



250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200
801.538.7500

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

January 25, 2011

For Immediate Release

Contact: John Jesse, Director of Assessment and Accountability
(801) 538-7811 · john.jesse@schools.utah.gov

Utah Fourth and Eighth Graders Outpace Nation in Science Scores

SALT LAKE CITY – Utah’s fourth grade students scored on average 5 points higher than their peers nationally and Utah’s eighth grade students scored on average 9 points higher than their peers nationally on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, according to data released today by the National Center for Education Statistics.

NAEP data also showed that only 11 states performed substantially better than Utah’s fourth graders and only five states performed substantially better than Utah’s eighth graders on the test.

“We again take our hats off to our state’s hard-working teachers and students who are achieving these results,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Larry K. Shumway. “Utahns can be justifiably proud of the return they are getting on their investment in public education. At the same time, we in Utah public education remain keenly aware of gaps in performance shown on this test and the fact that not all students are performing at the highest levels. We will continue to work on these areas.”

The performance gap between Utah's white and Hispanic students (32 points in fourth grade and 35 in eighth) is about equal to the national average gap. The gap between students who receive free and reduced-price lunch and those who don't, while large (23 points in fourth grade and 21 points in eighth), remains smaller than the gap nationally.

The NAEP test is given to a statistical sampling of Utah fourth and eighth grade students. There is no district- or school-level data.

Read more about Utah's and the nation's results on the 2009 science on the web at nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard or you can read the national report at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2009/2011451.pdf>.

www.schools.utah.gov