

Austin Independent School District

TELEPHONE (512) 414-2414

FAX (512) 414-1098

www.austinisd.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Dec. 7, 2011

Contact:
Erin Moore
512-414-9803

AUSTIN'S EIGHTH GRADERS TOP THE CHARTS IN MATHEMATICS

AISD outperforms other urban school districts in Math and Reading in national test

Austin, TX—Austin Independent School District (AISD) Superintendent Meria Carstarphen announced today that AISD's fourth and eighth grade students continued to outperform their peers in large cities and other urban school districts on the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the *Nation's Report Card*. The results for the 21 urban districts that participated in this year's Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) of the NAEP were released today in Washington, D.C. NAEP is the only assessment that allows valid comparisons among students in urban school districts in different states.

Austin ISD's 2011 mathematics results demonstrate that the percentage of fourth and eighth graders scoring at or above *Basic* remains higher than the percentage of their peers scoring at or above *Basic* in most other TUDA districts and in large city (LC) schools.

- The percentage of AISD fourth graders scoring at or above *Basic* (87%) in mathematics was significantly higher than that of their peers in 18 TUDA districts (see Math Figure 1), LCs (74%) and national public schools (82%).
- The percentage of AISD eighth graders scoring at or above *Basic* (74%) in mathematics was significantly higher than that of their peers in 17 TUDA districts (see Math Figure 2), LCs (63%) and was similar to that of their peers in national public schools (72%).

Although NAEP reading scores across the nation and among all TUDA districts remained relatively flat in fourth and eighth grade during 2011, the percentage of AISD students in both grades scoring at or above *Basic* was higher than that of their peers in most large city TUDA districts (see Math Figures 3 and 4). In addition, AISD percentages have increased significantly in both grades since 2005 and have increased at a greater rate than the state's percentage.

- Overall, the percentage of fourth graders scoring at or above *Basic* in reading (68%) was significantly higher than that of their peers in 15 other TUDA districts (see Reading Figure 1) and LCs (55%) and was similar to that of their peers in national public schools (66%).

- The percentage of AISD's eighth graders scoring at or above *Basic* in reading (71%) was significantly higher than 15 other TUDA districts (see Figure 4), LCs (65%) and not significantly different from their peers in national public schools (75%).

"Results from the *Nation's Report Card* show that the AISD fourth and eighth grade students' scores in mathematics and reading were among the highest in the nation," said Meria Carstarphen, AISD Superintendent. "We are extremely proud of our students and staff, who continue to prove that they are outstanding among their peers."

Mathematics Results:

Austin ISDs fourth graders continued to perform well in mathematics. AISD students' average scale score (245) was significantly higher than that of their peers in LCs (233), national public schools (240) and 18 of the 20 other TUDA districts (including Houston and Dallas). Overall, 87% of AISD fourth graders scored at or above *Basic*, which is a significant increase from 2007 (83%). In addition, 46% of AISD fourth graders scored at or above *Proficient*, also a significant improvement from 2005 (40%).

Although fourth graders as a group performed well in NAEP mathematics, achievement gaps remain between student subgroups (e.g., racial/ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students identified with disabilities). Despite these achievement gaps, however, students in some subgroups made some noteworthy accomplishments. For example, economically disadvantaged students' average scale scores improved significantly from 2007 (229) to 2011 (235). Additionally, the percentage of Hispanic students scoring at or above *Basic* (82%) was greater than that of their peers in LCs (71%), national public schools (72%) and 12 other TUDA districts (see Reading Table 1).

In 2011, Austin ISD eighth graders also performed well in mathematics, scoring higher, on average (287), than their peers in LCs (274) and national public schools (283) and higher than their peers in 19 other TUDA districts (including Houston and Dallas). Overall, 74% of eighth graders tested scored at or above the *Basic* level, a significant increase from 2005 (68%) and a greater percentage than that of their peers in LCs (63%).

Students in several subgroups outperformed their peers in similar districts and improved significantly since 2005. For example, the percentage of eighth grade Hispanic students scoring at or above *Basic* (67%) in mathematics was higher than that of their peers in LCs (58%) and national public schools (60%), and represented a significant improvement from 2005 (56%). Additionally, the percentages of economically disadvantaged (62%) and ELL students (39%) scoring at or above *Basic* in AISD were higher than those of their peers in LCs (55% and 26%, respectively) and represented significant improvement from 2005 (49% and 21%, respectively).

Reading Results:

In 2011, NAEP reading scores were flat for AISD students and students from other TUDA districts, LCs and national public schools. However, the percentage of AISD's fourth graders scoring at or above *Basic* was significantly higher in 2011 (68%) than in 2005 (61%). In addition, the percentage of AISD's fourth graders scoring at or above *Proficient* (36%) improved significantly from 2005 (28%) and was higher than that of their peers in LCs (24%).

Similar to AISD fourth grade students' performance in mathematics, achievement gaps remained on the reading assessment of NAEP. However, AISD students' performance in several subgroups improved. For example, the percentage of fourth grade students identified as English language learners (ELL) who scored at or above *Basic* in 2011 (40%) has improved significantly since 2005 (26%). Also noteworthy, the percentage of Black students scoring at or above *Basic* (62%) was higher than that of their peers in LCs (45%) and 11 other TUDA districts (see Reading Table 1).

Among AISD's eighth graders, the percentage of students scoring at or above *Basic* in 2011 (71%) was significantly higher than in 2005 (65%). During that time, the percentage of White students scoring at or above *Basic* improved from 86% to 94%, and was significantly higher in 2011 than that of their peers in LCs (83%) and in national public schools (84%).

Achievement gaps also remain for eighth-graders on NAEP reading. Although the percentages of Hispanic (63%) and economically disadvantaged (58%) students scoring at or above *Basic* were not significantly higher than those of their peers in LCs (Hispanic students: 60%, economically disadvantaged students: 59%) or national public schools (Hispanic students: 63%; economically disadvantaged students: 63%), Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students have shown significant improvement since 2005 (Hispanic: 52%; economically disadvantaged students: 49%).

About the Trial Urban District Assessment:

NAEP, also known as the *Nation's Report Card*, is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics, within the U.S. Department of Education. NAEP is a nationally representative assessment that reports on what students know and can do in core academic subjects.

NAEP is the only common assessment taken by students nationwide and provides the only consistent comparison between students in those urban districts. Results are reported for student populations, and for subgroups of those populations, at the national and state levels, and at the district level for the TUDA districts. Since the NAEP TUDA only tests a sample of the entire district student population, no individual student or campus results are issued in the report.

AISD has participated in the NAEP urban schools assessment since 2005. In 2011, 21 urban school districts participated in the TUDA: Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, District of Columbia, Fresno, Hillsborough County, Houston, Jefferson County, Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia and San Diego.

For these TUDA districts, results are reported at the district level. School districts can then compare their results to the national average for public schools, other similar TUDA districts, similar LCs and the state. In this way, the NAEP assessment is unique in that it allows AISD to compare fourth- and eighth-grade students' performance over time to other similar districts.

To learn more about NAEP, please visit www.nationsreportcard.gov. For more information, please contact the Department of Public Relations and Multicultural Outreach at 414-2414.

###