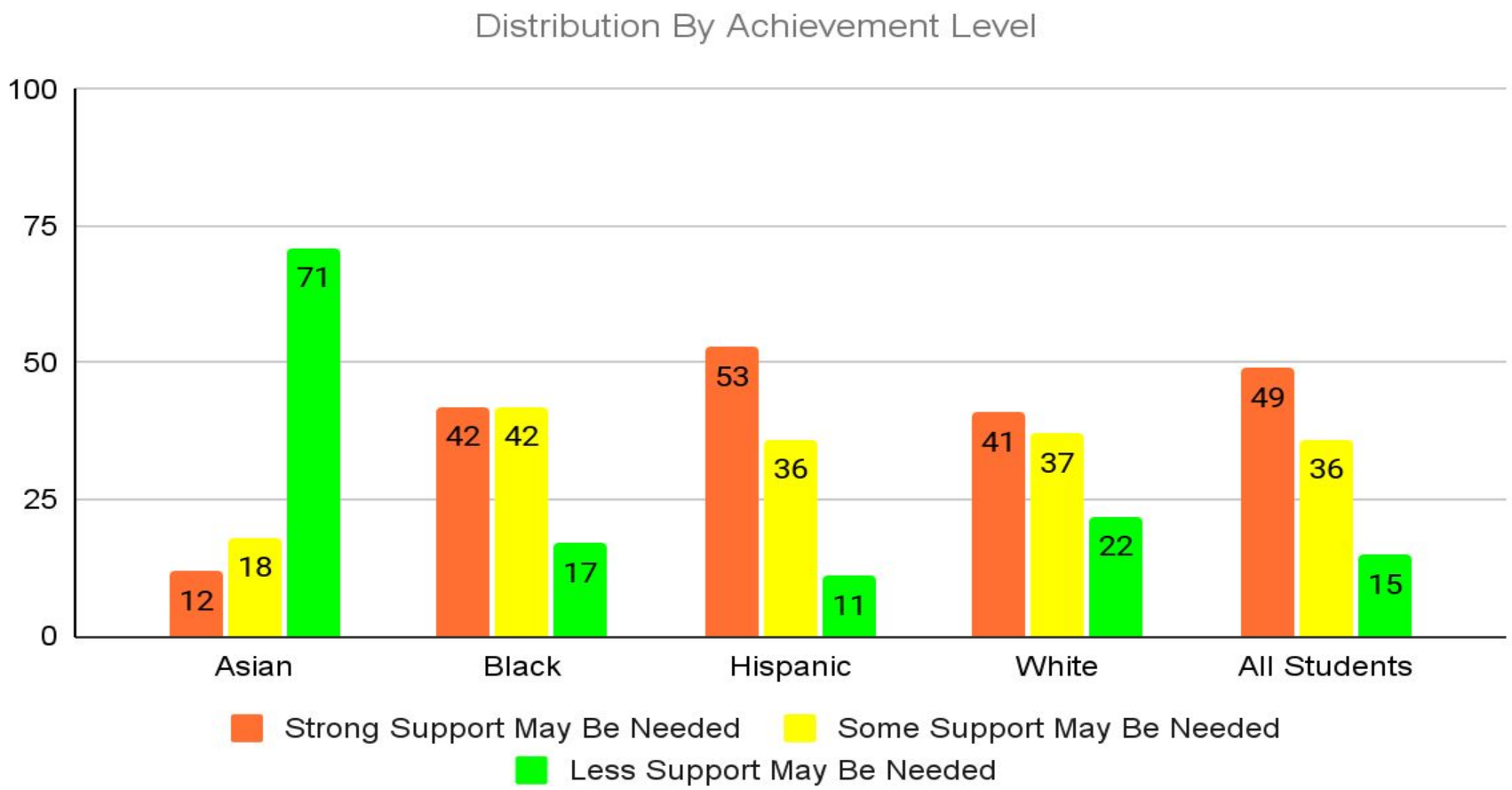


*American Indian / Hawaiian / Pacific Islander / Two or More Race Populations ALL N<10

Cliffside Park's

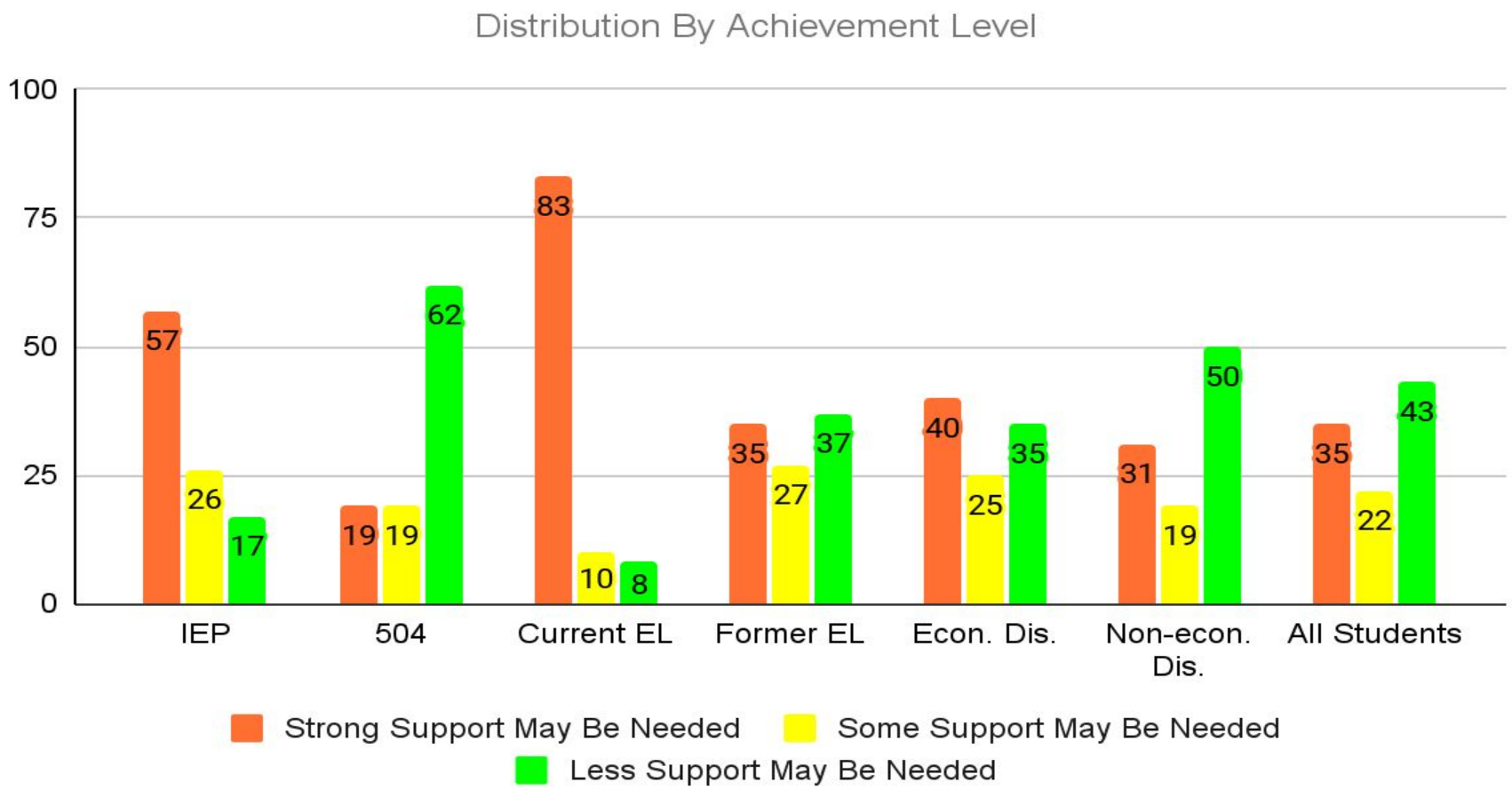
Ethnicity Subgroup Performance Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Science



*American Indian / Hawaiian / Pacific Islander / Two or More Race Populations ALL N<10

Cliffside Park's
Subgroup Performance By Program - Percentage
Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - ELA

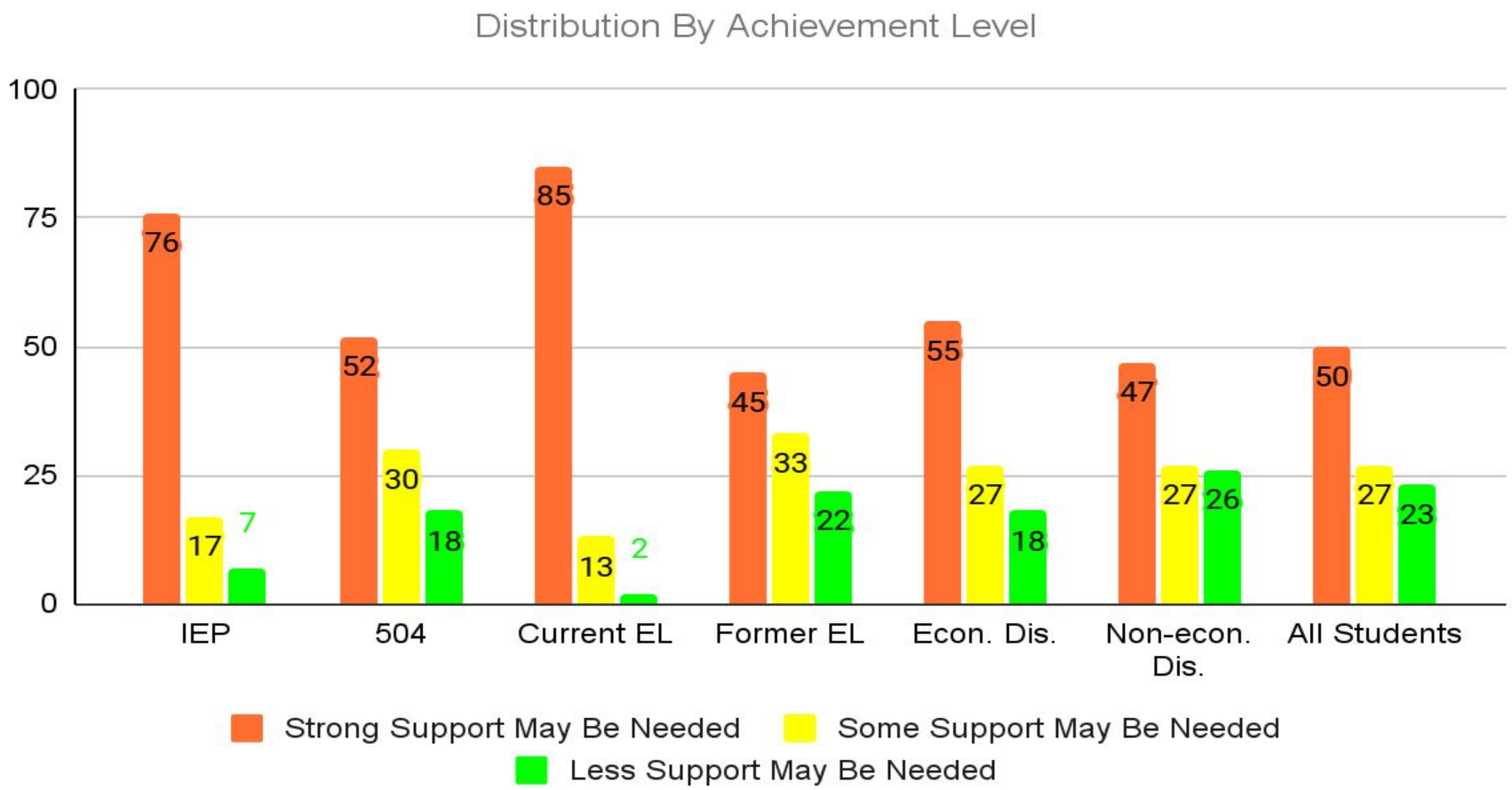


*Homeless / Migrant Populations ALL N<10

Cliffside Park's

Subgroup Performance By Program - Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Mathematics

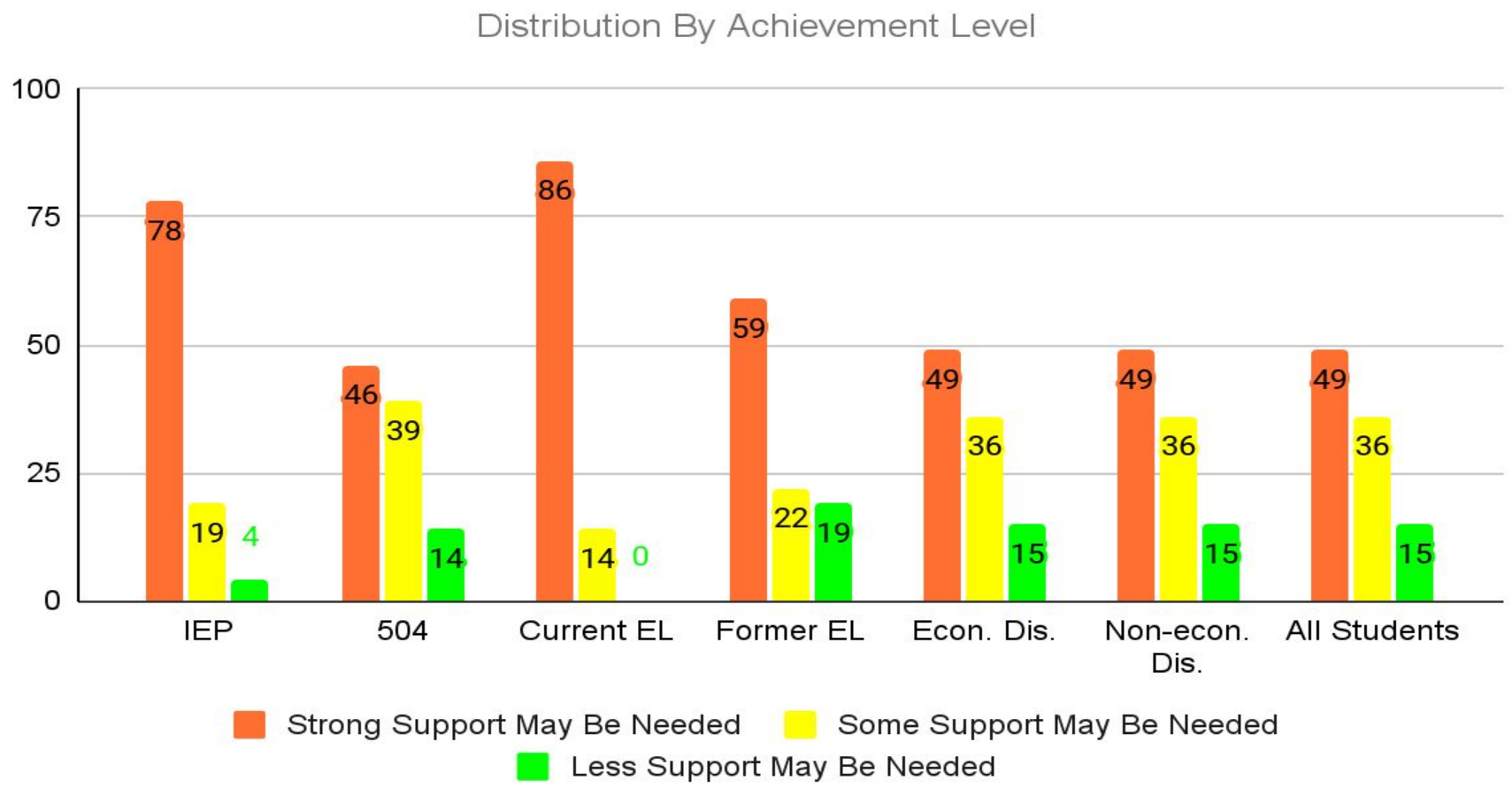


*Homeless / Migrant Populations ALL N<10

Cliffside Park's

Subgroup Performance By Program - Percentage

Start Strong Fall 2021 Administrations - Science



*Homeless / Migrant Populations ALL N<10

Start Strong Narrative

- As expected, ELA scores were considerably higher than math or science. In discussions prior to the release of Start Strong results we surmised that the scores would turn out exactly as they did, mostly due to the fact that reading skills suffered less during remote and hybrid instruction than math or science: students were still required to read constantly while using Google Classroom, and practice is practice. State overall results indicated the same: math and science were indeed lower than ELA.
- Cliffside Park's Start Strong scores compared very favorably with the scores shown on the as-of-yet officially unreleased state numbers found in the NJDOE site here. Cliffside Park students were nearly identical to the overall NJ student population in ELA and math, and were 7% off from the achievement numbers of the state in science. There is a lot of work to do, but it is encouraging that our students are keeping up with the general population.
- As an additional metric, the Start Strong scores were a welcome addition to our data pool. However, the reality is that they arrived too late to truly be a primary guidance for our instruction. The revelation that the scores provided was that the majority of our students were behind, but this is something that was already painfully obvious to our teachers and administration. Instead, we determined that to make good use of the data provided by Start Strong we needed to utilize it as a metric in a type of comparative matrix.

Intervention Strategies

As with all school districts across the country, Cliffside Park was heavily affected by the continuing global pandemic. By far the most impactful change was the remote and hybrid nature of the past two years, which unfortunately led to a dearth of concrete, actionable data for our school district to use.

Upon returning to full in-person learning at the start of this year, we were determined to find a tool to diagnose our students quickly, broadly, and effectively. As a district we have settled on utilizing the IXL platform as our primary method of student advancement tracking. We utilize the data provided from the IXL platform as one of our multiple measures to gauge student learning. We feel comfortable with the results from IXL primarily based on the fact that the initial IXL diagnostic given to our students tracked very closely with the results from the Start Strong Assessment. It was important for us to be able to show that the data corresponded closely, because if the state DOE feels the Start Strong assessment is valid, then correlation in this case justifies the use of the IXL platform as a diagnostic tool.

Intervention Strategies

- We are utilizing the IXL Diagnostic tool, an interim assessment designed to provide real-time, up to the minute data on student performance and growth. With this tool we are able to easily see where students are excelling and where they may need some help. The diagnostic takes a lot of the difficult work of gauging growth out of the teachers' hands and provides clear, concise, actionable data.
- We have eliminated a lot of additional tools that were put in place during remote learning. We felt that practice time in math was being diluted by an excess of platforms. We are focused on using less resources more effectively.
- In ELA we have implemented the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) System to help our most needy students. The program is an intensive supplementary literacy intervention, with a focus on quick and permanent growth, that will allow students to exit the program in 18 weeks. This is an attempt to move away from the permanent Title I "lifers" of the past.