

# Academic Growth of Exceptional Children in Reading and Mathematics

## *Findings from the National Center on Assessment and Accountability for Special Education*

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# National Center on Assessment & Accountability for Special Education

- NCAASE [www.ncaase.com](http://www.ncaase.com)
- Institute of Education Sciences, 2011-2016
- Co-PI's
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*This work is supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through grant R32C110004 awarded to the University of Oregon. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent views of the Institute or the U.S. Department of Education.*

# Overview

- Standards-based reform in USA-Brief overview
- Growth vs. status measures—a changing focus
- NCAASE purpose and key questions
- Selected NCAASE initial results

# Special Education and Accountability in USA: Background Info

- Standards-based reform has dominated educational scene in USA since 1990s
- Theory of action: Articulate high standards, test students on standards, resulting feedback, plus rewards and sanctions will improve student outcomes

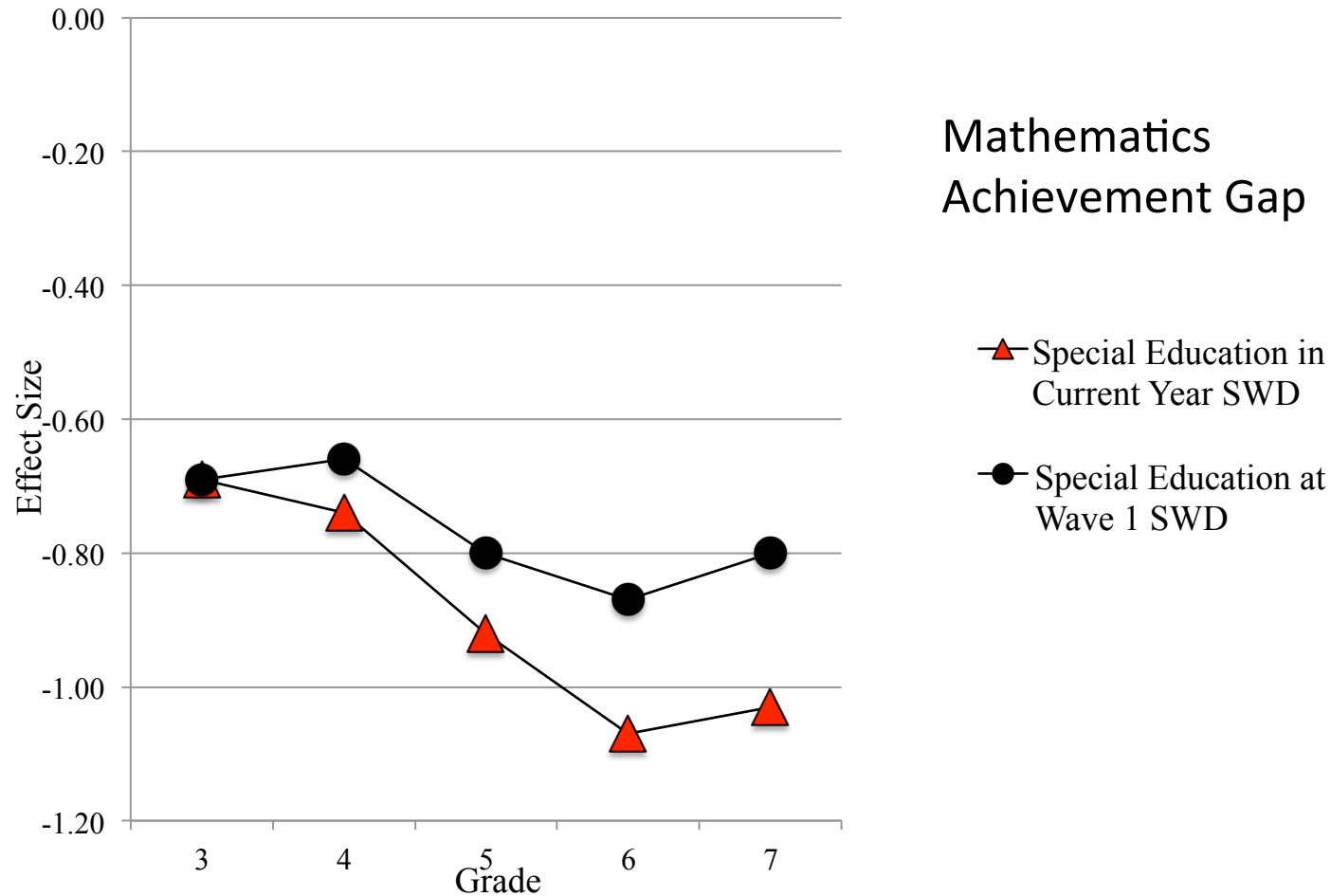
# Special Education and Accountability in USA: Background Info

- Initially, many students with disabilities were excluded from standards and assessments
- Concern that exclusion of students with disabilities weakening reform and accountability efforts for all students, and leaving students with disabilities behind
- More knowledge about impact of excluding than how to include

# No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

- Mandated testing in grades three to eight, including students with disabilities
- Outcomes reported for disaggregated groups—gender, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch (indicator of poverty), English language proficiency status
- Goal: All children in all subgroups will be scoring at grade level proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014
- NCLB initial metric--% of students scoring at grade level proficiency or above, monitored by examining successive cohorts of students

# Stable Subgroup Membership Matters



# Change in Mean Number of Students Reaching Proficiency

				Rdg/LA		Mathematics	
				Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Current Participation in Special Education Only</i>				40	21	59	20
<i>Including Students Two Years Post Dismissal</i>				47	19	65	18
<i>Net Change in Percent Proficient</i>				<b>+7</b>		<b>+6</b>	



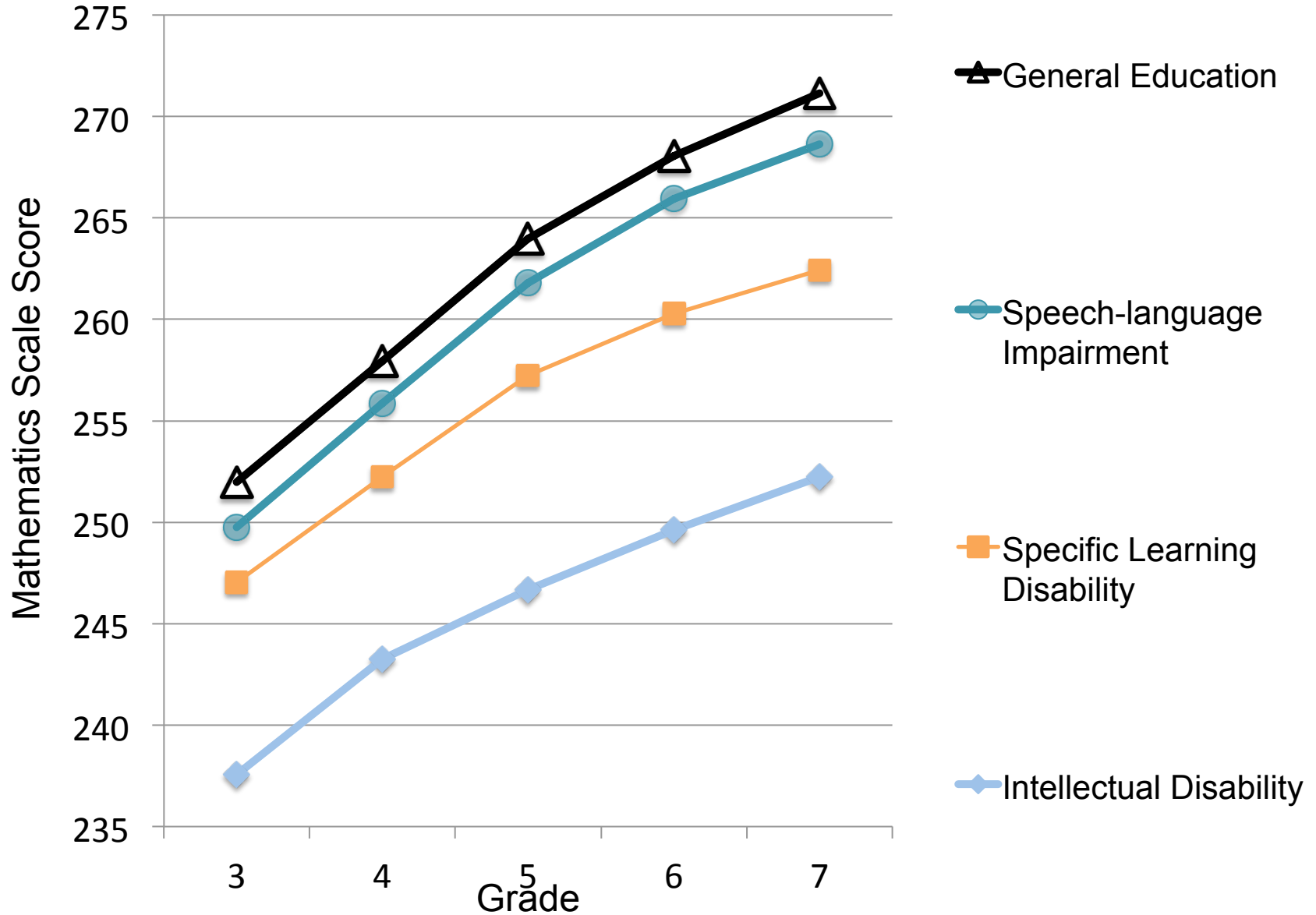
# NCAASE 2011-2016: Our Key Research Questions

1. What is the **natural developmental progress** in achievement for students with disabilities?
2. What models **best characterize achievement growth** for students with disabilities who are participating in general achievement tests?
3. How do various growth models represent **school effects** for students with and without disabilities, and how do results compare to those derived from the status models now in use?
4. How do results from different types of **interim assessments** of students' achievement meaningfully contribute to a model of academic growth for students with disabilities?
5. How can information about **opportunity to learn** and achievement growth be used to **enhance academic outcomes** for students with disabilities?

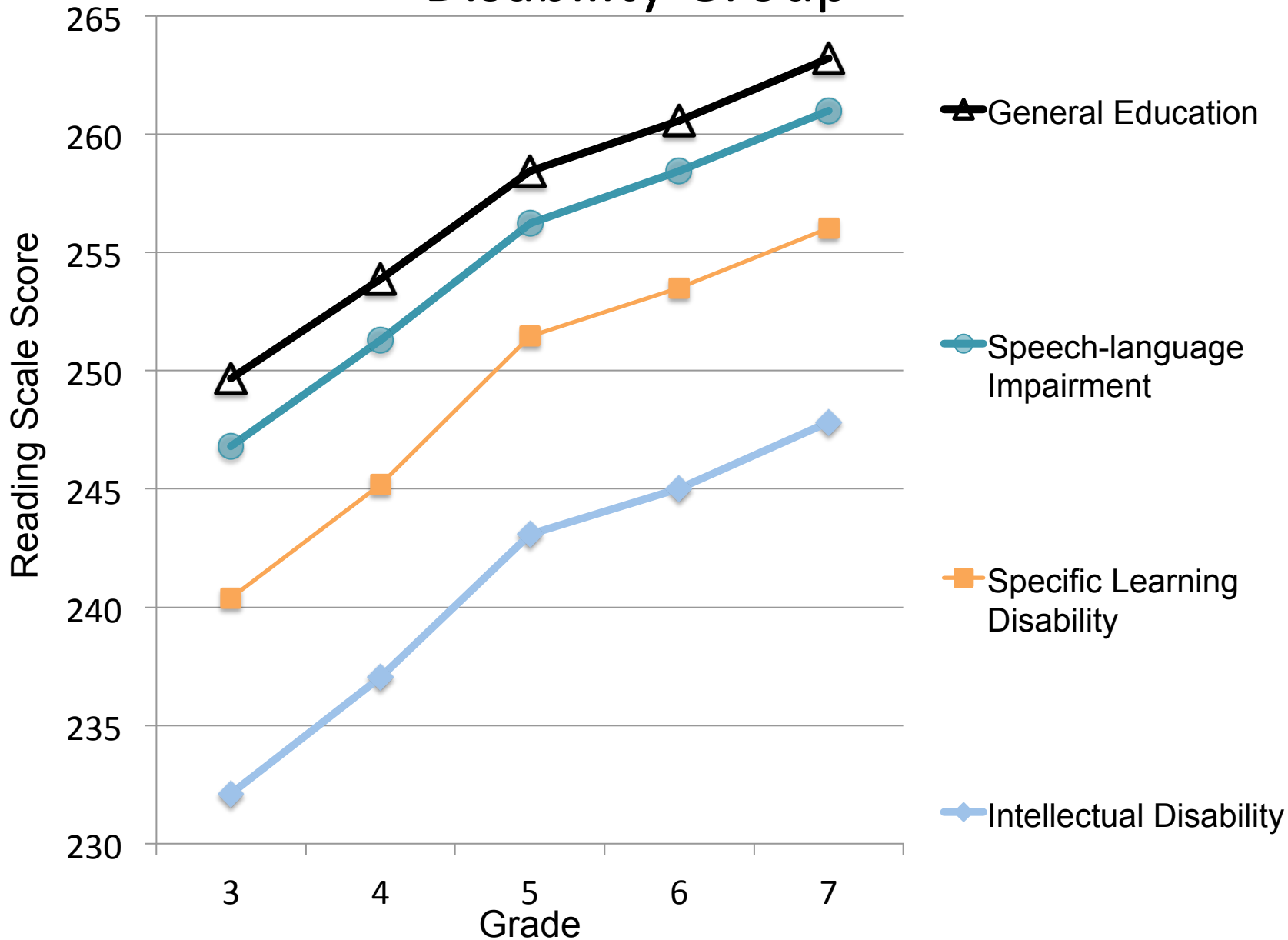
# Data Sources for Growth Studies

- North Carolina test data (NCAASE also looking at AZ, OR, PA)
- Longitudinal—Math 2001-2005 cohort, Reading 2003-2007 cohort
- Sample sizes >90,000 in each sample, followed for 5 years

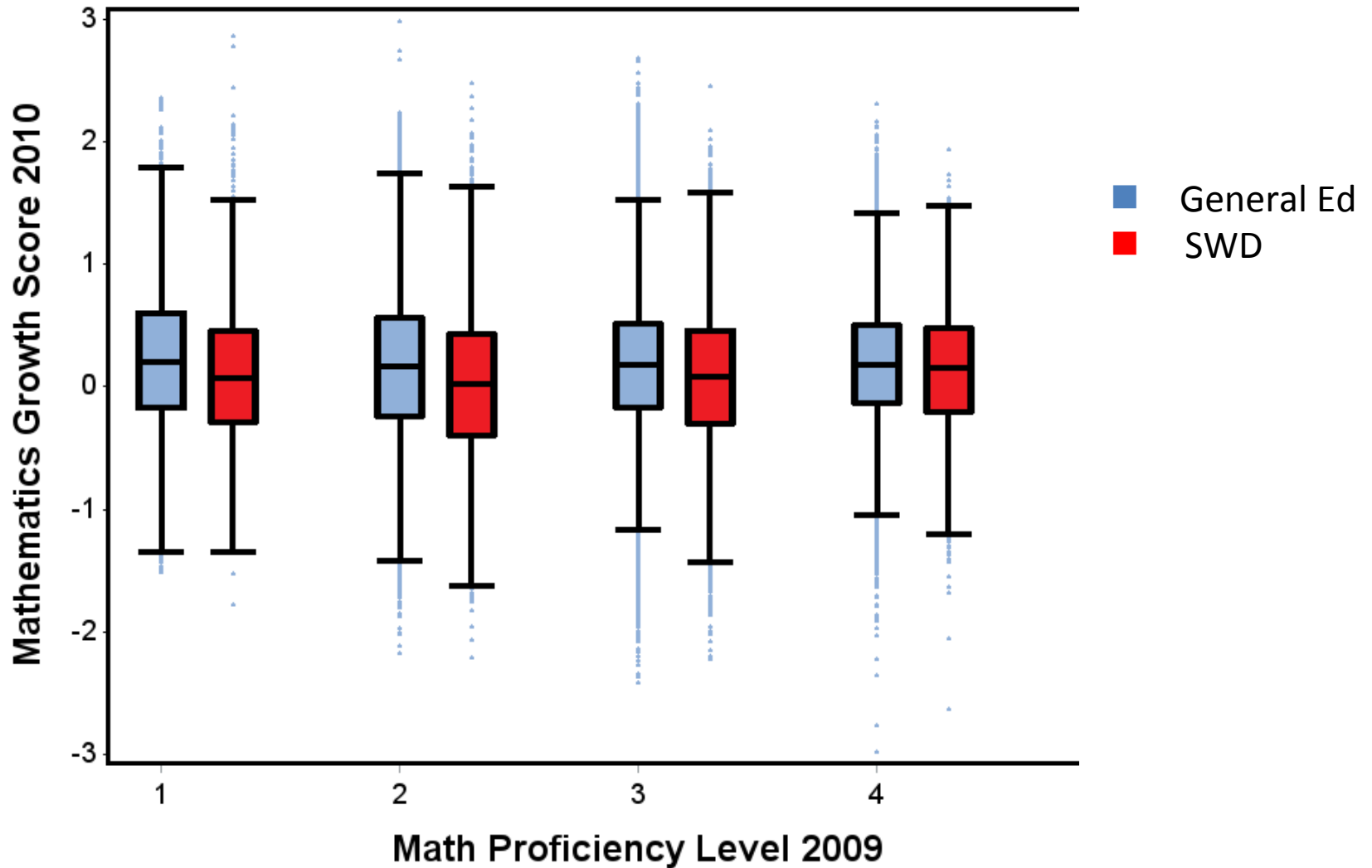
# Mathematics Growth by High Incidence Disability Group



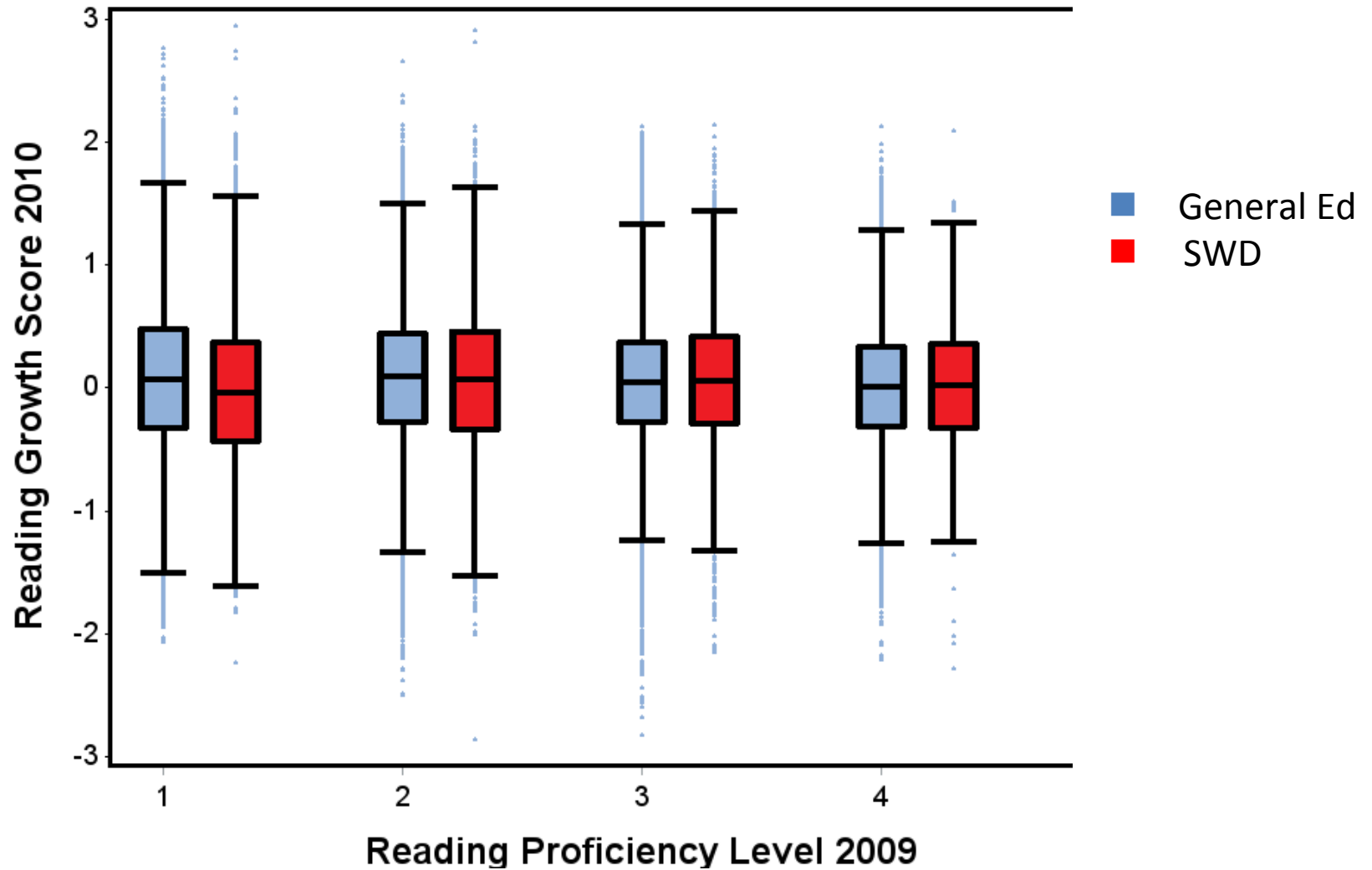
# Reading Growth by High Incidence Disability Group



# Growth by Starting Proficiency Level-Math



# Growth by Starting Proficiency Level-Rdg



# Findings to Date

- Students with disabilities are growing in reading and mathematics.
- Large differences in starting point achievement skills within students with disabilities, smaller differences in growth
- Student improvement may not be reflected in changes in status (Non-proficient/proficient)
- Only considering students currently served in special education biases outcomes for this group

# Future Directions

- Longitudinal studies with other states' data
- Growth on alternate assessments for students with severe disabilities
- Examining how students with disabilities' achievement scores are related to outcomes for schools
- Comparisons among different school accountability models
- Examining how to enhance achievement growth for students with disabilities



# Thank you!

Questions, comments?

Please visit project website:

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