



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Tom Rosenthal

Richard Vespucci

Jon Zlock

609-292-1126

For Release: May 14, 2003

New Jersey Students Participate in National Assessment of Educational Progress

For the first time, virtually all New Jersey schools selected in a sample agreed to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP 2003). NAEP exams are standards-based tests in reading, math, and other subjects that are administered periodically to fourth and eighth grade students in the United States.

This year marked the first year since 1996 that New Jersey schools have participated significantly in the NAEP exams. In 1998, 2000 and 2002, New Jersey did not report its results due to an insufficient number of participating schools.

Commissioner of Education William L. Librera said that New Jersey can compare its NAEP results with results attained by other states. He also noted that the federal No Child Left Behind Act now requires school districts to participate in NAEP if they are eligible for, and want to continue to receive, their full Title I federal education funding.

"The message from the federal government is clear: NAEP is a useful tool for comparing student achievement information among states, and that participating in NAEP is required by Title I school districts if they want to continue to receive their current levels of federal Title I funds," said Commissioner Librera.

Of 160 New Jersey districts sampled, 159 reported that at least one of their schools participated in NAEP exams in reading and mathematics administered to approximately 14,000 fourth- and eighth-grade students from January 27 through March 27, 2003. The sampling of 224 schools was conducted by Westat, the contractor hired by the National Center for Educational Statistics, the agency responsible for administering NAEP. The sample was described as a random stratified sample based on the type of location (level of urbanization) and minority characteristics of the student populations.

NAEP only reports state level results; it does not provide individual student, school or district level reports. The state assessment reports contain disaggregated data in categories such as: gender, race, ethnicity, limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities. NAEP also reports background information on the students, school and school staff, such as the number of math teachers with a degree in mathematics education, or how many hours students watch television or read for pleasure.