



NEWS RELEASE

***Embargoed, Hold For Release Until:
Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2005,
10:00 a.m. Eastern Time***

CONTACTS: Stephanie Germeraad at (202) 357-6938 or stephanie.germeraad@ed.gov
Matt Maurer at (202) 955-9450 ext. 322 or mmaurer@commworksllc.com

2005 Nation's Report Card™ Shows Significant Progress For U.S. Students in Reading and Mathematics

***Black, Hispanic & Lower Income Students
Post Some of the Larger Achievement Gains***

WASHINGTON – October 19, 2005 – Overall, student achievement in the U.S. continues to rise, according to results from The 2005 Nation's Report Card™, with some of the larger gains being made by the nation's Black, Hispanic and lower income students.

The results are documented in two reports, *The Nation's Report Card™ Reading 2005* and *The Nation's Report Card™ Mathematics 2005*, which detail achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) administered to fourth and eighth graders in selected years, most recently 2000, 2003 and in 2005, earlier this year.

Based on national averages, achievement in mathematics rose to its highest level in 15 years, with most of the gains for both students in grades four and eight occurring since 2000. Gains in mathematics for both fourth and eighth graders from both 2000 and 2003 to 2005 were significant.

(more)

Reading results for fourth graders showed significant improvement over both 2002 and 2003, although gains were less dramatic than those for mathematics. Since 2000, average reading score gains for fourth grade Black and Hispanic students exceed those of other student groups. Reading performance of eighth graders shows a small, but significant decline since the last assessment.

Improvements in state assessment results tend to follow national trends. Results are stronger in mathematics than reading, and better in fourth grade than in eighth grade.

“These results indicate progress,” said Darvin M. Winick, chair of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) that sets policy for NAEP. “The results are similar to those from the national, long-term trend assessments of nine- and thirteen-year-old students, which NAGB released last July. Parents and educators should be pleased with recent successes, especially at the elementary level. While still large, the differences between those students classified as eligible and not eligible for subsidized lunches continue to shrink.”

2005 Nation's Report Card™

In 2005, more than 165,000 fourth-grade students and 159,000 eighth-grade students nationwide participated in the NAEP assessment in reading. About 172,000 fourth-grade and 162,000 eighth-grade students nationwide participated in the math assessment.

The Nation's Report Card™: Reading 2005 and *The Nation's Report Card™: Mathematics 2005* are available online at www.nationsreportcard.gov.

#

The Nation's Report Card™ is the only nationally representative, continuing evaluation of the condition of education in the United States and has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969. Through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics, The Nation's Report Card informs the public about what America's students know and can do in various subject areas, and compares achievement data between states and various student demographic groups.

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.