



**ies** NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION STATISTICS  
Institute of Education Sciences



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT  
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# The Nation's Report Card

## 2007 AT A GLANCE



**2007 SPECIAL EFFORT:**  
12th Grade Participation, Pg. 12



## Overview

The Nation's Report Card informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time. NAEP provides a common yardstick for measuring the progress of students' education across the country. While each state has its own unique assessment, NAEP asks the same questions in every state – making national, state, and in some cases, urban district comparisons possible.

For over three decades, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects. By collecting and reporting information on student performance at the national, state, and local levels, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only information related to academic achievement and relevant variables is collected. The privacy of individual students and their families is protected, and the identities of participating schools are not released.

NAEP is a congressionally authorized project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible for carrying out the NAEP project. The National Assessment Governing Board oversees and sets policy for NAEP.

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## About *At a Glance*

*The Nation's Report Card: 2007 At a Glance* is a compilation of reprinted Executive Summaries from the reading, mathematics, and writing report cards based upon data collected in 2007. The reports provide national, state, and district-level results as well as trends for different student groups such as gender, race/ethnicity, students with disabilities (SD), English language learners (ELL), and socioeconomic status. *At a Glance* also takes a closer look at the types of students who participated in the 2007 assessments.

NAEP results are reported in two ways: by scale scores and achievement levels. Scale scores report what students know and can do on NAEP assessments. NAEP results are generally reported on 0-300 or 0-500 point scales. Because NAEP scales are developed independently for each subject, scores should not be compared across subjects or grades.

Achievement levels reflect what students should know and be able to do. Based on recommendations from policymakers, educators, and members of the general public, the National Assessment Governing Board establishes specific achievement levels for each subject area and grade. To provide a context for interpreting student performance, NAEP results are reported as percentages of students performing below the *Basic* level, at or above the *Basic* and *Proficient* levels, and at the *Advanced* level.

Many other studies are conducted under NAEP. Twelfth-grade NAEP results are used in the High School Transcript Study (HSTS) every four years. Other NAEP data contribute to the National Indian Education Survey (NIES) and other special studies. An overview of other major reports released in 2007 can be found at the end of the report.

**NATIONAL:** All NAEP assessments provide national results.

**STATE:** At 4th and 8th grades, state-level NAEP results are reported in four subjects: reading, mathematics, science, and writing. States are required to participate in reading and mathematics every other year. Some 12th grade state results will be available in reading and mathematics after a 2009 pilot study.

**TRIAL URBAN DISTRICT ASSESSMENT (TUDA):** As a trial program, NAEP assessments are given to 4th and 8th grade public school students in select large urban districts. Results are available at the district level.

## NAEP Achievement Levels

**Basic** denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at a given grade.

**Proficient** represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter.

**Advanced** represents superior performance.



# READING 2007



## State and National Results at Grades 4 and 8

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_2007/](http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_2007/)

### Statistics

#### Fourth Grade

**Students assessed:** 191,000

**Schools assessed:** 7,830

**Student demographic breakdown:**

White: 58%

Black: 16%

Hispanic: 19%

Asian/Pacific Islander: 5%

American Indian/Alaska Native: 1%

National School Lunch Program—Eligible: 41%

SD and/or ELL—Accommodated: 7%

**National student participation rate:**

Public: 94.6%

Private: 96.3%

**National school participation rate:**

Public: 99.7%

Private: 77.5%

#### Eighth Grade

**Students assessed:** 160,700

**Schools assessed:** 6,930

**Student demographic breakdown:**

White: 60%

Black: 16%

Hispanic: 17%

Asian/Pacific Islander: 5%

American Indian/Alaska Native: 1%

National School Lunch Program—Eligible: 37%

SD and/or ELL—Accommodated: 6%

**National student participation rate:**

Public: 91.9%

Private: 95.8%

**National school participation rate:**

Public: 99.7%

Private: 73.8%

## Executive Summary

Reading skills are improving for both fourth- and eighth-graders, particularly among lower- and middle-performing students. Many student groups made gains in both grades; however, these gains were not always accompanied by significant closing of racial/ethnic and gender gaps.

Students demonstrated their reading comprehension skills by responding to questions about various types of reading passages on the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment. Reading abilities were assessed in the contexts of literary experience, gaining information, and performing a task.

A nationally representative sample of more than 350,000 students at grades 4 and 8 participated in the 2007 reading assessment. Comparing these results to results from previous years shows the progress fourth- and eighth-graders are making both in the nation and in individual states.

Fourth-graders scored higher in 2007 than in all the previous assessment years. The average reading score was up 2 points since 2005 and 4 points compared to the first assessment 15 years ago. Higher percentages of students were performing at or above the *Basic* and *Proficient* achievement levels in 2007 than in previous years.

The average reading score for eighth-graders was up 1 point since 2005 and 3 points since 1992; however, the trend of increasing scores was not consistent over all assessment years. In comparison to both 1992 and 2005, the percentage of students performing at or above the *Basic* level increased, but there was no significant change in the percentage of students at or above the *Proficient* level.

## White, Black, and Hispanic students in both grades make gains

As indicated on the chart below, White, Black, and Hispanic students all scored higher in 2007 than in the first assessment 15 years ago at both grades 4 and 8. However, improvements for minority students did not always result in the narrowing of the achievement gaps with White students. Only the White – Black gap at grade 4 was smaller in comparison to the gaps in 2005 and 1992.

## Female students outperform males

Patterns in improvement for male and female students varied by grade. Scores for both male and female students increased since 2005 at grade 4, but not at grade 8. In 2007, female students scored 7 points higher than male students at grade 4 and 10 points higher at grade 8. These gender score gaps were not significantly different from the gaps seen 15 years ago.

Student groups	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	Since 1992	Since 2005	Since 1992	Since 2005
<b>Overall</b>	↑	↑	↑	↑
White	↑	↑	↑	↑
Black	↑	↑	↑	↑
Hispanic	↑	↑	↑	↔
Asian/Pacific Islander	↑	↑	↔	↔
American Indian/ Alaska Native	‡	↔	‡	↔
<b>Gaps</b>				
Male – Female	↔	↔	↔	↔
White – Black	↓	↓	↔	↔
White – Hispanic	↔	↔	↔	↔

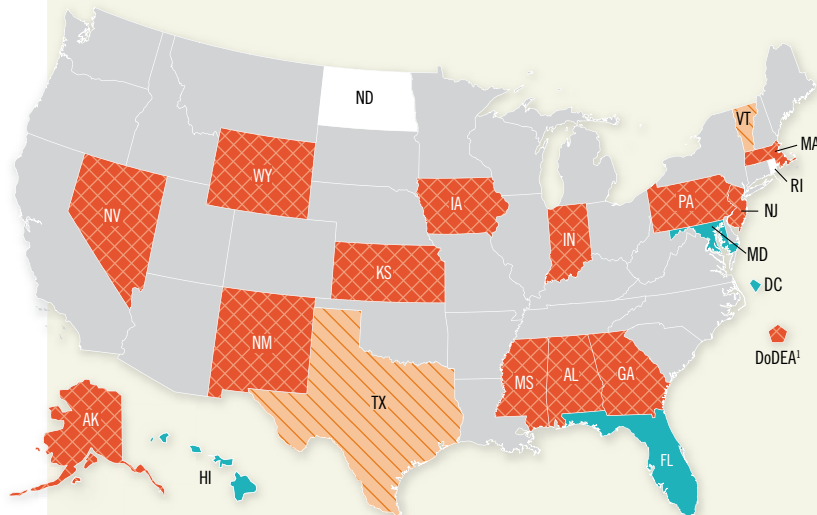
↑ Indicates the score was higher or the gap increased in 2007.

↓ Indicates the score was lower or the gap decreased in 2007.

↔ Indicates there was no significant change in the score or the gap in 2007.

‡ Reporting standards not met. Sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

## FOUR STATES AND JURISDICTIONS MAKE GAINS IN READING AT BOTH GRADES

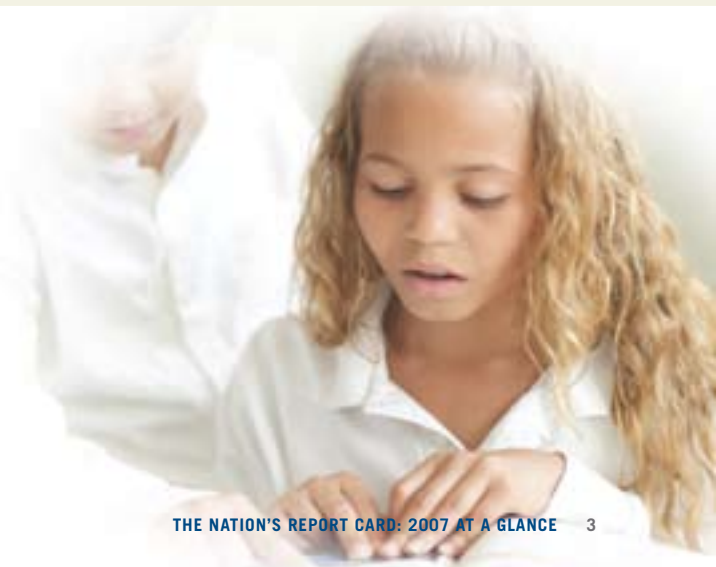


<sup>1</sup> Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools).

### Compared with 2005,

- 4 states and jurisdictions (District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, and Maryland) improved at both grades,
- 13 states and Department of Defense schools improved at grade 4 only,
- 2 states improved at grade 8 only,
- 2 states declined at grade 8, and
- 30 states showed no significant change at either grade.

Differing patterns emerged when results were examined by the contexts for reading. For example, 5 of the 44 states and jurisdictions that showed no change in overall performance at grade 8 did show a gain in at least one of the three reading contexts.



# READING 2007



## Trial Urban District Assessment Results at Grades 4 and 8

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/tuda\\_reading\\_2007/](http://nationsreportcard.gov/tuda_reading_2007/)

### Statistics

#### Fourth Grade

**Students assessed:** 20,400

**Schools assessed:** 790

**Student demographic breakdown:**

White: 14%

Black: 30%

Hispanic: 48%

Asian/Pacific Islander: 8%

National School Lunch Program—Eligible: 79%

SD and/or ELL—Accommodated: 1%-22%\*

#### Eighth Grade

**Students assessed:** 17,100

**Schools assessed:** 560

**Student demographic breakdown:**

White: 14%

Black: 31%

Hispanic: 46%

Asian/Pacific Islander: 9%

National School Lunch Program—Eligible: 78%

SD and/or ELL—Accommodated: 3%-17%\*

\* Indicates the range of percentages among participating TUDAs.

## Executive Summary

Reading achievement held steady or improved for most districts. At grade 4, the majority of the districts that participated in 2002 had improved scores in 2007. At grade 8, several districts had increases compared with 2005.

The results from the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) make it possible to compare the performance of students in participating urban school districts to that of public school students in the nation, in large central cities (population over 250,000), and to each other.

About 37,000 fourth- and eighth-graders from the following 11 urban districts participated in the fourth reading Trial Urban District Assessment in 2007. Six districts at grade 4 and five districts at grade 8 participated in 2002, ten districts participated in 2003, and eleven in 2005.

Atlanta	Chicago	Los Angeles
Austin	Cleveland	New York City
Boston	District of Columbia	San Diego
Charlotte	Houston	

#### At grade 4

- Four districts showed score increases compared with 2002, two districts had higher average scores compared with 2005, and one district had a lower average score in 2007 compared with 2005.
- Five districts improved their 2007 percentages at or above *Basic*, and three districts improved their percentages at or above *Proficient* compared with 2002.

#### At grade 8

- Two districts showed increases compared with 2002, and four districts had higher average scores compared with 2005.
- Two districts improved their 2007 percentages at or above *Basic* compared with 2002, and two districts improved their percentages at or above *Basic* compared with 2005.

## Changes in NAEP reading scores

District	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	Since 2002	Since 2005	Since 2002	Since 2005
Atlanta	↑	↑	↑	↑
Austin	—	↔	—	↔
Boston	—	↔	—	↔
Charlotte	—	↔	—	↔
Chicago	↑	↔	↔	↔
Cleveland	—	↔	—	↑
District of Columbia	↑	↑	↔	↑
Houston	↔	↓	↔	↑
Los Angeles	↔	↔	↑	↔
New York City	↑	↔	‡	↔
San Diego	—	↔	—	↔

↑ Indicates the score was higher in 2007.

↓ Indicates the score was lower in 2007.

↔ Indicates there was no significant change in the score in 2007.

— Not available. District did not participate in 2002.

‡ Reporting standards not met. Sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate for New York City in 2002.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Trial Urban District Reading Assessment.

## CONTEXT FOR URBAN DISTRICT RESULTS

It is important to examine the results for each of the districts by race/ethnicity and family income status. There is generally a higher concentration of minority (races other than White) and lower-income families in these urban districts than in the nation as a whole.

For example, Black and Hispanic students made up about 37 percent of fourth-graders in the nation, but between 55 and 93 percent of the fourth-graders across the 11 districts. At grade 8, between 47 and 100 percent of students in each of the participating districts were eligible for the National School Lunch Program (an indicator of poverty) in 2007, compared to 40 percent of eighth-graders nationally.

In many cases, when scores for only Black, Hispanic, or lower-income students in the districts are compared with their peers nationally, students in the districts score comparably or higher. Additionally, over time these student groups are making gains.

## GAINS MADE FOR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS

At grade 4, compared with 2002 for the six participating districts, scores were higher for

- White students in one district, Black students in four districts, and Hispanic students in two districts, and
- all three racial/ethnic groups in one of the districts.

At grade 8, compared with 2002 for the five participating districts, scores were higher for

- Black students in one district and Hispanic students in one district.

## LOWER-INCOME STUDENTS IN SOME DISTRICTS OUTPERFORM PEERS IN NATION

When results for only lower-income students in 2007 were compared at grade 4

- four districts had scores that were higher than or not significantly different from the score for lower-income students in the nation, and
- seven districts scored lower.

When only scores for lower-income students were compared at grade 8

- six districts had scores that were not significantly different from the score for lower-income students in the nation, and
- five districts scored lower.

## PERFORMANCE IN MANY DISTRICTS HIGHER THAN OR SIMILAR TO LARGE CENTRAL CITIES

In 2007, fourth-graders in Austin, Charlotte, and New York City scored higher on average than students in large central cities, while those in Chicago, Cleveland, the District of Columbia, and Los Angeles scored lower. Scores for fourth-graders in the other four districts were not significantly different from the score for students in large central cities.

Eighth-graders in Austin and Charlotte scored higher on average in 2007 than students in large central cities, while students in Atlanta, the District of Columbia, and Los Angeles scored lower. Scores for eighth-graders in the other six districts were not significantly different from the score for students in large central cities.