



Wyoming Department of Education

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Tim Lockwood
tlockw@educ.state.wy.us

(307) 777-6386
www.k12.wy.us

2009 Wyoming NAEP Math scores released

Cheyenne – Wyoming Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Jim McBride announced today that Wyoming’s performance in mathematics on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, known as “The Nation’s Report Card” or NAEP, was released today.

Wyoming’s fourth and eighth grade students continue to outperform national average test scores in mathematics. Wyoming’s average eighth grade test scores remain unchanged from when the state was last assessed in 2007, and higher than scores reported in 2005. At fourth grade, Wyoming scores were lower than those reported in 2007, but remain above the NAEP 2000 results.

Nationally, results remained flat or unchanged at fourth grade but was higher in grade eight.

Grade 4 (Average Scale Score)	2007	2009	Change
Wyoming	244	242	↓
Nation	239	239	--

Grade 8 (Average Scale Score)	2007	2009	Change
Wyoming	287	286	--*
Nation	280	282	↑

*The National Center for Education Statistics does not consider this one point difference to be a statistically significant change from 2007.

“This is disappointing news. I am sure Wyoming educators will join me in this reaction,” Dr. McBride said. “After some years of increase and improvement, we now see a decrease in 4th grade, and a flat line in 8th grade.”

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Dr. Jim McBride
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
(307) 777-7673 (307) 777-6234 FAX



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Results for fourth and eighth grade students in Wyoming in mathematics were again higher than averages for the nation as a whole—as was the case in 2007, the last time NAEP Mathematics was administered in Wyoming.

Wyoming's estimated average scale score in fourth grade mathematics was 242 points compared to a national average of 239 points. In eighth grade, Wyoming's average scale score was 286 points compared to 282 points for the nation as a whole. NAEP Mathematics results are reported on a 0 to 500 point scale at grades four and eight.

At fourth grade, estimated average scores fell two scale points from 244 in 2007 to 242 this year.

At eighth grade, estimated average scores fell one scale point from 287 in 2007 to 286 this year.

“We must take these results to heart and conduct a deeper evaluation of our approach – both at the state, district, and individual school level,” Dr. McBride said. “Results similar to these can be found in the state’s PAWS results for math. So, there is no escaping the message: Time to refocus, analyze current practices and student needs, and apply research based instruction.”

While not an encouraging sign, the one point change in Wyoming's eighth grade score was not large enough to be significantly different from results reported in 2007, based upon the sampling and statistical procedures used to conduct NAEP and report its results.

In fourth grade mathematics, ten states this year (Connecticut, Kansas, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, North Dakota, and Vermont) were statistically higher than Wyoming; 24 states scored lower, and 17 were not significantly different from Wyoming. Three states (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and North Dakota) had a greater percentage of students than in Wyoming performing at or above NAEP's *Basic* benchmark.

Overall Wyoming placed 22nd in terms of grade four average scale scores among the 50 states, District of Columbia and Department of Defense schools administering NAEP Mathematics this year. This compares to a 12th place ranking in 2007.

In addition, decreases occurred in three mathematical sub-areas: algebra, measurement, and number properties and operations. Results in the other two sub-areas—data analysis and probabilities, and geometry— were unchanged from Wyoming's fourth grade results in 2007.

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In eighth grade mathematics, Wyoming scores were not statistically lower than the previous assessment—286 scale points in 2007 to compared to 287 points this year. Eleven states this year (Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, New Hampshire New Jersey, South Dakota, and Washington) were higher than Wyoming; 23 states scored lower, and 17 were not significantly different from Wyoming.

This placed Wyoming 21st nationally in terms of estimated average scale scores, compared to 11th in 2007. Five states (Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, North and South Dakota) had a greater percentage of students than in Wyoming performing at or above NAEP's *Basic* benchmark.

Wyoming's performance in mathematics between 2007 and 2009 did not follow the national trend for either eighth grade, which were higher scores across most states, or fourth grade, which remained unchanged for most states.

In fourth grade, the average score for White students fell two scale points, from 246 in 2007 to 244 in 2009. Average scores for Hispanic students changed from 229 in 2007 to 231 in 2009, however this difference in scores was not statistically significant. The overall gap between White and Hispanic students neither narrowed nor widened between 2007 and 2009.

Wyoming retained some of the smallest educational gaps nationally between low and high students as shown by current NAEP Mathematics results. For example, the estimated difference between students eligible for the NSLP (Nation School Lunch Program) and non-eligible students in fourth grade mathematics was 12 scale points this year.

This was the smallest point difference in the nation, with eight other states statistically tied with Wyoming for smallest income gap based on income. In eighth grade, only one state (Nevada) showed a smaller difference in scale scores between high and low income students than Wyoming.

Wyoming's mathematics results in 2009 were roughly equivalent to results in its neighboring states. The exceptions to this pattern were in fourth grade mathematics where Wyoming average scale scores were higher than Nebraska's but lower than Montana's, and in eighth grade mathematics where both Montana and South Dakota had higher average scale scores.

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction
(307) 777-7673 (307) 777-6234 FAX