

## Summary of Facts: 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Grades 4 and 8

### Background Knowledge

- NAEP was established in 1969 and is a project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) under the U.S. Department of Education.
- NAEP provides national and state achievement results of elementary and secondary students in the United States in eight subject areas, including mathematics, reading, writing and science.
- It is the only federal nationally representative assessment of what young students know and can do in key subject areas. Commonly referred to as the “Nation’s Report Card,” it is used to provide a point of reference for comparisons between states and to provide an accurate and representative picture of student performance over time.
- The NAEP 2015 reading assessment was a paper-pencil assessment administered to a representative sample of fourth and eighth-graders at the national level and at the state level.
- Every two years (odd years) NAEP provides state results for grades four and eight in reading.
- The assessments are not designed to provide individual district, school or student data.
- The President and Congress use NAEP results in setting education policy. States are neither rewarded nor sanctioned based on their results. The Nation’s Report Card is produced by the U.S. Department of Education and has generated more than 600 reports in its history.
- The NAEP reading assessment window for Colorado students was January 26 – March 6, 2015.
- Each student received two twenty-five minute cognitive reading tests, in addition to general background questions and reading-specific background questions. The test requires about 90 minutes per student to administer.

### Participation Facts:

- Nationwide: 137,400 public school fourth- grade students in 7,240 schools participated.
- Nationwide: 135,100 public school eighth-grade students in 5,170 schools participated.
- Colorado: 2,200 public school fourth- grade students in 98 schools participated.
- Colorado: 2,200 public school eighth-grade students in 94 schools participated.
- All 50 states, the District of Columbia and Department of Defense schools participated.

### Scoring:

- Both the NAEP grade 4 and 8 reading scales range from 0 to 500.
- Achievement levels for grade 4 correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scales: below *Basic*, 207 or lower; *Basic*, 208–237; *Proficient*, 238–267; and *Advanced*, 268 and above.
- Achievement levels for grade 8 correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scales: below *Basic*, 242 or lower; *Basic*, 243–280; *Proficient*, 281–322; and *Advanced*, 323 and above.
- At or above *Basic* includes *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. At or above *Proficient* includes *Proficient* and *Advanced*.
- In addition, the scores are reported by two reading subscales: Gain Information and Literary Experience.

- NAEP only reports scores as higher or lower if they are statistically significantly different.

#### Frameworks

- The 2015 grades 4 and 8 reading assessments are based on the 2013 NAEP framework that was approved by the National Assessment Governing Board which oversees NAEP, <http://www.nagb.org>. The 2013 reading assessment uses the same framework used in 2009.
- Link to Frameworks (standards):  
<https://www.nagb.org/content/nagb/assets/documents/publications/frameworks/reading/2015-reading-framework.pdf>

#### Overall Key Findings for grade four

- In 2015, the average scale score for students in grade 4 reading in Colorado was 224. This was not significantly different than the score for public school students across the nation (221).
- In 2015, there were 7 states/jurisdictions that outperformed Colorado in average scale score (Massachusetts, Department of Defense, New Hampshire, Vermont, New Jersey, Connecticut and Wyoming); 28 states that were not significantly different than Colorado and 16 scored significantly lower than Colorado.
- The Colorado grade 4 reading 2015 average scale score (224) has increased by 7 points since the 1992 test administration (217).
- In 2015, the percentage of Colorado grade 4 students who performed at or above NAEP *Proficient* level was 39 percent. Colorado was significantly higher than the percentage of the nation's public school grade 4 students who performed at the same level (35 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at or above NAEP *Proficient* in 2015 (39 percent) was not significantly different than the percentage of Colorado students who performed at or above NAEP *Proficient* in 2013 (41 percent).
- In 2015, the percentage of Colorado students who performed at or above NAEP *Basic* level was 71 percent. This is not significantly different than the percentage of the nation's public school students who performed at the same level (68 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at or above *Basic* in 2015 (71 percent) was not significantly different in comparison to 2013 (74 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at the *Advanced* level in 2015 (10 percent) was not significantly different in comparison to 2013 (10 percent).

#### Overall Key Findings for grade eight

- In 2015, the average scale score for students in grade 8 reading in Colorado was 268. This was significantly higher in comparison to the score for public school students across the nation (264).
- In 2015, there were 5 states/jurisdictions that outperformed Colorado in average scale score (Department of Defense, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut), 26 states that were not significantly different than Colorado and 20 scored significantly lower than Colorado.
- The 2015 Colorado grade 8 reading average scale score (268) is not significantly different in comparison to the 2013 score (271).

- The percentage of Colorado students who performed at or above NAEP *Proficient* level was 38 percent in 2015. This is significantly higher than the percentage of the nation's public school students who performed at the same level (33 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at or above NAEP *Proficient* in 2015 (38 percent) was not significantly different than that in 2013 (40 percent).
- The percentage of Colorado students who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 78 percent in 2015. This is significantly higher compared to the percentage of the nation's public school students who performed at the same level (75 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at or above *Basic* in 2015 (78 percent) was not significantly different compared to 2013 (81 percent).
- The percentage of students in Colorado who performed at the *Advanced* level in 2015 (3 percent) was not significantly different compared to 2013 (5 percent).

#### Trend Results: overall, subgroups and subscales

##### Nation

- In 2015, students had an average score in reading of 223 points at grade 4 and 265 points at grade 8 on separate 0-500 point scales.
- The 2015 average score in reading was not significantly different at grade 4 and was 2 points lower at grade 8 compared to 2013. Scores at both grades were higher in 2015 than those from the earliest reading assessments in 1992 by 6 points at grade 4 and 5 points at grade 8.
- In 2015, average reading scores were higher compared to 2013 for fourth-grade students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and for fourth-graders identified as students with disabilities. Fourth grade scores for all racial/ethnic groups and for male and female students did not differ significantly in comparison to 2013.
- In comparison to 2013, average reading scores for eighth graders in 2015 were lower for White, Black, and Hispanic students as well as for male and female students.

##### Colorado

- The 2015 grades 4 and 8 scores for the two different reading subscales for Gaining Information and Literary Experience were not significantly different compared to 2003.
- In 2015, the Colorado average reading scores were the same in comparison to 2013 for fourth-grade students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and for fourth-graders identified as students having disabilities.
- Colorado fourth grade scores for White, Black and Hispanic students and for male and female students did not differ significantly in comparison to 2013.
- In 2015, the Colorado average reading scores were the same in comparison to 2013 for eighth-grade students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and for eighth-graders identified as students having disabilities.
- In comparison to 2013, average reading scores for Colorado eighth graders in 2015 were the same for White, Black, and Hispanic eighth-grade students.
- The Colorado eighth grade average reading score for males decreased by 6 points from 2013 to 2015 whereas the females stayed the same.
- 2015 score gaps for grade 4 and grade 8 reading for White/Hispanic groups and White/Black groups did not differ significantly in comparison to 1998.

Links for further information

- Links to the 2015 Colorado NAEP grades 4 and 8 Reading Snapshot Reports:  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/naep2015gr48reading>
- Link to Item Maps:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itemmaps/index.asp>
- NAEP 101 Video:  
[http://youtu.be/J6Zm18b\\_EKI](http://youtu.be/J6Zm18b_EKI)