



NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. Students Show Progress in Math and Reading, According to 2007 Nation's Report Card™

Minority Students Post Some of the Larger Gains

WASHINGTON (September 25, 2007) – Overall, student achievement in mathematics and reading in the United States is on the rise, according to results from The 2007 Nation's Report Card™, with some of the larger gains made by the nation's minority students.

Two reports released today, *The Nation's Report Card™: Mathematics 2007* and *The Nation's Report Card™: Reading 2007*, detail the achievement of 4th- and 8th-graders on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), administered by the U.S. Department of Education earlier this year. The reports compare national and state data in 2007 with each prior year the tests were given, beginning in 1990 for mathematics and 1992 for reading.

Based on national averages, mathematics scores for 4th- and 8th-graders have continued to rise since 1990. In addition, the proportion of students performing at or above the *Basic* and *Proficient* achievement levels has increased markedly over the last 17 years. Gains made since 2003 are statistically significant, although not as large as those realized during some earlier periods.

Meanwhile, the average reading score for 4th-graders was the highest in 15 years and has increased since 2003, though the overall gains since 1992 have been more modest than those seen in mathematics. The average 8th-grade reading score has improved slightly since 2005 but remains below the level of achievement shown in 2002 and is about the same as the average in 1998.

The Nation's Report Card™

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At the state level, 14 states and the District of Columbia improved their overall mathematics scores at both the 4th- and 8th-grade levels from 2005 to 2007, while no state showed a decline in achievement. In reading, three states and the District of Columbia raised their scores at both grade levels from 2005 to 2007. At 4th-grade, no state declined in reading, and only two states did so in 8th grade.

“These results amount to a promising report card for American students, and are consistent with the trend of improvement in the early grades that has been seen on other NAEP tests,” said Darvin M. Winick, chair of the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy for NAEP. “Parents and educators should be encouraged by this progress, but achievement gaps remain too large, and are a continuing challenge that demands our full attention.”

Since 2005, the achievement gaps between White and Black students have decreased in 4th-grade reading and 8th-grade mathematics, but the size of these gaps remains quite large. The White-Hispanic gaps in both grades and subjects have shown little change since 2005.

2007 Nation's Report Card

In 2007, more than 702,000 4th- and 8th-grade students nationwide participated in the NAEP assessments in mathematics and reading, which were administered by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education.

Copies of *The Nation's Report Card™: Mathematics 2007* and *The Nation's Report Card™: Reading 2007*, plus extensive information from the 2007 NAEP mathematics and reading assessments, will be available online at <http://nationsreportcard.gov> at 10 a.m. EDT on September 25.

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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), 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.