



NEWS RELEASE



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TOM TORLAKSON, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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California Students Make Major Gains in National Tests, State Schools Chief Tom Torlakson Announces

SACRAMENTO—California's eighth graders made the biggest gain in reading scores in the country last year, the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) shows, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced today.

Also known as the "[Nation's Report Card](#)," the NAEP test is an ongoing, nationally representative assessment designed to evaluate what American students in grades four and eight know and can do in a variety of subjects, including reading and science. It was established by Congress in 1969.

"The resilience and tenacity of our schools have seen them through some challenging years, and I'm glad to see this validation of the hard work of educators, students and their families," Torlakson said. "These scores are another sign that we are moving in the right direction to prepare students for college and career, but we still have a lot of work to do to make sure every student graduates equipped to succeed."

State Board of Education President Mike Kirst agreed, noting that California's scores climbed in nearly all the tested areas in addition to the grade eight reading jump.

"Literacy is at the core of a child's education, and it's remarkable to see such a major gain in scores in just one year," Kirst said. "We can all look forward to seeing where our students go from here as we continue to improve teaching and learning."

While California students continue to score a few points below other students nationwide, major gains have been made over the past decade. And while some gains were made this year in narrowing the gap between higher achieving students and African American and Hispanic students, a persistent achievement gap remained.

About 220 school districts and 740 schools in California participated in NAEP during the 2012-13 school year. NAEP results are reported for populations of students, not for individual students or schools. For complete state and national results, visit the [NAEP Web site](#).

Grade Eight Reading Scores

California's average grade eight reading score climbed 7 points, from 255 to 262, from 2011 to 2013. Scores were also up for students of color, socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils, and children with disabilities. English learner scores were unchanged. There was no change in scores for higher achieving students and African American and Hispanic students. The average remains in the NAEP "basic" category.

Grade Eight Mathematics Scores

The average grade eight mathematics score of California was 276, up 3 points from 2011 to 2013. Scores were also up for all subgroups, including students of color, socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils, children with disabilities, and English learners. The gap in scores between higher achieving students and African American and Hispanic students narrowed slightly. The average remains in the NAEP "basic" category.

Grade Four Reading Scores

The average grade four reading score of California was 213, up 2 points from 2011 to 2013. California's score was in the NAEP basic range. There were modest improvements overall, with white and Hispanic students performing above the state average. The achievement gap widened slightly between higher achieving students and African American students.

Grade Four Mathematics Scores

The average grade four mathematics score of California was 234, remaining relatively unchanged from 2011 to 2013. California's score was in the NAEP basic achievement level. There was a narrowing in scores between higher achieving students and Hispanic students.