



## NEWS RELEASE

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# NEBRASKA STUDENTS SCORE AMONG THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY ON 2022 NATIONAL MATH AND READING ASSESSMENTS

Nebraska's 2022 fourth and eighth graders scored higher than the national average and higher than most other states across the country in math and reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

No other state scored higher than Nebraska in fourth-grade math. Only one state scored higher in eight-grade math. Only three states outscored Nebraska in fourth grade reading and only seven states scored higher in eight grade reading.

"While the pandemic has clearly disrupted teaching and learning in our state, these scores are a testament to the dedication and perseverance of Nebraska's educators from the beginning of the pandemic to today," said Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt. "Schools committed to providing as much in-person learning as possible during the 2020-21 school year and have led the nation in the continued safe return to a new normal. Beginning in the summer of 2020 and continuing today, Nebraska's schools have been investing federal relief funds to accelerate student learning, implementing high-quality instructional materials, addressing the non-academic needs of students like mental health and nutrition, and committing to innovative practices before, during, and after school."

The NAEP math assessment measures both mathematics knowledge and students' ability to apply their knowledge in problem-solving situations. The NAEP reading assessment measures reading comprehension by asking students to read selected grade-appropriate materials and answer questions based on what they have read. More than 7500 Nebraska students participated in this year's exams.

Nebraska's average math score is 242 for fourth-grade, seven points higher than the national average of 235, and 279 for eighth-grade, six points higher than the national average of 273.

Nebraska's average reading score is 219 for fourth-grade, three points higher than the national average 216, and 259 for eighth grade, the same as the national average.

The State Board of Education included a state budget request for increased funding for early literacy in the NDE biennial budget request in September. The Board has included early literacy funding in the past two biennium budget requests and has been focused on early literacy since 2016 when the Board adopted the strategic plan.

The following are among other key findings from this year's Nebraska NAEP math and reading assessment data:

- Due to COVID-19 NAEP testing was pushed back one year, the last results were pre-pandemic from 2019.
- Scores were down in all four tests nationally and locally. While Nebraska scores showed declines, they weren't as

large as most states and students continued to score at or above the national average in each test.

- English learners saw significant drops in scores in 2022. EL students scored 16 points lower in fourth-grade reading, 10 points in fourth-grade math and 13 points in eighth-grade reading than in the 2019 assessment. EL students were unchanged in eighth grade math.
- Black students in Nebraska scored 30 points below white students in fourth-grade math, 37 points lower in eighth-grade math, 34 points lower in fourth-grade reading and 30 points lower in eighth-grade reading.
- The gap in score averages was similar for Hispanic students with a difference of 25 points in fourth-grade math, 27 points in eighth-grade math, and 24 points in fourth-grade reading and 22 points in eighth-grade reading compared to white students.

The 2022 national NAEP report card can be viewed at: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>.

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