

# EDUCATION WEEK

## **Big Districts Improve Reading, Math Scores**

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The largest districts in the country made significant gains on their states' reading and mathematics tests in the spring of 2006, according to an annual study of 4th and 8th graders' performance.

The study, conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools, found that 55 percent of 4th graders in 67 of the biggest districts scored at or above "proficient" on their states' reading tests, a gain of 12 percentage points since 2002. Fourth graders' performance on their states' math tests jumped 15 percent-age points, to 59 percent, over the same time. Among 8th graders, 46 percent scored at or above proficient in math, up 11 points since 2002, and 42 percent scored at that level in reading, a gain of 8 percentage points.

The Washington-based council, whose members are large urban school districts, found that while urban districts' test scores on the whole still lag behind state averages, many districts in the study showed gains that equaled or outpaced those of their respective states.