



2002 NAEP Reading Results

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Massachusetts Department of Education

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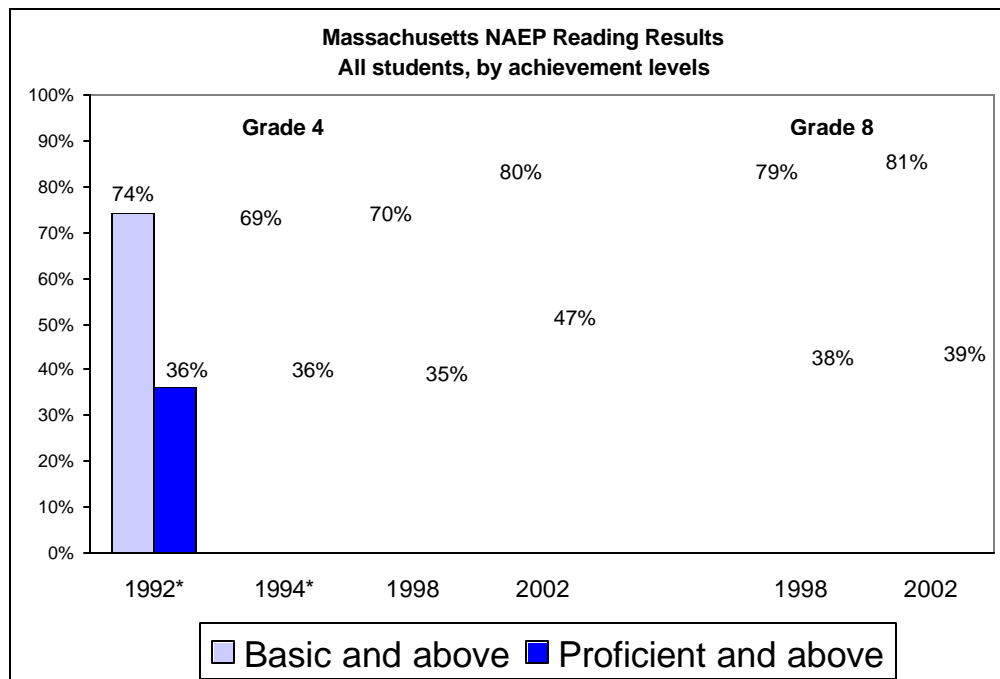
Executive Summary

NAEP 2002 Reading: Grade 4

- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score for students in 2002 was significantly higher¹ than those in all other participating states and jurisdictions.
- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score of students in 2002 (234) was higher than in 1998 (223).
- In 2002, 47 percent of Massachusetts students performed at or above the *Proficient* level, compared to 30 percent nationwide.
- In 2002, Massachusetts female students outperformed male students.
- In Massachusetts, the performance of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students improved significantly from 1998 to 2002.

NAEP 2002 Reading: Grade 8

- Massachusetts students outperformed students in 32 other states and jurisdictions. Massachusetts performance was similar to student performance in the remaining 14 highest scoring states and jurisdictions.
- In 2002, the average scaled score for students in Massachusetts was 271. This was higher than students across the nation (263) and was not found to differ significantly from 1998 (269).
- In 2002, 39 percent of Massachusetts students performed at or above the *Proficient* level, compared to 31 percent nationwide.
- In 2002, Massachusetts female students outperformed male students.
- In Massachusetts, the performance of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students did not change from 1998 to 2002.



¹ Any difference noted as “higher” or “lower” in this report denotes a significant difference.

What is NAEP?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as “The Nation’s Report Card,” is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subjects. NAEP assesses representative samples of students in grades 4, 8 and 12 in core academic subjects. For more than 30 years, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography and the arts. NAEP is also developing assessments in world history, economics and foreign language.

NAEP is mandated by the U.S. Congress and is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the U.S. Department of Education. Policies for NAEP are set by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), whose members are appointed by the Secretary of Education.

NAEP collectively refers to national assessments, long-term trend assessments, and state assessments. For national assessments, NAEP samples students from grades 4, 8, and 12 in public and nonpublic schools. For long-term trend assessments, NAEP samples students at ages 9, 13, and 17.

NAEP State Assessment

Since 1990, NAEP assessments have also been conducted to give results for participating states. For the state assessments, NAEP samples students from grades 4 and 8 and administers assessments in reading, mathematics, writing, and science. According to the provisions of the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001, NAEP must assess fourth and eighth grade students every two years in reading and mathematics, beginning in 2003.

In its content, the state assessment is identical to the assessment conducted nationally. However, because the national NAEP samples were not designed to support the reporting of accurate and representative state-level results, separate representative samples of students were selected for each participating state and jurisdiction. Beginning with the 2002 assessments, a combined sample of public schools was selected for both state and national NAEP. The national sample is a subset of the combined sample of students assessed in each participating state, plus an additional sample from the states that did not participate in the state assessment. This additional sample ensures that the national sample is representative of the total national student population.

The NAEP 2002 Reading Assessment

The NAEP 2002 Reading Assessment framework defined reading as an interactive and constructive process involving the reader, the text, and the context of the reading experience. Reading involves the development of an understanding of the text, thinking about the text in different ways, and using a variety of text types for different purposes.

The NAEP 2002 Reading Assessment measured three contexts for reading: reading for literary experience, reading to gain information, and reading to perform a task. Reading for literary experience involves the reader in exploring themes, events, characters,

settings, problems, and the language of literary works. Various types of texts are associated with reading for literary experience, including novels, short stories, poems, plays, legends, biographies, myths, and folktales. Reading for information involves the engagement of the reader with aspects of the real world. Reading for information is most commonly associated with textbooks, primary and secondary sources, newspaper and magazine articles, essays, and speeches. Reading to perform a task (not assessed at grade 4) involves reading in order to accomplish or do something. Practical text may include charts, bus or train schedules, directions for games or repairs, classroom or library procedures, tax or insurance forms, recipes, voter registration materials, maps, referenda, consumer warranties, or office memos.

Since readers develop understanding of a text in different ways, the assessment measures four aspects of reading that represent the types of comprehension questions asked of students: (1) forming a general understanding; (2) developing interpretation; (3) making reader/text connections; and (4) examining content and structure.

Each student in the state assessment completed two 25-minute sections, each consisting of a reading passage and associated comprehension questions. A combination of multiple-choice and constructed-response questions was used to assess students' understanding of the passages. Passages are authentic and are drawn from sources commonly available to students both in and out of the school environment.

NAEP Reporting

NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it offers results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for national and state populations of students (e.g., fourth graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a sample of student populations of interest.

Student performance was indicated in two ways – scaled scores and achievement levels. The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The three NAEP achievement levels are: *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. The three achievement levels are broadly defined as follows:

Basic – Partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade.

Proficient – Solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Advanced – Superior performance.

To see how the achievement levels are used to describe reading performance at each grade level, please see the Appendix to this report.

NAEP Accommodations

Prior to 1996, NAEP had no policy of allowing assessment accommodations for students with disabilities or English language learners. However, subsequent research conducted by NAEP revealed that the results for accommodated students could be combined with the results for nonaccommodated students without compromising the validity of the NAEP scales in trend comparisons. Therefore, students who typically received accommodations in their classroom testing also received such accommodations on NAEP, where appropriate.

In 1998, NAEP used a split sample of schools, one sample in which accommodations were permitted for special-needs students who normally received them and the other sample in which accommodations were not permitted. Therefore, there were two sets of results for 1998.

Beginning in 2002, NAEP used only one set of procedures – permitting the use of accommodations.

Interpreting this Report

When reviewing this report, it is important to keep in mind that the NAEP results are based on a *sample* of students across Massachusetts and not the *population* of Massachusetts students. In analyzing the data, tests of significance were employed to determine what differences in the data could be confidently characterized as *not occurring by chance*. This type of difference is commonly referred to as a *significant* difference. In this report, any comparison where one number is described as higher or above another indicates that the difference was significant at the $p < .05$ level. Tables denote significant differences using an asterisk.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. While the same scale is used for grade 4, 8, and 12, it is important to understand that student performance cannot be interpreted as grade equivalence. Higher performance at lower grade levels does not mean the student has mastered upper grade material.

Massachusetts' Participation in NAEP 2002 Reading

In Massachusetts, 3,236 randomly selected students from 111 schools at grade 4 and 2,576 students from 104 schools at grade 8 participated in the NAEP 2002 Reading Assessment.

Average Reading Scaled Scores and Percent of Students at or Above Basic and Proficient, Massachusetts and The Nation: 1992, 1994, 1998, 2002

Grade 4, all students		Average Scaled Score	<i>Percent of students:</i>	
			At or above Basic	At or Above Proficient
Accommodations permitted				
2002	Massachusetts	234	80%	47%
	Nation	217	62%	30%
1998	Massachusetts	223*	70%*	35%*
	Nation	213*	58%*	28%
Accommodations not permitted				
1998	Massachusetts	225*	73%*	37%*
	Nation	215	61%	29%
1994	Massachusetts	223*	69%*	36%*
	Nation	212*	59%*	28%
1992	Massachusetts	226*	74%*	36%*
	Nation	215	60%	27%*

* This notation signifies that the value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

Comparisons of scores between the accommodations-not-permitted and the accommodations-permitted samples should be interpreted with caution.

The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4: Basic, 208-237; Proficient, 238-267; and Advanced, 268 and above.

Grade 8, all students		Average Scaled Score	<i>Percent of students:</i>	
			At or above Basic	At or Above Proficient
Accommodations permitted				
2002	Massachusetts	271	81%	39%
	Nation	263	74%	31%
1998	Massachusetts	269	79%	38%
	Nation	261*	71%*	30%
Accommodations not permitted				
1998	Massachusetts	269	80%	36%
	Nation	261	72%*	31%

* This notation signifies that the value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

Comparisons of scores between the accommodations-not-permitted and the accommodations-permitted samples should be interpreted with caution.

The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 8: Basic, 243-280; Proficient, 281-322; and Advanced, 323 and above.

How Does Massachusetts Compare To Other Top Performing States in 2002?

Grade 4

- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score for students (234) was significantly higher than those in 47 jurisdictions.
- In Massachusetts, the percent of students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level (47 percent) was significantly higher than in 46 jurisdictions and the difference was not found to be significant for one jurisdiction.

Not statistically different from Massachusetts:
Connecticut (43 percent)

Grade 8

- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score for students (271) was higher than in 32 jurisdictions and the difference was not found to be significant for the remaining 14 highest scoring jurisdictions.

Not statistically different from Massachusetts:
Department of Defense Overseas Schools (273); Vermont (272); Department of Defense Domestic Schools (272); Maine (270); Montana (270); Nebraska (270); Kansas (269); Virginia (269); Missouri (268); North Dakota (268); Ohio (268); Oregon (268); Washington (268); Connecticut (267).

- In Massachusetts, the percent of students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level (39 percent) was significantly higher than in 31 jurisdictions and the difference was not found to be significant for the remaining 15 highest scoring jurisdictions.

Not significantly different from Massachusetts:
Vermont (40%); Department of Defense Overseas Schools (40%); Kansas (38%); Maine (38%); Connecticut (37%); Department of Defense Domestic Schools (37%); Montana (37%); Oregon (37%); Virginia (37%); Washington (37%); Nebraska (36%); Ohio (36%); North Dakota (34%); Pennsylvania (34%); Idaho (33%).

How Did the Scores of Female Students Compare to Those of Male Students in Massachusetts and Across the Nation?

Grade 4

- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score of female students was 237 in 2002. This was higher than that of male students (231).
- In 2002, the average scaled score of male students in Massachusetts (231) was higher than that of male students across the nation (214). The average scaled score of female students in Massachusetts (237) was higher than that of female students across the nation (220).
- In Massachusetts, the average scaled scores of both female and male students were higher in 2002 than in 1998.
- In Massachusetts, 52 percent of female students performed at or above *Proficient*, compared to 43 percent of male students.

Grade 4, by gender		Percent of Students	Average Scaled Score	Percent of students At or Above <i>Proficient</i>
Male				
2002	Massachusetts	51%	231	43%
	Nation	51%	214	26%
1998	Massachusetts	48%	219*	31%*
	Nation	50%	210*	25%
Female				
2002	Massachusetts	49%	237	52%
	Nation	49%	220	33%
1998	Massachusetts	52%	226*	39%*
	Nation	50%	215*	30%

* This signifies that the value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 - 500.

The above samples are those in which accommodations were permitted.

Grade 8

- In Massachusetts, the average scaled score of female students was 275 in 2002. This was higher than that of male students (266).
- In 2002, the average scaled score of male students in Massachusetts (266) was higher than that of male students across the nation (258). The average scaled score of female students in Massachusetts (275) was higher than that of female students across the nation (267).
- In Massachusetts, the average scaled scores of both male and female students in 2002 were not found to differ significantly from those in 1998.
- In Massachusetts, 45 percent of female students performed at or above *Proficient*, compared to 33 percent of male students.

Grade 8, by gender		Percent of Students	Average Scaled Score	Percent of students At or Above <i>Proficient</i>
Male				
2002	Massachusetts	48%	266	33%
	Nation	50%	258	26%
1998	Massachusetts	51%	264	30%
	Nation	51%	253*	23%*
Female				
2002	Massachusetts	52%	275	45%
	Nation	50%	267	36%
1998	Massachusetts	49%	274	45%
	Nation	49%	268	37%

* This signifies that the value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 - 500.

The above samples are those in which accommodations were permitted.

How Did Students In Massachusetts From Each Racial/Ethnic Category Perform On NAEP 2002 Reading?

Grade 4

- In 2002, White students in Massachusetts had an average scaled score (239) that was higher than those of Black (212) and Hispanic students (207), but did not differ significantly from that of Asian/Pacific Islander students (233).
- The average scaled scores of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students in Massachusetts were significantly higher in 2002 than in 1998.
- In Massachusetts in 2002, the percent of White students performing at or above the *Proficient* level (54 percent) was greater than those of Black (19 percent) and Hispanic students (15 percent), but was not found to differ significantly from that of Asian/Pacific Islander students (46 percent).
- The percent of White students and Asian/Pacific Islander students in Massachusetts performing at or above the *Proficient* level was greater in 2002 than in 1998. The percent of Black and Hispanic students in Massachusetts performing at or above the *Proficient* level in 2002 was not found to differ significantly from 1998.

Race/ethnicity, Grade 4		Percent of students	Average scaled score	% At or Above <i>Proficient</i>
White students				
2002	Massachusetts	78%	239	54%
	Nation	60%	227	39%
1998	Massachusetts	82%	228*	40%*
	Nation	64%	223*	36%*
Black students				
2002	Massachusetts	9%	212	19%
	Nation	18%	198	12%
1998	Massachusetts	6%	202*	12%
	Nation	16%	192*	10%
Hispanic students				
2002	Massachusetts	8%	207	15%
	Nation	17%	199	14%
1998	Massachusetts	7%	194*	11%
	Nation	14%	192	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander students				
2002	Massachusetts	4%	233	46%
	Nation	4%	223	36%
1998	Massachusetts	3%	211*	19%*
	Nation	4%	211!	27%!

* Value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

! Nature of sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of the statistic.

Grade 8

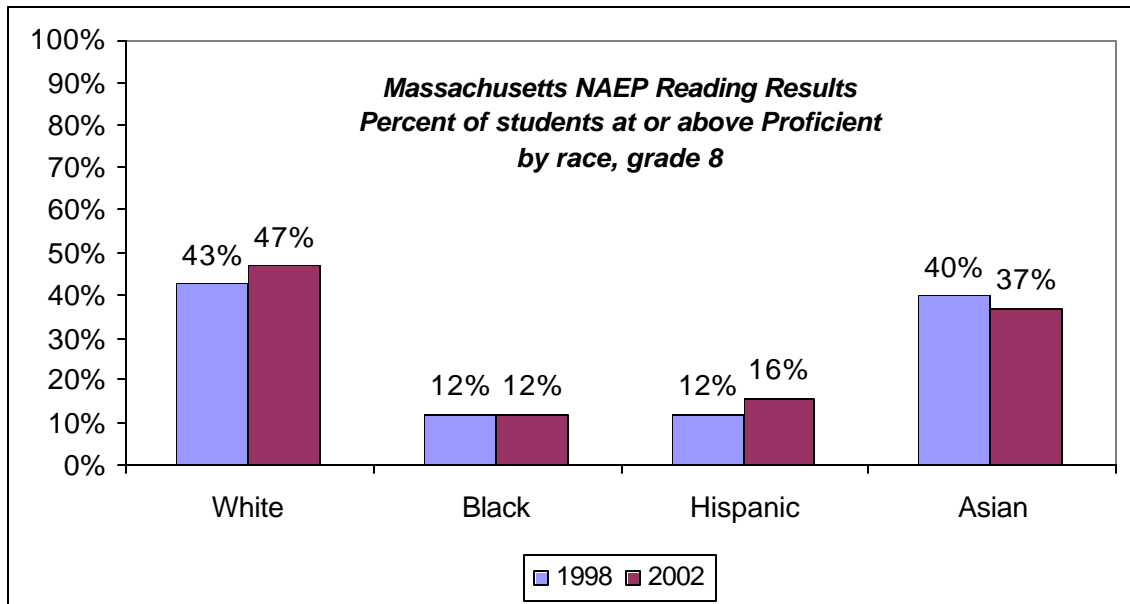
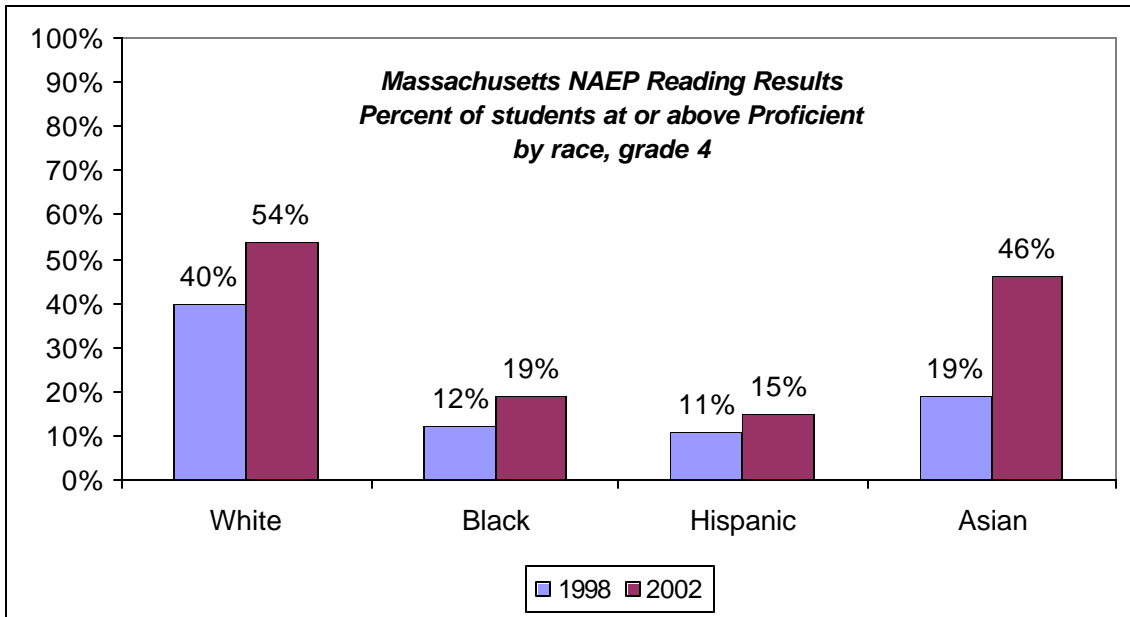
- In 2002, White students in Massachusetts had an average scaled score (278) that was higher than those of Black (246) and Hispanic students (246), but did not differ significantly from that of Asian/Pacific Islander students (270).
- The differences in the average scaled scores of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students in Massachusetts between 2002 and 1998 were not found to be significant.
- In Massachusetts in 2002, the percent of White students performing at or above the *Proficient* level (47 percent) was greater than those of Black students (12 percent) and Hispanic students (16 percent), but was not found to differ significantly from that of Asian/Pacific Islander students (37 percent).
- The differences in the respective percentages of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students in Massachusetts performing at or above the *Proficient* level between 2002 and 1998 were not found to be significant.

Race/ethnicity, Grade 8		Percent of students	Average scaled score	% At or Above <i>Proficient</i>
White students				
2002	Massachusetts	73%	278	47%
	Nation	64%	271	39%
1998	Massachusetts	79%	274	43%
	Nation	68%*	268	37%
Black students				
2002	Massachusetts	9%	246	12%
	Nation	15%	244	13%
1998	Massachusetts	7%	246	12%
	Nation	16%	242	11%
Hispanic students				
2002	Massachusetts	11%	246	16%
	Nation	15%	245	14%
1998	Massachusetts	9%	242	12%
	Nation	12%*	241	13%
Asian/Pacific Islander students				
2002	Massachusetts	5%	270	37%
	Nation	4%	265	34%
1998	Massachusetts	4%	269	40%
	Nation	4%	261	30%

* Value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

! Nature of sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of the statistic.

Percent of Students At or Above Proficient, By Race

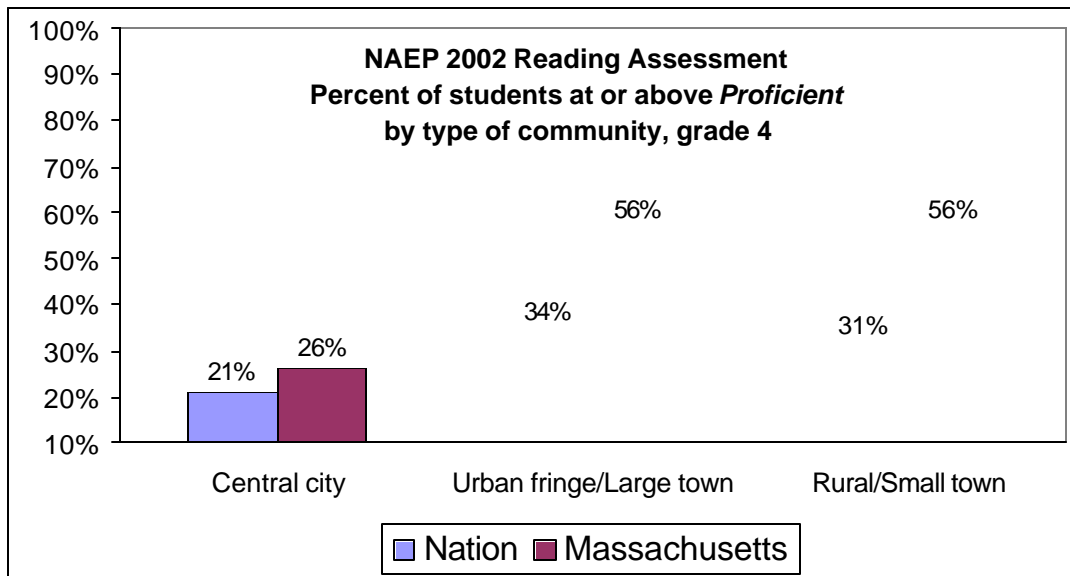


How Did Students Attending Schools Located In Different Types Of Communities Perform On The Reading Assessment?

Grade 4

- In 2002 in Massachusetts, the average scaled score of students attending schools in central cities (217) was lower than those of students in urban fringes/large towns (241) and rural areas/small towns (240).
- The average scaled scores of students attending schools in all three types of locations were higher in Massachusetts than in similar types of communities across the nation.
- In 2002, 26 percent of students attending schools in central cities in Massachusetts performed at or above *Proficient*, which was smaller than the corresponding percentages for students in urban fringes/large towns (56 percent) and rural areas/small towns (56 percent).

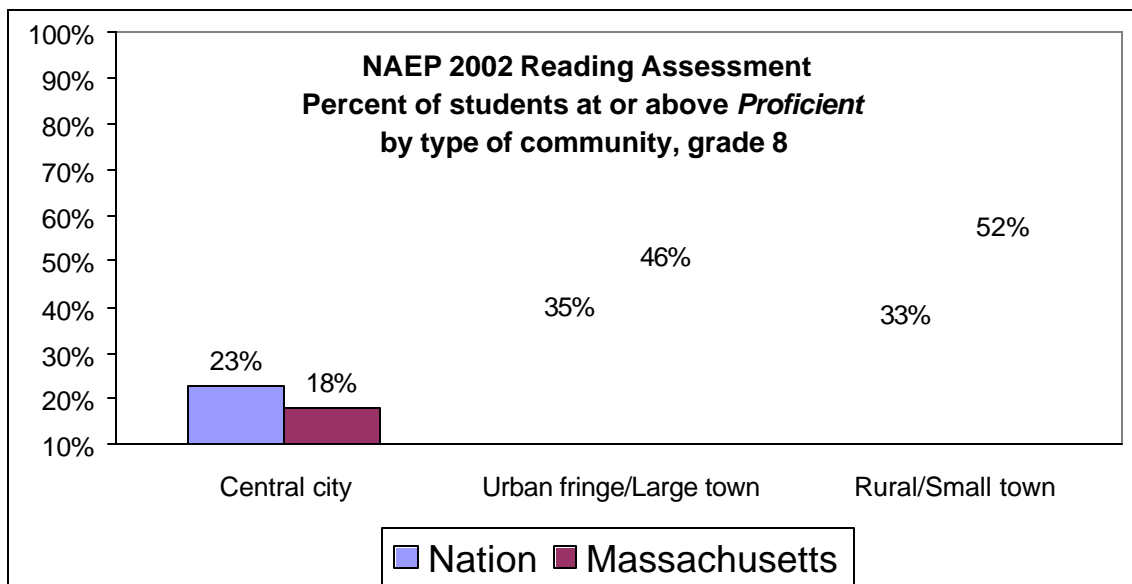
Type of community, grade 4		Percent of students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient
Central city				
2002	Massachusetts	29%	217	26%
	Nation	28%	208	21%
Urban fringe / large town				
2002	Massachusetts	52%	241	56%
	Nation	42%	221	34%
Rural / small town				
2002	Massachusetts	19%	240	56%
	Nation	30%	219	31%



Grade 8

- In 2002 in Massachusetts, the average scaled score of students attending schools in central cities (253) was lower than those of students in urban fringes/large towns (276) and rural areas/small towns (281).
- The average scaled scores of students attending schools in urban fringes/large towns and rural areas/small towns were higher in Massachusetts than in similar types of communities across the nation. The difference in average scaled score of students attending schools in central cities in Massachusetts and similar communities nationwide was not found to be significant.
- In 2002, 18 percent of students attending schools in central cities in Massachusetts performed at or above *Proficient*, which was smaller than the corresponding percentages for students in urban fringes/large towns (46 percent) and rural areas/small towns (52 percent).

Type of community, grade 8		Percent of students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient
Central city				
2002	Massachusetts	28%	253	18%
	Nation	27%	254	23%
Urban fringe / large town				
2002	Massachusetts	51%	276	46%
	Nation	42%	266	35%
Rural / small town				
2002	Massachusetts	21%	281	52%
	Nation	31%	266	33%



How Did Students Classified By Their School As Having A Disability Perform On The Reading Assessment?

Grade 4

- In 2002 in Massachusetts, the average scaled score of students classified as having a disability was 208. This was lower than the average scaled score of students not classified as having a disability (237).
- In 2002 in Massachusetts, 20 percent of students classified as having a disability performed at or above *Proficient*, compared to 51 percent of students not classified as having a disability.

Grade 8

- In 2002 in Massachusetts, the average scaled score of students classified as having a disability was 242. This was lower than the average scaled score of students not classified as having a disability (275).
- In 2002 in Massachusetts, 9 percent of students classified as having a disability performed at or above *Proficient*, compared to 44 percent of students not classified as having a disability.

		<i>Was the student classified by the school as having a disability (SD, IEP)?</i>					
		Yes			No		
		% of students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient	% of students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient
Grade 4							
2002	Massachusetts	12%	208	20%	88%	237	51%
	Nation	8%	187	9%	92%	220	31%
1998	Massachusetts	13%	192*	11%	87%	227*	39%*
	Nation	7%	176*	8%	93%	216*	29%
Grade 8							
2002	Massachusetts	14%	242	9%	86%	275	44%
	Nation	9%	227	6%	91%	266	33%
1998	Massachusetts	12%	241	14%	88%	272	41%
	Nation	8%	224	6%	92%	264*	32%

* Value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

How Did Students Who Are Eligible For Free/Reduced-Price School Lunch Perform On The Reading Assessment?

Grade 4

- In 2002, students in Massachusetts eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had an average scaled score of 215. This was lower than that of students not eligible for this program (241).
- In 2002, the average scaled score of students in Massachusetts eligible for free/reduced-price lunch (215) was higher than in 1998 (203).
- In Massachusetts, 23 percent of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performed at or above *Proficient* in 2002, compared to 15 percent in 1998.

School lunch eligibility		Percent of students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient
Grade 4				
Eligible				
2002	Massachusetts	27%	215	23%
	Nation	43%	202	16%
1998	Massachusetts	26%	203*	15%*
	Nation	41%	195*	12%*
Not eligible				
2002	Massachusetts	67%	241	56%
	Nation	50%	229	41%
1998	Massachusetts	69%	230*	43%*
	Nation	50%	226*	39%
Information not available				
2002	Massachusetts	6%	238!	54%!
	Nation	7%	217	30%
1998	Massachusetts	5%	224!	35%!*
	Nation	7%	219!	33%!

* Value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

! Nature of sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of the statistic.

Grade 8

- In 2002, students in Massachusetts eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had an average scaled score of 253. This was lower than that of students not eligible for this program (278).
- In 2002, the average scaled score for students in Massachusetts eligible for free/reduced-price lunch (253) was not found to differ significantly from that in 1998 (247).
- In Massachusetts, 18 percent of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performed at or above *Proficient* in 2002, compared to 14 percent in 1998.

School lunch eligibility Grade 8		Percent of Students	Average Scaled Score	% At or Above Proficient
Eligible				
2002	Massachusetts	28%	253	18%
	Nation	34%	249	17%
1998	Massachusetts	23%	247	14%
	Nation	30%*	245*	14%
Not eligible				
2002	Massachusetts	69%	278	49%
	Nation	57%	271	40%
1998	Massachusetts	72%	276	45%
	Nation	58%	268*	37%
Information not available				
2002	Massachusetts	3%	259!	24%!
	Nation	10%	264	32%
1998	Massachusetts	5%	265!	31%!
	Nation	11%	264	34%

* Value is significantly different from the value for 2002.

! Nature of sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of the statistic.

NAEP Reading Achievement Levels²

Grade 4

Basic – Grade 4

Fourth-grade students performing at the *Basic* level should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading text appropriate for fourth-graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences.

For example, when reading **literary** text, they should be able to tell what the story is generally about – providing details to support their understanding – and be able to connect aspects of the stories to their own experiences. When reading **informational** text, Basic-level fourth graders should be able to tell what the selection is generally about or identify the purpose for reading it, provide details to support their understanding, and connect ideas from the text to their background knowledge and experiences.

Proficient – Grade 4

Fourth-grade students performing at the *Proficient* level should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.

For example, when reading **literary** text, Proficient-level fourth graders should be able to summarize the story, draw conclusions about the characters or plot, and recognize relationships such as cause and effect. When reading **informational** text, Proficient-level students should be able to summarize the information and identify the author's intent or purpose. They should be able to draw reasonable conclusions from the text, recognize relationships such as cause and effect or similarities and differences, and identify the meaning of the selection's key concepts.

Advanced – Grade 4

Fourth-grade students performing at the *Advanced* level should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge text critically and, in general, to give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.

For example, when reading **literary** text, Advanced-level students should be able to make generalizations about the point of the story and extend its meaning by integrating personal experiences and other readings with ideas suggested by the text. They should be able to identify literary devices such as figurative language.

When reading **informational** text, Advanced-level fourth graders should be able to explain the author's intent by using supporting material from the text. They should be

² Source: *The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2002*, National Center for Education Statistics.

able to make critical judgments of the form and content of the text and explain their judgments clearly.

Grade 8

Basic – Grade 8

Eight-grade students performing at the *Basic* level should demonstrate a literal understanding of what they read and be able to make some interpretations. When reading text appropriate to eight grade, they should be able to identify specific aspects of the text that reflect overall meaning, extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences, recognize and relate interpretations and connections among ideas in the text to personal experience, and draw conclusions based on the text.

For example, when reading **literary** text, Basic-level eight graders should be able to identify themes and make inferences and logical predictions about aspects such as plot and characters. When reading **informational** text, they should be able to identify the main idea and the author’s purpose. They should make inferences and draw conclusions supported by information in the text. They should recognize the relationships among the facts, ideas, events, and concepts of the text (e.g., cause and effect, order). When reading **practical** text, they should be able to identify the main purpose and make predictions about the relatively obvious outcomes of procedures in the text.

Proficient – Grade 8

Eight-grade students performing at the *Proficient* level should be able to show an overall understanding of the text, including inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to eighth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making clear inferences from it, by drawing conclusions, and by making connections to their own experiences – including other reading experiences. *Proficient* eighth-graders should be able to identify some of the devices authors use in composing text.

For example, when reading **literary** text, students at the Proficient level should be able to give details and examples to support themes that they identify. They should be able to use implied as well as explicit information in articulating themes; to interpret the actions, behaviors, and motives of characters; and to identify the use of literary devices such as personification and foreshadowing. When reading **informational** text, they should be able to summarize the text using explicit and implied information and support conclusions with inferences based on the text. When reading **practical** text, Proficient-level students should be able to describe its purpose and support their views with examples and details. They should be able to judge the importance of certain steps and procedures.

Advanced – Grade 8

Eighth-grade students performing at the *Advanced* level should be able to describe the more abstract themes and ideas of the overall text. When reading text appropriate to eighth grade, they should be able to analyze both meaning and form and support their analyses explicitly with examples from the text; they should be able to extend text

information by relating it to their experiences and to world events. At this level, student responses should be thorough, thoughtful and extensive.

For example, when reading literary text, Advanced-level eighth graders should be able to make complex, abstract summaries and theme statements. They should be able to describe the interactions of various literary elements (i.e., setting, plot, characters, and theme) and explain how the use of literary devices affects both the meaning of the text and their response to the author's style. They should be able to critically analyze and evaluate the composition of the text. When reading informational text, they should be able to analyze the author's purpose and point of view. They should be able to use cultural and historical background information to develop perspectives on the text and be able to apply text information to broad issues and world situations. When reading practical text, Advanced-level students should be able to synthesize information that will guide their performance, apply text information to new situations, and critique the usefulness of the form and content.