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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
 May 20, 2010, 10:00 a.m., ET

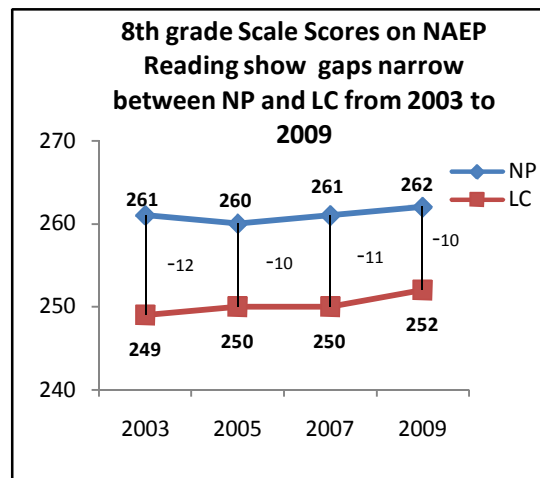
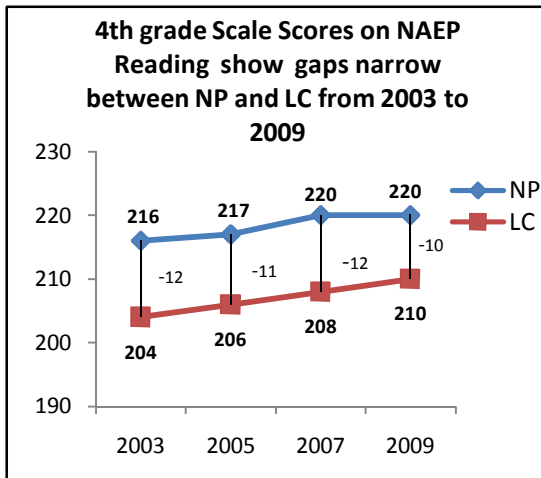
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## Big-City School Students Outpace Public Schools Nationally In Reading

*Achievement Gaps Narrow to 10 points from 2003 to 2009*

WASHINGTON, May 20 – The *Nation’s Report Card Trial Urban District Assessment Reading 2009* shows that in comparison to 2003, average reading scores for students in large cities nationally increased in grades 4 and 8 and narrowed the achievement gap to 10 points when compared to students nationally.

The new report reveals that for 2009 Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Jefferson County (Louisville, K.Y.), and Miami-Dade had higher scores in both fourth and eighth grades compared to the average score for large cities nationally on the rigorous National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Additionally, New York City had higher average scores for 2009 in grade 4 compared to large cities nationally. Also, scores in Atlanta, Houston and San Diego were comparable to those large cities nationally at grade 4 and 8.



\* **NOTE:** NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.  
 NP=National Public; LC= Large Cities  
**SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

“We are pleased with the reading gains that students in America’s big-city schools are making,” said Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a Washington-based coalition of the nation’s largest urban public school systems that initiated the urban NAEP test. “The narrowing of the overall achievement gap is evidence that urban students are making progress academically.”

Eighteen big-city school districts volunteered for the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) in 2009, with seven of the districts participating for the first time. Newcomers were Baltimore, Detroit, Fresno, Jefferson County (Louisville), Miami-Dade, Milwaukee and Philadelphia. They joined Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City and San Diego.

### **Reading Progress in Grade 4**

The grade 4 reading data show that 2009 scores for students in large cities nationally increased compared to 2003 and 2005. However, 2009 scores for fourth-graders in large cities show no significant difference compared to 2007.

For 2009, the percentages of students performing *at or above proficient* in grade 4 in Austin, Charlotte, Jefferson County (Louisville), Miami-Dade, New York City and San Diego were higher than large cities nationally.

Seven districts—Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, District of Columbia, Los Angeles and New York City—demonstrated an increase in 2009 scores for fourth graders compared to 2003. The 2009 grade 4 report also reveals that 2009 scores for students in Boston, District of Columbia, Houston and New York City increased compared to 2007.

### **Reading Gains in Grade 8**

The grade 8 reading data showed that 2009 scores for students in large cities nationally increased when compared to 2003, 2005 and 2007.

For 2009, the percentages of students performing *at or above proficient* in grade 8 in Austin, Charlotte, Jefferson County (Louisville) and Miami-Dade were higher than large cities nationally.

Four districts—Atlanta, Boston, Houston and Los Angeles—demonstrated an increase in 2009 scores for eighth graders compared to 2003. The new report also reveals

that scores for eighth-grade students in Atlanta, District of Columbia and Los Angeles increased from 2007.

### **Achievement Gaps Decrease in Some Districts**

Compared to large cities nationally, Boston and Cleveland had significantly lower Black-White gaps in grade 4. And compared to students in large cities nationally, Cleveland and Miami-Dade had smaller Hispanic-White gaps in grade 4, while Miami-Dade had smaller gaps in grade 8.

Although NAEP scores are increasing for large cities nationally and TUDA districts, the achievement gap between Black and Hispanic students and their White peers continued to be significant.

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