



120 State Street - Montpelier, VT 05620-2501 – (802) 828-3135 – www.education.vermont.gov

Vermont Shows Gains in Grade 8 Reading and Math

MONTPELIER – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment of 4th and 8th grade students, released the statewide performance results from the 2011 assessment in Reading and Math today.

Vermont 8th grade students posted gains in both Reading and Math this year. Fourth grade students fell back from the levels they experienced in 2009.

“We are glad to see that the Grade 8 results continue to increase,” said Commissioner Vilaseca. “However, we have work to do in order to reach students with disabilities and students from lower income households. NAEP also provides us a definitive snapshot of how we compare with other states, and we continue to be one of the top performers.”

A snapshot summary of Vermont’s NAEP performance since 2003 is included in the table below. These results reflect the % of students performing at or above proficient.

Mathematics At or Above Proficient	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	National Public 2011
Grade 4	42%	44%	49%	51%	49%	40%
Grade 8	35%	38%	41%	43%	46%	34%
Reading At or Above Proficient	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	National Public 2011
Grade 4	37%	39%	41%	41%	41%	32%
Grade 8	39%	37%	42%	41%	44%	32%

Only Massachusetts had a higher average score than Vermont in Math at grade 8. In grade 8 Reading, Vermont shared the top spot with the states of Montana, Colorado, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Maryland.

Vermont scored lower than Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Minnesota in grade 4 Math and lower than New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey and Maryland in grade 4 Reading. Vermont still remains above the nation in both Reading and Math at grades 4 and 8.

NAEP results are released as *The Nation’s Report Card* every two years as specified under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Results are provided as scale scores and achievement levels. The results are reported as average scores on a 0 to 500 scale and as percentages of students performing at or above three achievement levels—Basic (partial mastery of knowledge and skills), Proficient (solid academic performance), and Advanced (superior performance).

Results are based on representation of students from the 220 public schools with a 4th grade class and 120 public schools with an 8th grade class. There are no results for individual students, classrooms or schools. NAEP reports results for different demographic groups, including race/ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status.

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The performance results for 2011 by subgroup are including in the table below. These results reflect the % of students performing at or above proficient.

NAEP 2011	Grade 4 Math	Grade 8 Math	Grade 4 Reading	Grade 8 Reading
Overall At or Above Proficient	49%	46%	41%	44%
Males	52%	46%	38%	37%
Females	46%	46%	45%	52%
Eligible for Free-Reduced Lunch	35%	26%	25%	28%
Not Eligible for Free-Reduced Lunch	59%	56%	52%	52%
Students with Disabilities	17%	9%	8%	7%
Students without Disabilities	55%	54%	47%	52%

Gaps continue to persist among students who receive free and reduced-price school lunch and those who do not.

The NAEP program endeavors to have all students participate. NAEP provides accommodations as necessary for students with disabilities (SD) and/or English language learners (ELL). The accommodations are available to students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifically requires them. Because some ELL students do not have an IEP, decisions about accommodations for these students are typically made by knowledgeable school staff.

Although every effort is made to include as many students as possible, different states have different exclusion policies, and those policies may have changed over time. Because SD and ELL students typically score lower than students not categorized as SD or ELL, states that are more inclusive—that is, states that assess greater percentages of these students—may have lower average scores than those with a less inclusive policy. Exclusion rates for SD and/or ELL fourth- and eighth-graders ranged from 1% to 10% percent in Reading and Math across the U.S. in 2011. Vermont’s exclusion rate was 2% in grade 4 Reading and Math; 1% at grade 8 Math and 3% in grade 8 Reading.

The test is given every other year in January through March.

For more information about Vermont’s performance on NAEP as well as national results of the 2011 administration, please visit <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>.

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