

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner



Department of Education
and Early Development

www.Education.Alaska.Gov

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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***The Nation's Report Card Highlights Opportunities to Improve
Alaska Student Achievement***

Department Focusing on Third Grade Reading Proficiency

JUNEAU -- Nationwide, state, and subgroup level results from the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are now available online. The assessment provides one piece of information to educators, policymakers, elected officials, and parents across the country about how states are performing in reading and mathematics.

Notable findings in the 2019 NAEP results for Alaska include:

- Compared to the nation, Alaska performed below the national average for grade 4 reading and mathematics and grade 8 reading and mathematics.
- In **grade 4 reading**, only 25 percent of students in Alaska performed at or above the Proficient level.
- In **grade 4 mathematics**, 33 percent of students in Alaska performed at or above the Proficient level.
- In **grade 8 reading**, 23 percent of students in Alaska performed at or above the Proficient level.
- In **grade 8 mathematics**, 29 percent of students in Alaska performed at or above the Proficient level.

"Alaska's 2019 NAEP results confirm what we learned from our 2019 Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) results, our statewide summative assessment – a large achievement gap continues to exist and the work to improve outcomes for all students must continue," said Alaska Education Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson. "For the second time in a row, Alaska has ranked last out of all 50 states in grade 4 reading. Our dissatisfaction with these results must drive us to abandon the status quo and reach for the kind of innovation our students need. Our number one policy priority in the department is to support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade."

EDUCATION
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“We must insist on better educational outcomes for our children,” said Alaska Governor Michael J. Dunleavy. “The Alaska’s Education Challenge provides a pathway forward that focuses our efforts on measurable goals that will increase student performance. We must use these results as an opportunity to increase our sense of urgency and be willing to move beyond the idea that more money, without changes to the way we provide education, will produce different results.”

NAEP data provides one standardized way for Alaska to compare the performance of its students in reading and mathematics with students across the country.

DEED recently released a new online data portal for Alaska’s families entitled *The Compass: A Guide to Alaska’s Public Schools*. The portal presents school-level data reported to DEED, including PEAKS assessment results, in the form of a school profile where visitors can compare their school’s data over multiple years, compare schools, and explore educational options in their local school district and across the state.

The 2019 NAEP reading and mathematics assessments were given to a representative sample of grade 4 and grade 8 students in public schools in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Department of Defense schools at the beginning of 2019.

NAEP is not designed to report results for individual schools or students. A sampling procedure is used to ensure that NAEP participants are representative of the geographical, racial/ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of schools and students across the country. NAEP was administered to students as a digitally based assessment in 2019. In Alaska, each of the four assessments included approximately 2,200 students in about 250 schools.

Results for *The Nation’s Report Card: 2019 Mathematics and Reading* are available in an interactive online format at www.nationsreportcard.gov.

NAEP is a congressionally authorized project of the National Center for Education Statistics within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible for carrying out the NAEP project. The National Assessment Governing Board oversees and sets policy for NAEP.

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*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 505 public schools across the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*

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