From the OEP

Yesterday, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics 2009 results were released. Students in fourth and eighth grade took the test in the spring of 2009. On the 500 point scale, fourth graders averaged a score of 238, which is no different than 2007. According to the NAEP performance levels, 36% of fourth graders scored at proficient or advanced. Eighth graders averaged 276, which is not significantly different than the score of 274 in 2007. This was common nation-wide – thirty states and jurisdictions showed no significant change at either grade. A summary of the major national findings can be found here.

In other news, we are posting the most recent section of the Outstanding Educational Progress Awards report. This section focuses on middle schools. We have highlighted the top middle schools in each region, as well as schools that performed well in individual grade levels (for grades six through eight). In two weeks we will highlight the top performing high schools across the state and in each region.

We’ve highlighted some news below, but you can always find more stories on our In the News section online. Have a great weekend!

News from Around the Natural State

National Assessment of Educational Progress Math 2009
Arkansas’ fourth- and eighth-grade public school students maintained the gains students in those grades have made on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics exam in recent years, according to results released by the National Assessment Governing Board and the U.S. Department of Education.

8 Districts Exit Fiscal Distress
The Arkansas Board of Education on Monday removed eight school districts from its fiscal distress program after the school systems took steps to replenish what had been rapidly dwindling financial reserves.

Additional Elementary School May be Needed, Superintendent Says
Superintendent Jim Rollins discussed the possible need for an additional elementary school in 2011 during the Springdale School Board on Tuesday night. The school district grew by 759 students this year, said Allen Williams, assistant superintendent for finance. That gives the school district 18,188 students.
News from Around the Nation

NAEP Math Scores Idle at 4th Grade, Advance at 8th
After marching steadily upward for the past two decades, students’ scores in 4th grade mathematics have stagnated on a prominent nationwide exam. That result seems likely to prompt calls for an inspection of state and federal efforts to boost elementary instruction in the subject. Scores among 8th graders on the exam, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, continued to rise, meanwhile—a fairly consistent trend since the early 1990s.

Graduation Rates Rise in South, Study Finds
Reversing a downward trend, high school graduation rates in most Southern states have climbed this decade, with Tennessee leading the pack in growth, according to a report out from the Southern Regional Education Board.

Site Seeing

Since the 2009 math NAEP scores have been released, we would like to highlight The Nation’s Report Card website. Here you will find the full report, a press conference, and state level information.

Mark Your Calendar

Friday, October 16, 12:00 – Lecture Series: Lisa Snell, Universal Preschool isn’t a Silver Budget (U of A, Graduate Education Building)

More information is available on the OEP Calendar.

Final Thought

“When you look at performance on this test over the last decade, Arkansas is one of the top states in terms of gains in scores over that time. That said, we still have room for improvement, and we know that our students, teachers, and administrators are working toward that.” –Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Arkansas Education Commissioner

Thanks for reading! See you next week!
The Office for Education Policy
University of Arkansas
Director: Gary W. Ritter
Research Associates:
Nathan Jensen
Caleb Rose
Bentley Kirkland
James Shuls

If you would like to be added or removed from this list, please send an e-mail to oep@uark.edu.