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National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Assesses Writing

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assesses writing for three purposes identified in the NAEP framework: narrative, informative, and persuasive. The NAEP writing scale ranges from 0 to 300.

In 2007, the average scale score for eighth-grade students in Missouri was 153. This was not significantly different from their average score in 2002 (151) and was higher than their average score in 1998 (142).¹

Missouri's average score (153) in 2007 was not significantly different from that of the nation's public schools (154).

Of the 45 states and one other jurisdiction that participated in the 2007 eighth-grade assessment, students' average scale score in Missouri was higher than those in 10 jurisdictions, not significantly different from those in 17 jurisdictions, and lower than those in 18 jurisdictions.²

The percentage of students in Missouri who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 26 percent in 2007. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2002 (27 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (17 percent).

The percentage of students in Missouri who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 89 percent in 2007. This percentage was greater than that in 2002 (86 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (80 percent).

In 2007, male students in Missouri had an average score that was lower than that of female students by 20 points. This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (23 points).

In 2007, Black students had an average score that was lower than that of White students by 16 points. This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (21 points).

In 2007, Hispanic students had an average score that was lower than that of White students by 14 points. Data are not reported for Hispanic students in 1998, because reporting standards were not met.

In 2007, students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of poverty, had an average score that was lower than that of students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch by 20 points. This performance gap was the same as that of 1998 (20 points).

In 2007, the score gap between students at the 75th percentile and students at the 25th percentile was 41 points. This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (46 points).

Technology Counts 2008

Technology Counts is a joint project of *Education Week* and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. As in previous years, the EPE Research Center

surveyed the states to assess the status of K-12 educational technology across the nation in the areas of access, use, and capacity. The report assigns grades to the states for their technology performance overall and in those three categories. The state report assembles key findings from the survey and other sources.

Missouri's scores:

Access to technology D+
Use of technology A-
Capacity to use technology C
Overall grade C+

Complete Missouri report:

http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/tc/2008/30MO_STR2008.h27.pdf

State-Funded Preschool Enrollment Passes One Million Mark, Yet Most 3- and 4-Year-Olds are Denied Access to Public Preschool Programs

Survey Shows 12 States Offer No Programs, Others Falter; Gains are Threatened by Possible Recession

State-funded preschools served over one million children last year, yet public pre-K was unavailable for most 3- and 4-year-olds, according to the annual survey released by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

Funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, *The State of Preschool 2007* (<http://nieer.org/yearbook/>) ranks all 50 states on the percentage of children served and spending per child. It also compares the number of quality benchmarks each state meets for the 2006-2007 school year. The survey found that enrollment, quality and state spending per child increased.

Yet, 12 states offered no state-funded preschool education and others faltered in

their commitment to the quality of their early education programs. The report showed that nationally less than half of all 4-year-olds were enrolled in government-supported preschool education programs and one quarter received no preschool. For 3-year-olds the situation was worse, with only 15 percent enrolled in public programs and 50 percent receiving no early education.

Children from wealthy families can attend expensive private preschools while the federal Head Start program and most state-funded preschool education is targeted at lower income families.

Research shows that high-quality preschool education for disadvantaged children improves later high school graduation rates and college attendance, employment opportunities and earnings, even marriage rates. It lessens future crime, delinquency and teenage pregnancy. In economic terms, high-quality preschool education returns to the individual and the public up to \$17 for each \$1 invested. New studies find educational benefits for middle-income children as well.

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming have no state-funded programs. Serious problems also exist in four states – **California, Texas, Florida, and Ohio** – that are home to one-third of all American preschoolers."

On a more positive note, the yearbook reported that in 2006-2007:

- Average state spending per child was \$3,642, halting a trend of declining per-child commitments that had persisted since at least the 2002-2003 school year.
- More than one million 3- and 4-year-old children attended state-funded preschool education programs.
- Thirty states increased enrollment. Nationally, enrollment was up by 80,000.
- Eight states met higher quality standards. Yet, some states still require preschool education teachers to have little more than a high school diploma.
- Of the 26 states that served 3-year-olds, enrollment increased in all but five states. Overall enrollment of 3-year-olds was up 10 percent, mostly due to increases in **Illinois**, which became the first state to commit to serving all 3-year-olds.

Pre-K funding could be attached to state funding formulas for K-12 education to ensure that funds increase proportionally with enrollment as it expands and that funding per child is more dependable the authors say. They also said the federal government could play a vital role by providing an inducement to states to expand enrollment, particularly at age 3, by offering matching funds.

The 2007 *Yearbook* pointed out that one-quarter of all 4-year-olds and half of all 3s had no access to preschool education. State and federal regular preschool education, special education and Head Start combined served 39 percent of the country's 4-year-olds, and some attend private programs, leaving one-quarter of 4-year-olds with no preschool program at all. At age 3, state and federal programs combined to serve only 15 percent. Even with some others attending private programs, 50 percent of 3-year-olds had no access to a preschool education.

Other key findings in the yearbook include:

Access:

- Enrollment increases in most states tended to be modest, but some states made large gains. Enrollment increased by 52 percent in **Tennessee**, 33 percent in **Pennsylvania**, and 17 percent in **Illinois**, **Florida**, and **New York**.
- State pre-K programs served 22 percent of 4-year-olds and 3 percent of 3-year-olds nationwide.
- Three states with "Pre-K for All" served more than half of their 4-year-olds: **Oklahoma** (68 percent), **Florida** (58 percent), and **Georgia** (53 percent). When Head Start and preschool special education enrollments are taken into account, **Oklahoma** served 90 percent of all 4-year-olds; **Florida**, 71 percent; and **Georgia**, 65 percent.

The State of Preschool 2007 is available at

<http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf>

State Profiles are available at:

<http://nieer.org/yearbook/states/>

Missouri profile:

<http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf#page=86>