

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY HAILS GAINS ON NATIONAL READING EXAM FOR NORTH CAROLINA
North Carolina Students Perform Above the National Average; Rank Second in the Southeast

RALEIGH—The National Assessment for Educational Progress released today the scores on the 2002 Reading exam for fourth and eighth-graders, the only two grades that are tested nationally. North Carolina students scored above the southeastern and national average.

Since the last reading exam in 1998, North Carolina's fourth-graders gained nine points while the nation as a whole gained only two points. Eighth-graders in North Carolina also outpaced the nation. African-American fourth-graders gained 12 points since 1998, doubling the gains of African-American students across the country. Scores for Latino students were reported as a separate category for the first time this year. Latino students performed well above the national average.

"These scores show that we remain on the right track in North Carolina despite tough budget times," said Gov. Mike Easley. "Our investments in education are paying off and we cannot retreat from our commitment to provide educational opportunities to all of our children. NAEP is the standard we use to compare ourselves with other states and these results show that our students are outpacing the nation on gains and are competitive regionally and nationally. We will reach our goals if we stay focused on high standards and accountability and provide our schools with the resources they need."

"We are closing the achievement gap, but we must eliminate it. We will reach our goals if we stay focused on high standards and accountability and provide our schools with the resources they need."

The National Assessment of Educational Progress is the only nationally representative and continuous assessment of student knowledge in core subject areas.

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