



NEWS RELEASE

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Latest Reading, Mathematics Assessments Show Progress

Percentage of Students in Grades 4 and 8 Scoring Proficient or Above Is Higher Than in the 1990s

WASHINGTON—The latest Nation’s Report Card, *2013 Mathematics and Reading*, shows some improvement nationally from the last assessment in 2011 among fourth- and eighth-grade students in mathematics, and among eighth-grade students in reading. Overall, there have been gains in both subjects since the assessments in the early 1990s.

Results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—also known as The Nation’s Report Card—are measured at three achievement levels, *Basic*, *Proficient* and *Advanced*, and the latest assessment shows growth in the proportion of students scoring *Proficient* and *Advanced* in both subjects at both grades. For example, 42 percent of fourth-grade students performed at or above *Proficient* in mathematics in 2013 compared with 13 percent when fourth graders were first assessed in mathematics in 1990. *Basic* denotes partial mastery of the knowledge and skills needed for grade-appropriate work; *Proficient* denotes solid academic performance; and *Advanced* represents superior work.

For the first time, the report findings are available in a new online format that makes it possible to find and sort the data more easily than the previous, paper version. The interactive website also allows visitors to explore side-by-side presentations of mathematics and reading achievement data and includes videos that guide visitors on how to easily explore the results.

This report card also shows improvement since 2011 in average scores for students of different racial/ethnic groups. Hispanic students were the only racial/ethnic group to improve their mathematics scores at both grades 4 and 8. Eighth-grade reading scores rose for white, black, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander students. Despite such gains, gaps in reading achievement between racial/ethnic groups did not change significantly since 2011.

“Today’s results give me hope, as more students are performing at or above the *Proficient* level—which tells me that they are demonstrating competency over challenging subject matter when it comes to math and reading,” said David P. Driscoll, chair of the Governing Board, which sets policy for NAEP. “Even though the gains since 2011 are modest, some states have notable improvements, and over time all of these improvements add up to higher achievement overall.”

At the state level, the category that saw the largest number of states with score increases since 2011 was fourth-grade mathematics, with students in 16 states or jurisdictions having higher average scores in comparison with the last assessment. Public schools in three jurisdictions—Tennessee, the District of Columbia and U.S. Department of Defense schools—have made gains since 2011 in both subjects at both grade levels. Of those, scores for the U.S. Department of Defense schools were higher than the national average for both grades and subjects.

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Since the first reading and mathematics assessment in the 1990s for which state results were reported, gaps in achievement have narrowed only in some states. Florida is the only state to have narrowed the gap in achievement between black and white students at both grade levels and in both subjects. New Jersey and Rhode Island narrowed the gap between white and Hispanic students for mathematics at both grades. California is the only state in which gaps in reading between white and Hispanic students have narrowed at grade 8; Connecticut, New Jersey and New York narrowed this gap at grade 4.

The 2013 mathematics and reading assessments were given to fourth and eighth graders in public and private schools in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. Department of Defense schools. Scores for states are reported for public schools only. In 2013, more than 376,000 fourth graders and 341,000 eighth graders participated in the assessment.

Broken out by state, the results since 2011 include a few notable findings:

- § The average reading score for eighth graders in California increased seven points.
- § Mathematics scores increased seven points for fourth graders in Tennessee and the District of Columbia.
- § Maine is the only state in which the gap in achievement between black and white students was narrowed—but only in mathematics at fourth grade.

Changes at the state level since the first assessment are more encouraging:

- § In mathematics, every state for which results were first reported in 1992 for grade 4 and 1990 for grade 8 had higher scores in 2013.
- § In reading, of the 42 states or jurisdictions that participated in the 1992 fourth-grade assessment, 30 had higher scores in 2013.
- § Also in reading, of the 38 states or jurisdictions that participated in the 1998 eighth-grade assessment, 23 had higher scores in 2013. Oklahoma is the only state in which reading scores were lower than scores during the first assessment year for both grades.

In a new, interactive online format, *The Nation's Report Card: 2013 Mathematics and Reading* makes exploring student achievement data easier than ever before. Visit http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013 to view the interactive report card site.

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The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a congressionally authorized project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The National Center for Education Statistics, within the Institute of Education Sciences, administers NAEP. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible by law for carrying out the NAEP project.

The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, bipartisan board whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to set policy for NAEP.