



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

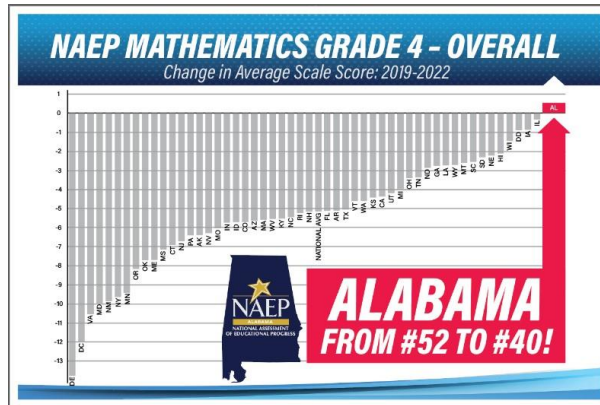
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 24, 2022

**CONTACT:** Communications  
334-694-4686  
[comm@alsde.edu](mailto:comm@alsde.edu)

**ALABAMA HOLDS ITS OWN, MOVING UP 12 and 10 PLACES IN  
MATH AND READING ON THE “NATION’S REPORT CARD”**

*Alabama Moves from 52<sup>nd</sup> to 40<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, and 49<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading  
as the Nation Uniformly Declines*

**MONTGOMERY, AL** – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results have been released, with Alabama’s standing either moving upwards, or holding its own against a backdrop of national decline. The NAEP is the only test administered that assesses what America’s students know and can do in various subjects. Today’s results are for the Main NAEP, 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading and Math.



What educational officials consider to be the combined effort of educators, parents, and lawmakers to endure the COVID crisis has begun to yield results as Alabama students move in both Math and Reading. From 2019 to 2022.

- Alabama went from 52<sup>nd</sup> to 40<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math.
- Alabama went from 49<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading.

- Alabama went from 52<sup>nd</sup> to 47<sup>th</sup> in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math
- Alabama maintained 49<sup>th</sup> in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading, as it was in 2019. However, considering the avalanche of downward scores across the nation, maintaining the same score indicates a strong effort.

“Our teachers and students have worked hard, but clearly, we still have a lot of work to do. Although we are on a good trajectory, we have historically underperformed and there is plenty of ground to make up. I am not as concerned about placement as I am about every student in the state of Alabama receiving a quality education that prepares them for life after high school,” State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Mackey said, “We have a strategic plan, *Alabama Achieves*, that highlights our key priority areas: Academic Growth and Achievement, College, Career, and Workforce Readiness, Safe and Supportive Learning Environments, Highly Effective Educators, and Customer Friendly Services. We are constantly working to improve performance in each of these areas. These results indicate we are making significant progress.”

Alabama  
State Board  
of Education

Governor Kay Ivey  
President

Jackie Zeigler  
District I

Tracie West  
District II  
President Pro Tem

Stephanie Bell  
District III

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.  
District IV

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.  
District V

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.  
District VI

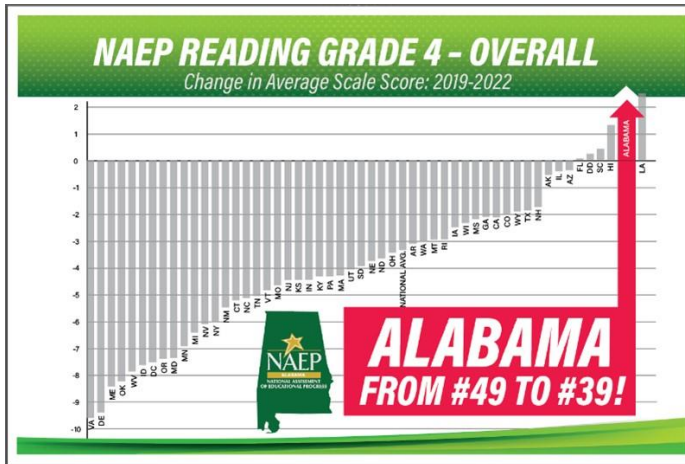
Belinda McRae  
District VII

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.  
District VIII  
Vice President

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
Secretary and  
Executive Officer

## STATE MATH AND READING ON THE “NATION’S REPORT CARD”

Across America, scores in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Reading and Math declined – some to historic lows.



The nation saw the largest decline in 4<sup>th</sup> grade math since 1990.

The impact education absorbed by the blow of the COVID crisis cannot be overstated. Still, subgroups throughout America’s schools show encouraging sparks of progress. America’s English Learners (EL) 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are performing against the national grain in Reading by improving four points, from 221 in 2019, to 225 in 2022. In Alabama, EL students are

making significant gains as well. In 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading, EL students jumped 17 points, from 179 in 2019, to 196 in 2022. In 4<sup>th</sup> Grade math they jumped 4 points, from 212 in 2019, to 216 in 2022.

Governor Kay Ivey attributes much of Alabama’s progress to in-school instruction and strong academic standards.

“This year’s NAEP results confirm that Alabama’s focus on core learning like reading and math is working, and that in-classroom instruction matters. Throughout my first term, we have laid a solid foundation by setting strong standards and an assessment system aligned to our standards. I am confident that we will build on this foundation as we move forward. It should also not go unnoticed that while the rest of the nation dropped, Alabama bucked that trend by holding our own and making some progress,” Gov. Ivey said. “That is undoubtedly because we pushed to get kids back in the classroom during the pandemic. I applaud our students, teachers, and parents. There is still much work ahead, but I am confident that our forward momentum will continue. The future of our state and world is entirely dependent on our students’ education.”

Alabama’s students with disabilities are showing significant improvement as well. The 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading scores of Special Education students rose 14 points, from 164 in 2019, to 178 in 2022. Their 4<sup>th</sup> Grade math scores also increased 15 points, from 196 in 2019, to 211 in 2022.

State education officials say the new 2019 Math Course of Study is better aligned to the NAEP mathematical framework. New initiatives designed to bolster math performance in Alabama, such as the TEAMS Act and the Numeracy Act, are expected to assist as Alabama continues to improve its numeracy instruction. The TEAMS Act offers up to a \$20K salary increase for math and science teachers, and an additional \$5K for teachers, in hard-to-staff areas of Alabama.

Mackey said Alabama is at the cusp of an educational shift and expects the strategies and initiatives made in education to take hold and show significant returns.

“We have strong state leadership, committed educators, hardworking communities, the support of our Governor and lawmakers, a consistent state assessment in the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP), effective initiatives, and educational frameworks more aligned with expected educational outcomes... we feel like we are poised to continue to make strong gains in education,” Mackey said.

## **STATE MATH AND READING ON THE “NATION’S REPORT CARD”**

Usually taken every two years, NAEP testing was interrupted by the COVID-19 crisis in 2021 but continued in 2022.

NAEP assigns student achievement levels; performance standards that describe what students know and should be able to do. The NAEP achievement levels are: NAEP Basic, NAEP Proficient, and NAEP Advanced. NAEP data provides insight into how students are doing among the percentiles of student performance. Individualized consideration is given to the academic progress of all students, at various levels of performance, from higher achieving to those below basic.

The results available today are the 2022 NAEP results; the last NAEP test was administered in 2019.

For the full results of the Nation’s Report card, visit [www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/](http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/)

###