

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, math, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects since 1969. NAEP collects and reports academic achievement at the national, state, and select urban district level but does not produce individual results for students. The survey uses a student sample representative of the geographical, racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity of schools and students in the state.

NAEP academic standards have not changed substantively over the last decade. For a discussion of how changes in Louisiana standards match with NAEP standards, click [here](#).

As with LEAP, PARCC, or ACT, NAEP results are reported in two formats: average scale scores and achievement categories (Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic). NAEP’s definition of readiness for the next level of education is “Proficient,” the second highest level on the test. Louisiana has aligned its definition of readiness with NAEP’s by designating “Mastery,” also the second highest level as indicative of readiness.

In an average state, 2,500 students in approximately 100 public schools are assessed per grade, for each subject assessed (320,000 students took the PARCC assessments in Louisiana). Typically 30 students per grade per subject are selected randomly in each school. Each student is assessed in only one subject area.

Louisiana NAEP Ranking among 50 States and D.C. (Average Scale Score)

Subject	National Ranking: 2009	National Ranking: 2011	National Ranking: 2013	National Ranking: 2015
Grade 4 Reading	50th	47th	47th	43rd
Grade 4 Math	48th	49th	49th	45th
Grade 8 Reading	48th	49th	48th	48th
Grade 8 Math	45th	47th	48th	49th

Change from 2013 to 2015 Nationwide and in Louisiana

Subject	% Proficient (Mastery)	Average Scale Score
Grade 4 Reading (nation)	+1%	No Change
Grade 4 Math (nation)	-2%	-1
Grade 8 Reading (nation)	-1%	-2
Grade 8 Math (nation)	-2%	-3

Subject	% Proficient (Mastery)	Average Scale Score
Grade 4 Reading (Louisiana)	+6%	+6
Grade 4 Math (Louisiana)	+4%	+3
Grade 8 Reading (Louisiana)	-1%	-2
Grade 8 Math (Louisiana)	-3%	-5

Louisiana's Ranking among 50 States and D.C. in Terms of Change Since 2013 (Average Scale Score)

Change from 2013 to 2015	Grade 4 Reading	Grade 4 Math	Grade 8 Reading	Grade 8 Math
Louisiana	2nd	2nd	32nd	45th

Low-income and African-American Performance in Louisiana Relative to the Nation

Percentage of Low-income Students Performing at Proficient		
Subject	Gap between Nation and Louisiana: 2013	Gap between Nation and Louisiana: 2015
Grade 4 Reading	5% (pts)	No Gap
Grade 4 Math	7%	3%
Grade 8 Reading	4%	4%
Grade 8 Math	6%	8%

Percentage of African-American Students Performing at Proficient		
Subject	Gap between Nation and Louisiana: 2013	Gap between Nation and Louisiana: 2015
Grade 4 Reading	6% (pts)	1%
Grade 4 Math	5%	3%
Grade 8 Reading	4%	3%
Grade 8 Math	5%	5%

Conclusion

The NAEP is an important snapshot of students' skills in America. In any two-year period, a number of factors impact shifts in performance positively or negatively. Implementation of new standards, curricula, training, and assessments are one such factor.

More important is the long-term effort to raise expectations and to improve learning. In Louisiana, the NAEP shows both long-term, steady improvement, of which the state should be proud, and gaps within our state and beyond our borders that should fuel our push for higher expectations.