

**The Nation's Report Card™  
Mathematics and Reading 2013  
Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA)  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is The Nation’s Report Card™?**

The Nation's Report Card™ presents results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP is a continuing and nationally representative assessment of what our nation’s students know and can do in mathematics, reading, science, writing, geography, U.S. history, civics, and other subjects. Standard administration practices are implemented to provide a common measure of student achievement. NAEP results can be used by teachers, principals, parents, policymakers, and researchers to assess progress and develop ways to improve education in the United States.

NAEP is a congressionally authorized project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education. The National Assessment Governing Board sets policy for the NAEP program.

**What is the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment?**

The Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) is a special project of the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Assessment Governing Board, and the Council of the Great City Schools. TUDA is intended to focus attention on urban education and measure educational progress within participating large urban districts. TUDA results are based on the same mathematics and reading assessments used to report national and state results, thus allowing students’ performance in the 21 participating districts to be compared to the performance of their peers in the nation’s large cities as well as their home state.

**How many districts participate in the NAEP reading and mathematics assessments?**

A total of 21 urban districts participated in the 2013 reading and mathematics assessments. No new districts were added in 2013, though three districts participated for the first time in 2011.

Participation in the Trial Urban District Assessment, by year (the number in parentheses represents the total number of districts that participated each year; italics indicate a district’s first year)						
2002 (6)	2003 (10)	2005 (11)	2007 (11)	2009 (18)	2011 (21)	2013 (21)
<i>Atlanta, Chicago, District of Columbia (DCPS),</i>	<i>Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland,</i>	<i>Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago,</i>	<i>Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago,</i>	<i>Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, Boston, Charlotte,</i>	<i>Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, Boston,</i>	<i>Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, Boston,</i>

<i>Houston, Los Angeles, New York City</i>	District of Columbia (DCPS), Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego	Cleveland, District of Columbia (DCPS), Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego	Cleveland, District of Columbia (DCPS), Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego	Chicago, Cleveland, <i>Detroit</i> , District of Columbia (DCPS), <i>Fresno</i> , Houston, <i>Jefferson County (KY)</i> , Los Angeles, <i>Miami-Dade</i> , <i>Milwaukee</i> , New York City, <i>Philadelphia</i> , San Diego	Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, <i>Dallas</i> , <i>Detroit</i> , District of Columbia (DCPS), <i>Fresno</i> , <i>Hillsborough County (FL)</i> , Houston, Jefferson County (KY), Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, San Diego	Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, District of Columbia (DCPS), <i>Fresno</i> , Hillsborough County (FL), Houston, Jefferson County (KY), Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, San Diego
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**Are the districts included in the recently released national and state NAEP results?**

Yes. Students in the TUDA samples are also included as part of the state and national samples. For example, the results reported for students in Los Angeles also contribute to the results reported for California and to the results for the nation. The districts’ results are weighted so that their contribution to the state results reflects the actual proportion of students in the population.

**What process is used to develop the assessments?**

TUDA results are based on the same mathematics and reading assessments used to report national and state results. The content of each NAEP assessment is based on a subject framework developed by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), in conjunction with subject area experts, school administrators, parents, policymakers, and others. Frameworks are reviewed periodically and revised or replaced periodically to reflect new developments in the field and to keep the assessments in line with current instructional practices.

NCES is responsible for developing NAEP questions based on framework specifications. The questions are developed in consultation with classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, and test development specialists, and are pilot-tested in schools across the country before an actual assessment is given.

**What are “large cities” and why are they used as a point of comparison?**

Just as the national public sample is used as a benchmark for comparing results for states, results for urban districts are compared to results from large cities nationwide (referred to as “large central cities” in previous TUDA reports). Large cities include public schools located in the urbanized areas of cities with populations of 250,000 or more. Large city is not synonymous with “inner city.”

Schools in participating TUDA districts are also included in the results for large cities. Students in the 21 TUDA districts represent nearly half of the students who attend schools in large cities nationally. The comparison to students in large cities is made because the demographic characteristics of those students are most like the characteristics of students in the urban districts. Both the districts and large cities overall generally have higher concentrations of Black or Hispanic students, lower-income students, and English language learners than in the nation as a whole.

**What subject areas are assessed?**

In 2013, NAEP assessed mathematics and reading in grades 4 and 8. The 2013 NAEP mathematics assessment tested students on five mathematics content areas. These content areas include:

<b>Mathematics Content Areas</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
<b>Number properties and operations</b>	40%	20%
<b>Measurement</b>	20%	15%
<b>Geometry</b>	15%	20%
<b>Data analysis, statistics, and probability</b>	10%	15%
<b>Algebra</b>	15%	30%

In addition to the NAEP mathematics content areas, the table above also lists the percentage of the assessment devoted to each of these areas in each grade.

The NAEP reading assessment was designed to measure student reading comprehension across the literary and informational texts, and was divided into three cognitive target areas in order to assess students’ reading ability, as shown in the table below. The proportion of the assessment questions devoted to each of the three cognitive targets varied by grade to reflect the developmental differences of students.

Reading Cognitive Target Areas	Grade 4	Grade 8
Locate and recall	30%	20%
Integrate and interpret	50%	50%
Critique and evaluate	20%	30%

### What types of questions did students answer?

In both assessments, students answered both multiple-choice and constructed-response questions. In the reading assessment, students read a passage and responded to a series of related questions.

A selection of sample questions is available in each of the report cards. Additional questions from NAEP assessments are available on the NAEP Questions Tool (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrlsx>), including sample student responses, a scoring guide, and students' performance results on the questions. These questions can be used by teachers to create classroom quizzes and compare their students' performances to the nation or their district.

### How many schools and students participated?

The NAEP 2013 mathematics and reading TUDA assessment results are based on representative samples of fourth- and eighth-grade public school students from 21 participating urban districts.

Grade	Mathematics		Reading	
	Students	Schools	Students	Schools
Grade 4	34,400	1,340	34,600	1,340
Grade 8	29,800	940	30,200	940

NOTE: The number of schools are rounded to the nearest ten and students to the nearest hundred.

### How are the results reported?

Student performance is reported in two ways – as average scale scores and as percentages of students performing at or above each of three achievement levels.

- Results are reported as average scores on separate scales for each subject and each grade. While both mathematics and reading are reported on a 0 – 500 scale, scores cannot be compared across subjects or grades.
- NAEP achievement levels are established by the National Assessment Governing Board and define a set of standards for what students *should* know and be able to do in each

subject area assessed. Achievement-level results are reported as the percentages of students performing at or above the *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced* levels. The Governing Board defines *Proficient* performance as “competency over challenging subject matter” and it should not be construed to be grade level performance.

**What results are reported?**

The mathematics and reading TUDA assessments provide district results, and compare them to the nation and large city results and to the district’s corresponding state results for fourth- and eighth-grade public school students.

Results are provided for students overall and by selected demographic characteristics such as race/ethnicity and student eligibility for the National School Lunch Program. Results are also available based on information collected from the student, teacher, and school background questionnaires. NAEP does not provide individual scores for participating students or schools.

**Are results for private schools included in this report?**

The Trial Urban District Assessment included only public schools, and the comparisons with large city and with the nation included only public school students.

**Are students with disabilities (SD) and English language learners (ELL) included in the NAEP samples?**

NAEP has always endeavored to assess all students selected as a part of its sampling process, including students who are classified by their schools as SD and/or ELL. The decision to exclude any of these students is made by school personnel. School personnel are encouraged to use inclusion criteria provided by NAEP and may discuss their inclusion decisions with NAEP district coordinators or field staff. Some students may participate with testing accommodations.

The percentages of students that were identified as SD and/or ELL and excluded or assessed in 2013 varied among participating districts. The table below presents this information for large cities in 2013. All specific district information can be found in the appendices of the report cards.

SD and/or ELL	Mathematics		Reading	
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
Identified	30%	22%	30%	22%
Excluded	2%	2%	3%	2%
Assessed	29%	20%	27%	19%

Without accommodations	11%	5%	11%	5%
With accommodations	18%	15%	16%	14%

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

### **What testing accommodations were offered?**

Accommodations are adaptations to standard testing procedures that remove barriers to participation in assessments without changing what is being tested. NAEP allows SD and ELL students to use most of the same testing accommodations that they receive in state or district tests. There are several NAEP accommodations that are allowed on the mathematics assessment, but not on the reading. Such types of accommodations include the use of bilingual test booklets in English and Spanish, having the assessment questions read aloud, and signing the test questions. For mathematics and reading, allowing extra time and giving the assessment in a small-group format were the two most commonly used accommodations.

### **What are the Governing Board inclusion goals? Did districts meet the inclusion goal in 2013?**

The National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy for NAEP, has been exploring ways to ensure that NAEP continues to appropriately include as many students as possible and to do so in a consistent manner for all jurisdictions assessed and reported. In March 2010, the Governing Board adopted a new policy, *NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners*. This policy was the culmination of work with experts in testing and curriculum, and those who work with exceptional children and students learning to speak English. The policy aims to:

- Maximize participation of sampled students in NAEP;
- Reduce variation in exclusion rates for SD and ELL students across states and districts;
- Develop uniform national rules for including students in NAEP; and
- Ensure that NAEP is fully representative of SD and ELL students.

The policy defines specific inclusion goals for NAEP samples. At the national, state, and district levels, the goal is to include 95 percent of all students selected for the NAEP samples, and 85 percent of those in the NAEP samples who are identified as SD or ELL.

All the urban districts participating in the 2013 mathematics assessment met the 95 percent inclusion goal and most of the participating districts met the inclusion goal in reading. Full district inclusion rates are available at

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_tuda\\_2013/index.html#/about#naep\\_inclusion](http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_tuda_2013/index.html#/about#naep_inclusion)

### **What additional results are available?**

There are a variety of tools available on the NAEP website at

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> that allow for further exploration of the results.

- The NAEP Data Explorer (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>) allows users to examine results by student demographic characteristics and by responses to questionnaires completed by students, teachers, and school administrators.
- The NAEP Questions Tool (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrlsx/>) provides a sample of actual questions that were answered by students. The tool also has performance results on all publicly released NAEP questions.

Links to other resources:

NAEP Release Site

<http://nationsreportcard.gov/>

NAEP Frameworks

<http://www.nagb.org/publications/frameworks.htm>

NAEP Achievement Levels

<http://www.nagb.org/publications/achievement.htm>