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**New Data on Pandemic-Era Learning from the Nation's Report Card  
Shows Steep Declines in Math, Falling Scores in Reading  
*Lower-performing students saw even greater declines in math, highlighting need for urgent action***

**Washington, D.C.** — The Long-Term Trend [results](#) out today showing trends for 13-year-olds provide further evidence that U.S. students are struggling academically amid achievement declines that worsened during the pandemic, particularly in math.

Average scores for 13-year-olds on this administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Long-Term Trend Assessments (LTT), declined 4 points in reading and 9 points in math compared to the LTT assessments administered in 2020. When compared to a decade ago, scores slid even further — 7 points in reading and 14 points in math.

Lower-performing students saw greater declines than higher-performing peers in math on the recent LTT assessment, a trend found on other recent NAEP assessments. Students at the 10th and 25th percentiles fell by 14 and 12 points, respectively.

A nationally representative sample of thirteen-year-old students in seventh and eighth grades took the LTT assessments in the fall of 2022. These findings emerge about a month after the release of the [U.S. history and civics results](#), which also showed steep declines.

"U.S. students are struggling across the board. Educators, policymakers, and families need to work together urgently and decisively to address this generation's learning needs," **said Beverly Perdue, National Assessment Governing Board chair and former North Carolina governor.** The National Assessment Governing Board sets policy for the Nation's Report Card, the only nationally representative assessment of achievement for U.S. students.

The LTT assessments manifest trends in education data over five decades and are distinct from the main Nation's Report Card assessments, [last released in October](#), which also showed steep declines in reading and math among fourth- and eighth-graders.

Today's release of LTT findings for 13-year-olds follows last September's report on [LTT for 9-year-olds](#), another data point that showed substantial slides in achievement.

The LTT assessments in reading and math measure fundamental skills among nationally representative, age-based cohorts and have been administered since 1971 and 1973, respectively. Students were generally making progress until 2012, when scores started declining. Scores took a sharp downturn during the pandemic. Today, the average score for 13-year-olds on the LTT reading assessment is about where it was in 1971. Despite the large decline in math, the average score in 2023 remains higher than in 1973.

Student survey data released along with LTT points to additional areas of concern.

The percentage of 13-year-olds who said they read for fun is lower than ever previously reported. Just 14 percent of students reported that they read for fun almost daily, down 3 percentage points from 2020 and 13 percentage points from 2012.

Among lower-performing students, 42 percent indicated they never or hardly ever read for fun.

As for absenteeism, an area of widespread concern, the percentage of students who reported they missed five or more days of school in a month has doubled since 2020.

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*The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, nonpartisan 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 the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For more information, visit [www.naqb.gov](http://www.naqb.gov).*