



# New Jersey's NAEP Report Card 2024

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP, is a test given to a representative sample of students in every state in Grades 4 and 8.

## Top Takeaways

- Education outcomes in New Jersey, both broadly and with specific populations, must improve.
- Focused, sustained, system-level work must occur in reading and mathematics for every single child to have a chance at success.
- JerseyCAN will continue to work vigilantly to advance this crucial goal.

The percentage (%) of New Jersey students at or above proficient by year

SUBJECT	PERCENT PROFICIENT					
	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022	2024
4th Grade Reading	42	43	48	42	38	38
4th Grade Math	49	47	50	49	40	44
8th Grade Reading	47	41	46	43	42	38
8th Grade Math	49	46	43	44	34	37

## Understanding NAEP

**Q:** When it comes to NAEP, or the Nation's Report Card, just how high is high achievement?

Only one state group — Massachusetts' 4th grade math students — showed more than half of students (51%) proficient. All other overall state proficiency rates fell below 50%.

**Q:** How well did the state of New Jersey do on NAEP?

New Jersey ranked #2 in the country in 3 of the 4 tests administered but to put that in perspective, that translated to **only 38% of 4th grade students being proficient in reading, meaning most are unprepared for success.**

**Q:** We hear a lot about reading; how are New Jersey's students doing in mathematics?

Overall, New Jersey's scores have declined. **Since 2013, our 8th grade math proficiency has dropped by 9% and in 4th grade, proficiency scores have dipped by 5%.**

**Q: From what we can see in NAEP data, what is the biggest factor influencing student success?**

Economic status is the strongest predictor of student success in New Jersey, so **it is often a student's zip code that determines their academic future.**

**Q: Is it fair or realistic to expect economically disadvantaged kids to really improve?**

Yes! The data makes this clear. For example, New Jersey is one of America's wealthiest states, yet several of our country's poorest states — **Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, and South Carolina** — now have a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged 4th graders reading proficiently than we do.

Also, Florida's economically disadvantaged 4th graders are outscoring their New Jersey counterparts by a whopping eleven (11) points in Math.

**Q: Which state had this year's best report card, and is there anything we can learn from them?**

Louisiana is a real winner because unlike consistently high-scoring states, Louisiana has seen considerable improvement. Their 4th graders had the highest reading growth nationwide for the second year in a row and their 4th graders' math scores are remarkably now four points higher than before the pandemic began. Louisiana also moved up twenty slots to improve its state ranking in 8th grade reading from 49th in 2019 to 29th in 2024.

Louisiana credits a steady focus on evidence-based reading, an emphasis on core skills in mathematics, and high-quality, high-dosage tutoring among the driving factors for their success.

## Final Comments

New Jersey's NAEP scores are better than most in the country, however, we have a lot to learn — and do — to give every single child in our state, no matter their wealth status or any other demographic marker, a fighting chance at success.

JerseyCAN knows that a high-quality education is possible for all, and we believe that a high-quality education serves as a potent antidote to poverty and other societal ills.

