



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Ron Rice
Kathryn Forsyth, Director
609-292-1126

For Release : October 19, 2005

2005 NAEP Results: NJ Students Score Higher than US Average, Significant Increases in Grade 4 Math

New Jersey students continued to score significantly higher than students across the country on the fourth- and eighth-grade math and reading tests administered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Acting Governor Richard J. Codey and Acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy announced today.

The state NAEP assessment, administered biennially at randomly selected schools in all states, the District of Columbia and the US Department of Defense domestic and overseas schools, is the only standardized test for which valid state-to-state score comparisons can be made.

The comparative results – known as “America’s Report Card” – were released today by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

The New Jersey fourth-grade math students scored significantly higher in 2005 when compared to their counterparts in 2003. Only one state in the nation, Massachusetts, scored significantly higher than New Jersey students in fourth-grade math and eighth-grade reading results.

“New Jersey continues to be one of the highest performing states in the nation and we should all be very proud of our students and their teachers,” said Acting Governor Richard J. Codey.

“We’ve made significant strides in education, but much more still needs to be accomplished. We need to continue our efforts in early literacy, stronger professional development, and more parental involvement, and in providing an unwavering commitment to academic achievement for all of our state’s students,” the Governor said.

“These findings in the report were not all together surprising” said Acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy. “The New Jersey Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (NJASK 4) demonstrated a 10-point increase in math scale scores over the same two year period.”

“The success that this report shows should encourage all of us to redouble our efforts to continue the progress,” said Acting Commissioner Davy. “The credit should be given to the students, parents, teachers, school staffers, and administrators who have all contributed to New Jersey’s continuing achievement in education.”

The NAEP report also showed that relative to the other states in the nation:

- New Jersey fourth-grade reading students scored significantly higher than 24 jurisdictions and lower than students in only three states; and
- New Jersey eighth-grade math students scored significantly higher than students in 24 jurisdictions and lower than students in only four states.

New Jersey students’ average scale scores were higher than the average for the nation’s public schools in each of the four NAEP categories and on par with the northeast region, which is also the highest ranking region in the nation:

- Fourth-grade math: NJ-244, US-237, Northeast-241
- Fourth-grade reading: NJ-223, US-217, Northeast-224
- Eighth-grade math: NJ-284, US-278, Northeast-282
- Eighth-grade reading: NJ-268, US-260, Northeast-267

“In addition to the positive overall results, we are proud to point to the fact that New Jersey also progressed in moving students up the NAEP identified achievement levels with more students being labeled proficient and advanced,” said Acting Commissioner Davy.

New Jersey witnessed a six percent increase in the percentage of students in fourth-grade math who performed at or above NAEP designated "Basic" level.

"The fact that the federal NAEP results clearly show that this state is moving forward supports our oft-repeated contention that the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act unfairly labels too many of New Jersey's schools as failing or in need of improvement," Acting Commissioner Davy emphasized.

Under NCLB, all school districts who submit state applications for Title I funds are required to participate in all aspects of NAEP or risk losing those funds.

Other encouraging trends in the report include:

- In both fourth-grade and eighth-grade math, New Jersey Black students' scale scores increased by 7 points and the White/Black achievement gap decreased by 4 points: and
- Students with disabilities in New Jersey scored significantly higher in fourth-grade math and eighth-grade reading.

"It is encouraging to receive data from a national report that evidences the state's efforts to close the achievement gap in New Jersey," said Acting Commissioner Davy. "Through our Abbott initiatives, such as CAPA reviews, encouraging parental involvement and our own assessment tests, we are hopeful that our efforts are starting to bear good fruit."

Since 1969, NAEP has periodically conducted assessments in [reading](#), [mathematics](#), [science](#), [writing](#), [U.S. history](#), [civics](#), [geography](#), and [the arts](#).

Under its current structure, the Commissioner of Education Statistics, who heads the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) in the U.S. Department of Education, is responsible by law for carrying out the NAEP project. The [National Assessment Governing Board \(NAGB\)](#), appointed by the Secretary of Education but independent of the Department, sets policy for NAEP and is responsible for developing the framework and test specifications that serve as the blueprint for the assessments.

The announced results are from the state NAEP assessment that was administered during a seven week period in the winter of 2005. The test also includes grade 12 students and a science test at grades 4, 8 and 12 that will be reported in April 2006.

The scoring range for both math and reading is 0-500 and the achievement level descriptions are "Basic," "Proficient," and "Advanced." NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools, but offers results regarding instructional experiences, school environment for populations of students (e.g. fourth-graders and eighth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g. male students, students with disabilities).

To view the results at the time of the test results release, please log onto the NAEP temporary release website that will be available through November 2, 2005 at <http://nationsreportcard.gov>. For more information about NAEP in general and its report results, please log onto <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>. For additional questions regarding this release, please contact the New Jersey Department of Education, Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.