

Missouri Education News
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Almost Half of States Fail Academic Standards Test

Weak expectations drive calls for national testing

Five years after No Child Left Behind made standards-based education reform the law of the land, a new study finds that the subject-by-subject state standards that undergird this reform strategy remain inadequate in most jurisdictions. *The State of State Standards 2006*, the first full review of such standards since 2000, confers an average grade of "C-minus"-the same as six years earlier-even though most states revised their standards during that period.

- Twenty-six states earned a "D" or an "F" grade overall, including Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Oregon.
- Eleven performed worse than in 2000, including Wisconsin, Florida, Ohio, and Utah.
- Nine states earned honors grades in all subjects, led by Massachusetts, California, and New York.
-

Nine improved their grade by one letter or more, including Indiana, Georgia, and Virginia.

Here is the report for **Missouri**

Overall Grade: D -

English: C

Math: F

Science: C

U.S. History: F

World History: F

More Details:

<http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=358&pubsubid=1346#1346>

Missouri Students Post Impressive Gains on "NAEP" Math Tests

Missouri fourth- and eighth-graders posted significant gains this year on the mathematics section of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests.

Missouri scores on the reading section of the NAEP exams did not change from 2005 and remained virtually the same as the national averages, according to the latest statistics.

The NAEP is known as "the nation's report card." The 2007 exams were given early this year to about 350,000 students nationwide (<http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>). In Missouri, the sample groups included about 3,000 students in each subject and grade level. Under the federal No Child Left Behind law, all states are now required to take part in NAEP testing in odd-numbered years.

"Missouri students made strong progress in math in both fourth and eighth grade, and Missouri is one of only six states in which students scored higher on all five subsections of the math exam," said Commissioner of Education D. Kent King.

"I am disappointed that we are not seeing any movement in the NAEP reading scores, but I am delighted with the amount of progress our students demonstrated this year in mathematics," King said.

Highlights of Missouri 2007 NAEP results:

In grade 4 mathematics, Missouri students posted an average scale score of 239, which is above the 2005 score of 235, and equal to the national average score. The percentage of fourth-graders at the "proficient" level or above is significantly higher this year (38%) than in 2005 (31%).

In grade 8 mathematics, Missouri students posted an average scale score of 281, which is above the 2005 score of 276 and nearly identical to the national average (280).

The percentage of eighth-graders at the "proficient" level or above is significantly higher this year (30%) than in 2005 (26%).

The average scores for female, white, and black students increased significantly.

In grade 4 reading, Missouri students posted an average scale score of 221, which is

unchanged from 2005, and nearly identical to the national average (220).
32% of fourth-graders were "proficient" or above, which is unchanged from 2005 and nearly identical to the national scores (31%).

In grade 8 reading, Missouri students posted an average scale score of 263, which was not significantly different than 2005 (265) and about the same as the national average (261).

31% of eighth-graders were proficient or above in reading, the same as in 2005 and above this year's national average (29%).

Here are the reports for Missouri:

Mathematics 4 and 8

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2007/2007495MO4.pdf>

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2007/2007495MO8.pdf>

Reading 4 and 8

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2007/2007497MO4.pdf>

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2007/2007497MO8.pdf>

Tipton Fourth-Grade Teacher Honored as Missouri's History Teacher of the Year

Lana Dicus, a fourth-grade teacher at Tipton Elementary School (Moniteau County), recently received the Gilder Lehrman American History Teacher of the Year award. The award is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Preserve America.

(Link: www.gilderlehrman.org)

During a ceremony at her school, Ms. Dicus received a \$1,000 honorarium and an archive of books and materials donated to the school library by the Gilder Lehrman Institute. Ms. Dicus is now a candidate for the National History Teacher of the Year Award.

She will be honored September 28-29, in St. Louis, at the Missouri Council for

History Education State Conference. Previous winners of the History Teacher of the Year Award and Eric Langhorst, the new Missouri Teacher of the Year, also will be honored.

Ms. Dicus has implemented primary source materials in creative ways in the teaching of American history. Her goal is to have “students relate to historical characters and understand they were people just like we are today.” She has integrated the teaching of communication arts with social studies, and she stresses the importance of research skills for young students.

Inaugurated in 2004, the History Teacher of the Year Award is designed to promote and celebrate the teaching of American history in classrooms across the United States. It honors one exceptional K-12 teacher of American history from each state and U.S. territory. Only K-6 teachers were eligible for nomination this year.

Nominees for the History Teacher of the Year Award must meet several criteria:

- Have at least three years of classroom experience in teaching American history.
- Have a strong commitment to teaching American history, including local and state history.
- Show creativity in addressing literacy and content beyond state standards.
- Give close attention to primary documents, artifacts, historic sites and other primary materials of history, including oral history.
- Show evidence of thoughtful assessment of student achievement.