



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Most Trial Urban Districts Raise Mathematics Scores Since 2003, Few Make Gains Since 2007, According to Nation's Report Card**

*Report tracks achievement for 18 urban districts, including seven for the first time*

WASHINGTON (December 8)—The mathematics results from the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) paint a mixed picture of student achievement in the 18 urban school districts that participated in the most recent Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). Among the districts that also participated in earlier years, most showed improvement since 2003 but no significant change since 2007.

The 11 districts that participated in prior years are: Atlanta; Austin, Texas; Boston; Charlotte, N.C.; Chicago; Cleveland; the District of Columbia; Houston; Los Angeles; New York City; and San Diego. The seven districts that participated for the first time in 2009 are: Baltimore City; Detroit; Fresno, Calif.; Jefferson County (Louisville), Ky.; Miami-Dade; Milwaukee; and Philadelphia.

Results were relatively unchanged for 4th- and 8th-graders in most TUDA districts between 2007 and 2009, though eight of the 10 districts that began participating in 2003 have made significant gains in both grades over this six-year period.

Two districts at each grade level raised scores from 2007 to 2009. At grade 4, Boston and the District of Columbia had higher scores in that period. At grade 8, Austin and San Diego made gains. No district had significantly lower scores in 2009 than in 2003 or 2007. All districts had some students performing at or above *Proficient* in both grades.

The results are detailed in *The Nation's Report Card: Trial Urban District Assessment Mathematics 2009*, which highlights the achievement of 4th- and 8th-graders in 18 of the nation's largest cities on the NAEP mathematics assessment, administered by the U.S. Department of Education earlier this year. Eighteen districts participated voluntarily—seven for the first time—in the representative-sample assessment, which provides an otherwise unavailable common yardstick of student achievement for these districts.

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The 2009 TUDA results make it possible to compare the performance of the 18 districts to public school students nationally and in the nation's large cities (cities with populations of 250,000 or more). The report reveals that average scores in 2009 for large cities were higher at both grade levels than in 2003 and 2007. And five of the 18 districts—Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Houston, and San Diego—scored above the average for large cities at both grades in 2009.

“The urban school districts that volunteer for this rigorous test should be commended for their willingness to be held to high standards,” said David P. Driscoll, chair of the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy for NAEP. “The report points to some leaders that have made significant strides in student achievement. While much remains to be done to increase achievement and narrow gaps between groups, we hope to learn more from these cities.”

Compared with the national average, Charlotte was the only district to score higher at grade 4. Scores in Austin, New York City, and San Diego were not significantly different from the nation. At grade 8, only Austin scored higher than the nation. Scores in Boston, Charlotte, and San Diego were not significantly different from the national average.

Compared to their large-city peers in grade 4, the TUDA districts with higher average scores were Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Houston, Miami-Dade, New York City, and San Diego. The score for Jefferson County was not significantly different. At grade 8, scores were higher in Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Houston, and San Diego. The scores for Jefferson County, Miami-Dade, and New York City were not significantly different from large cities.

Launched in 2002, the Trial Urban District Assessment is a joint effort developed by the Governing Board, the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, and the Council of the Great City Schools.

There are large demographic differences between urban districts and the nation. For example, 48 percent of 4th-graders and 43 percent of 8th-graders were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch nationally compared with between 46 percent and 100 percent in the participating districts. The percentages of English language learners (ELL) in the nation were 10 percent at grade 4 and 6 percent at grade 8, respectively. But the percentages of ELL students in Austin, Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Diego were higher in both grades than the percentages in both the nation and large cities.

The 2009 NAEP mathematics assessment was administered by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education to representative samples of between 1,800 and 4,300 4th- and 8th-graders from each of the 18 TUDA districts. *The Nation's Report Card: Trial Urban District Assessment Mathematics 2009* and additional data collected from the 2009 mathematics assessment are available online at <http://nationsreportcard.gov>.

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*The Nation's Report Card is the only nationally representative, continuing evaluation of the condition of education in the United States and has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969. Through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), The Nation's Report Card informs the public about what America's students know and can do in various subject areas, and compares achievement data between states and various student demographic groups.*

*The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, bipartisan board whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to set policy for NAEP.*