



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

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NEWS RELEASE

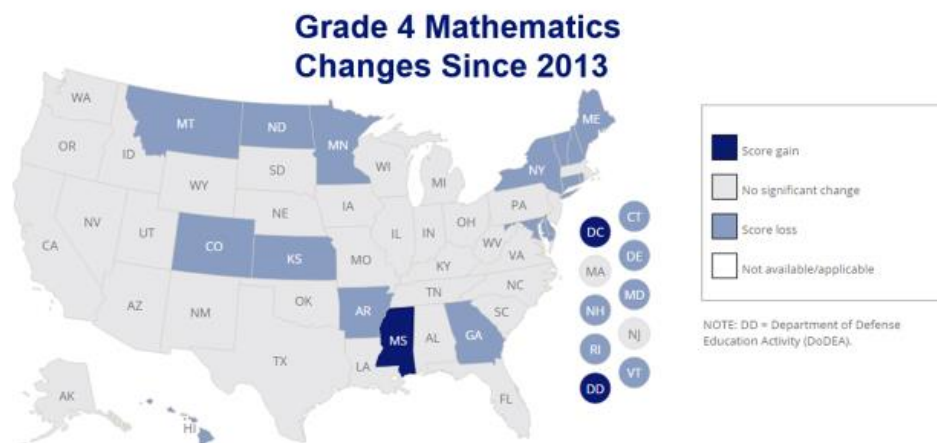
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Mississippi Leads the Nation for 4th Grade Gains on National Assessment of Educational Progress

JACKSON, Miss. – Mississippi showed a significant increase in 4th grade math and reading on the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), bucking the national trend of flat or declining performance.

Compared to 2013 scores, Mississippi was the only state that had a significant increase in 4th grade math, was one of 13 states that had a significant increase in 4th grade reading, and is the only state in that nation that saw significant increases in both subjects for 4th grade. Overall, 4th grade math proficiency rates rose from 26 to 30 percent, and reading proficiency increased from 21 to 26 percent. Mississippi is No. 1 for gains in the average scale score for 4th grade math.

“Mississippi is leading the nation in gains on the 4th grade NAEP assessment because of our schools’ commitment to higher academic standards, their intense focus on literacy and the hard work of students, teachers and administrators,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “These scores show we are making significant strides toward improving student outcomes.”





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In 4th grade reading, all subgroups showed improvements in NAEP proficiency since 2013. This includes students with disabilities, African Americans, Hispanics, and economically disadvantaged students. In 4th grade math, all subgroups except Hispanics showed improvement in NAEP proficiency.

Reading and math scores for Mississippi 8th graders also defied national trends. While national proficiency rates declined in 2015, proficiency levels for 8th grade reading in Mississippi remained flat at 20 percent and math increased from 21 to 22 percent.

“It is worth noting that most 4th graders had the benefit of receiving instruction based on the Mississippi College and Career Ready standards since the 1st grade,” Wright said. “Mississippi’s 8th graders were introduced to the higher standards in the 5th grade or later, which required they adjust to the more rigorous learning goals.”

Mississippi adopted College and Career Ready Standards in 2010. Schools and districts began phasing in the more rigorous standards starting in the 2011-2012 school year. The higher standards emphasize critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Though Mississippi showed significant increases in 4th grade math and reading and remained steady in 8th grade math and reading, the state remains in the bottom tier for each tested subject and grade. In addition, the achievement gap that exists between economically disadvantaged



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students and their more advantaged peers remains in Mississippi as it does in the nation as a whole.

“Mississippi’s NAEP scores affirm that we are moving in the right direction for improving academic achievement, but we still have more work to do,” Wright said. “It is more important than ever that we maintain our commitment to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards. Our NAEP results provide clear evidence that these standards are helping students achieve better academic outcomes.”

Mississippi Board of Education chairman Dr. John R. Kelly said the 2015 NAEP scores demonstrate the ability of Mississippi students achieve ambitious goals.

“We have always known that Mississippi students are just as smart and capable as students in any other area of the country,” Kelly said. “We must continue to challenge, encourage and support our students so they will reach their greatest potential.”

Chris Minnich, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, congratulated Mississippi for its NAEP results.

“I applaud teachers, parents and students across the state of Mississippi for these positive results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Students have made gains in mathematics and in reading this year,” Minnich said. “This year’s data shows that Mississippi is on the right track and moving in the right direction to better meet the needs of all students.”

2015 NAEP Proficiency Levels in Mississippi vs. United States:

Subject	Mississippi	2013-15 change	United States	2013-15 change
4 th grade reading	26 percent	+5	35 percent	+1
4 th grade math	30 percent	+4	39 percent	-1
8 th grade reading	20 percent	+0	33 percent	-1
8 th grade math	22 percent	+1	32 percent	-2

Mississippi NAEP Highlights 2005-2015:

- Mississippi No. 2 for increase in average 4th grade reading scale score
- Mississippi No. 8 for increase in average 4th grade math scale score
- Mississippi No. 7 for increase in average 8th grade math scale score



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Known as the Nation's Report Card, NAEP is the largest nationally representative assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. NAEP assessments are administered every two years to a random sample of students. In 2015, Mississippi students in 108 districts and 219 schools participated in the NAEP assessment.

For more information about Mississippi's NAEP results, visit: <http://bit.ly/1XyCS8L>

To view Mississippi's NAEP results, visit: <http://bit.ly/1RebnNI>

To view all NAEP results, visit, www.nationsreportcard.gov

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