

# Enhanced Student Achievement

## 2022 ADEQUACY STUDY

May 3, 2022

Prepared for the Interim Senate Committee on Education  
and the Interim House Committee on Education



**2022 ADEQUACY REPORT**





## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Literature Review .....	2
Why additional funding for poverty students? .....	2
Effective Uses for Additional Funding Identified in Research .....	3
<b>Identifying Poverty Students in Arkansas .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Alternative Methods For Defining Poverty .....	5
<b>Funding ESA Students .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Enhanced Student Achievement Grants .....	6
APA Recommendation .....	7
<b>ESA SPENDING .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Allowable Uses for ESA Funds in Arkansas .....	8
<b>Achievement of ESA Students.....</b>	<b>9</b>
National Assessment of Educational Progress.....	9
ACT Aspire .....	11
<b>2021 Legislation .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Act 322 .....	14
<b>Appendix A: Allowable Uses for ESA Expenditures .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix B: Other States’ ESA NAEP Scores.....</b>	<b>17</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reading.....	17
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Math.....	17
8th Grade Reading .....	18
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Math.....	18



## Introduction

More than 65% of Arkansas’s public school children each year qualify for free and reduced-price lunches through the National School Lunch program, and over 80% of the state’s 1,038 schools have at least 46% of their students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunches. To qualify for reduced-price meals, federal guidelines require that students must be in families whose incomes are at or below 185% of the national poverty level or, for free meals, at or below 130% of the national poverty level. In 2021, the poverty level for a family of four was \$26,500<sup>1</sup>, so a student in that sized family qualifying for a free meal would have a family income of \$34,450 or less. If that student qualified for a reduced-price meal, the family income would be between \$34,451 and \$49,025

Research has repeatedly found that children coming from families living near or below the poverty line are less likely to enter the school system on an equal, ready-to-learn footing with their more wealthy peers. Without additional resources, students who enter kindergarten already behind are also less likely to ever catch up with their more affluent classmates. Arkansas test scores mirror these findings. Research has also identified tools and strategies for helping these children achieve at higher levels. These findings will be discussed later in this report.

For the last two decades, Arkansas has used additional categorical funding that is now known as Enhanced Student Achievement (ESA)<sup>2</sup> funding to help address the barriers free and reduced-price lunch (FRL) students often face. Because it is categorical funding, school districts and charter school systems may only spend the funds on state-approved uses. (ESA funds may also be transferred to other categorical accounts and restricted to those uses: English learners; alternative learning environments; and professional development.)

When the ESA categorical fund was first created by Act 59 of 2003 (then called National School Lunch (NSL) categorical funding), many of the included allowable uses for the money had been recommended by the state’s educational consultants at the time because they had been identified in research as effective means of raising achievement for these students. The allowable uses included but were not limited to classroom teachers; before- and after-school academic programs, pre-kindergarten programs, tutors, teacher's aids, counselors, social workers, nurses, and curriculum specialists; parent education; summer programs; early intervention programs; and materials, supplies, and equipment including technology used in approved programs or for approved purposes.

The number of approved uses for ESA funding has expanded over the years. In DESE rules in effect for the 2021 school year, more than 30 approved programs and uses are eligible for the spending of ESA funds, including the ability to transfer from ESA funds to other categorical funds. Act 322 of 2021, which will govern ESA spending starting in 2023, will replace the former list of allowable uses and allow for ESA spending within six broad categories. School districts must create a plan for spending their ESA funds, and those plans will be monitored by DESE.

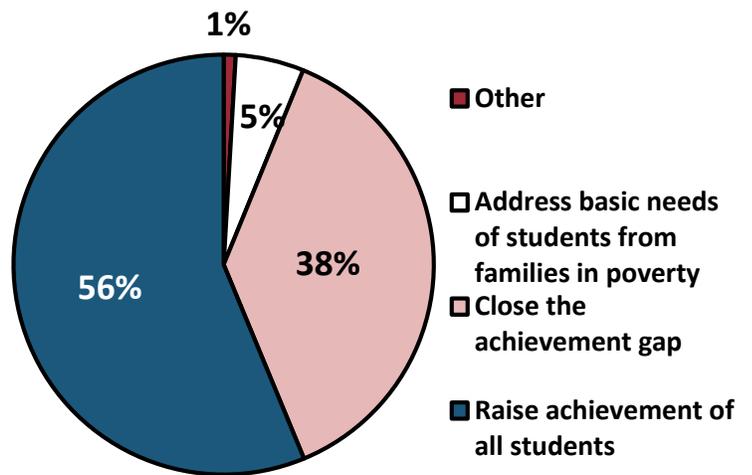
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<sup>1</sup> <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references>.

<sup>2</sup> Act 1083 of 2019.

In addition to the change in the number of approved uses for ESA funds, the goal for ESA funding has evolved over the years as well. Since 2003, Arkansas law governing these expenditures has referred to spending ESA funds to in order to close the achievement gap among students.<sup>3</sup> Act 322 removed references to closing the achievement gap, shifting the focus to “enhancing student achievement.” As seen in the chart above, the majority of principals reported to the BLR in 2021 that they spent ESA funds for the purpose of raising the achievement of all students.<sup>4</sup>

**Goals of ESA Funds**



This report examines the use and impact of ESA categorical funds by Arkansas school districts and charter school systems.

## Literature Review

### *WHY ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR POVERTY STUDENTS?*

Poverty matters when it comes to a child’s opportunity to learn, a review of research shows – not just the presence of poverty in a child’s home environment, but the persistence of it as well.<sup>5</sup> That’s because poverty can affect a child’s health and ability to learn due to stress from hunger and from home and neighborhood safety issues. Children growing up in poverty are less likely to have nutritional diets or stimulating environments, and they may further suffer from harsh parenting or lack of parenting. Poverty also can affect a child’s school as research has found that many schools with high levels of poverty offer fewer advanced classes, are staffed with less experienced teachers, and experience higher teacher turnover.<sup>6</sup>

Another comprehensive review of relevant research found that “[r]esearchers throughout the world have found a significant correlation with lower SES [socio-economic status] and academic achievement, to the detriment of students and schools with lower SES backgrounds.”<sup>7</sup> In addition, low-income and minority students both have been underrepresented in gifted and talented classes, according to research. This leads to fewer opportunities for these students to learn, which leads to lower standardized test scores on average for this group of students. That, and under-referrals by teachers, are often the reasons for the underrepresentation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> A.C.A. §6-20-2305(b)4(C)(i) *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> 2022 Principals Adequacy Survey, Q. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Olszewski-Kubilius, P. and Corwith, S. (Gifted Child Quarterly, 2018) “Poverty, Academic Achievement, and Giftedness: A Literature Review.”

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Berkowitz, R., Moore, H., Astor, R., and Benbenishty, R. (Review of Education Research, April 2017) “A Research Synthesis of the Associations Between Socioeconomic Background, Inequality, School Climate, and Academic Achievement.”

<sup>8</sup> “Poverty, Academic Achievement, and Giftedness: A Literature Review.”

### *EFFECTIVE USES FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING IDENTIFIED IN RESEARCH*

Research has found that effective spending of additional funds for poverty students can enhance learning for students facing challenges associated with poverty and even eliminate the achievement gap that often exists between poverty and non-poverty students.

For example, a study across multiple states found that spending about 20% more throughout all 12 years of school for low-income students is large enough to eliminate the education attainment gap between children of low-income and of non-poor families. While lower levels of investment can make a sizable difference, the additional 20% was found to effectively eliminate the gap. “Achieving learning results for all children requires investments in human resources. Greater overall investment in education typically results in more intensive staffing per pupil and/or more investment in teacher salaries. Investments in more and higher quality teachers are, in turn, related to higher learning outcomes for all children.”<sup>9</sup> Funding policies that allocate more money to support low-income school districts results in greater student learning and reduced achievement gaps.<sup>10</sup>

Some studies have shown that spending to reduce class sizes are most effective when classes reach a size of 15-18 students, with the effects strongest for students of color and schools serving concentrations of students in poverty.<sup>11</sup> An example of this approach is found in Illinois, which assigns a ratio of 15-1 in grades K-3 and 20-1 in grades 4-12 for low-income students. The state also supplies additional staff in the form of intervention teachers, extended day teachers and summer school teachers.<sup>12</sup>

Another substantial body of research shows that teacher pay matters. Teachers’ overall wages and relative wages affect “the quality of those who choose to enter the teaching profession – and whether they stay once they get in.”<sup>13</sup>

The most recent evidence-based study from Odden and Picus<sup>14</sup> maintains that the key concept is to keep standards high for all (the maxim for standards-based education reform) while varying instructional time so that all students have multiple opportunities to reach proficient levels of learning. Resources recommended for struggling students (which, as defined by Odden and Picus, include English learners and alternative education and special education students in addition to students in poverty) are tutoring, additional pupil support, summer school, extended day programs, and teachers certified for English language learning.

In addition to the resources listed above, Odden and Picus’ original adequacy study for Arkansas recommended preschool as a proven method for helping students in poverty begin school on an even playing field. Current research reiterates that point. A recent article in the journal *Pediatrics* stated that, “Fewer than half (48%) of poor children are ready for school at 5 years of age as compared with 75% of

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> EdBuild – <http://funded.edbuild.org/reports/issue/poverty/in-depth>; on the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress, Illinois and Arkansas had similar percentages of students scoring proficient or higher: 4<sup>th</sup> grade math (21% IL, 24% AR), 8<sup>th</sup> grade math (20% IL, 17% AR), 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading (21% IL, 21% AR) and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading (21% IL, 24% AR)

<sup>13</sup> “How Money Matters for Schools.”

<sup>14</sup> Odden, Allan, & Picus, Lawrence O. (2019). *School finance: A policy perspective*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

children from moderate- or high-income households.”<sup>15</sup> Children entering kindergarten ready for school are almost twice as likely to master basic skills by age 11.<sup>16</sup>

## Identifying Poverty Students in Arkansas

To determine categorical funding in Arkansas, Ark. Code Ann. §6-20-2305(b)(4) specifies that Enhanced Student Achievement funding shall be provided “for each identified national school lunch student.” The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the federal agency that administers the school breakfast and lunch programs, requires income verification for these students’ families unless a child qualifies by direct certification through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), because income would have already been verified in the SNAP application process.<sup>17</sup> Local school districts conduct the verification of meal applications, and DESE’s Child Nutrition Unit collects the verification results and provides a report to the USDA annually. Based on eligibility numbers districts submitted to DESE in October 2021, 128,706 students were eligible by direct certification, and 145,875 students were eligible based on a meal application.<sup>18</sup>

Two federal programs allow schools to serve free meals to all of their students, both with a goal of eliminating paperwork for school personnel and ensuring children are fed. Provision 2 allows schools to serve all meals at no charge for a four-year period. Schools make eligibility determinations during the first year, and then make no eligibility determinations for the next three years. For the 2022 school year, 24 Arkansas school districts participated in Provision 2, with a total of 100 schools participating. Funding is based on the first year eligibility numbers. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a federal program<sup>19</sup> for schools and school districts in low-income areas, allowing schools and districts to serve breakfast and lunch to all students at no cost without collecting household applications. Previously, base year calculations determined the percentage FRL for CEP districts, but DESE’s new rules (pending legislative approval as of April 29, 2022) specify that schools will be reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students participating in other specific means-tested programs, like SNAP. For the 2020-2021 school year, 75 districts were participating, for a total of 256 schools.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Williams, P.G., et al. (Pediatrics, Vol. 144, Issue 2, Aug. 2019) “School Readiness.” Retrieved at <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/144/2/e20191766/38558/School-Readiness>.

<sup>16</sup> “Achieving Kindergarten Readiness for All our Children: A Funder’s Guide to Early Childhood Development from Birth to Five,” The Bridgespan Group and Pritzker Children’s Initiative, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Email from Suzanne Davidson with the Child Nutrition Unit at the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education dated XXX.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA, Public Law 111-296, Sec. 104 (Dec. 2010).

<sup>20</sup> “Achieving Kindergarten Readiness for All our Children: A Funder’s Guide to Early Childhood Development from Birth to Five.”

For testing purposes, however, this distinction among students is not always made when schools participate in the Provision 2 or the CEP. All students in participating districts often are coded as FRL students for testing purposes, as evidenced in the de-identified student data set supplied to the BLR for test score analyses, while DESE’s official certification percentages for ESA funding are often lower.<sup>21</sup>

**ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR DEFINING POVERTY**

When the Senate and House Education Committees hired Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) to perform the Arkansas School Finance Study in 2020, one of the charges for APA was to present alternative methods to FRL-status for identifying poverty students. (See box.) The loss of accuracy in reporting achievement levels for these students and in providing appropriate amounts of funding due to the Provision 2 and CEP programs prompted this request. APA reported in Chapter 5 of its study that while alternative approaches to identifying students who would be eligible for ESA funding exist, all would cause change from the current distribution, which would create “winners” and “losers” after the funding changes were implemented. APA reported that while the majority of states, like Arkansas, rely on certification for the National School Lunch program, several others combine that status with other risk factors and a few states rely exclusively on direct certification with public support programs (Medicaid, SNAP) for identification of poverty students. A couple of states – North Carolina and Pennsylvania – were reported to use their census counts of students qualifying for federal Title I funds. Some education policy organizations recommend using multiple factors<sup>22</sup>.

<b>Alternatives to FRL Counts</b>
In 2020, Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates presented four common alternatives to counts of students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals through the federal National School Lunch program:
1) Direct certification of eligibility for other public support programs
2) Census or Title I poverty counts
3) Other student risk factors (homeless, foster care, etc.)
4) Some combination of the above

The following charts show how several other states identify poverty students for additional funding. These include top performing states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) among all states and among Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states, as well as Arkansas and its contiguous states.<sup>23</sup>

<b>Top NAEP States</b>	<b>Basis for Funding for Poverty</b>
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Direct certification
<b>New Jersey</b>	185% of poverty level
<b>New Hampshire</b>	FRL qualified or direct certification
<b>Minnesota</b>	FRL qualified
<b>Wyoming</b>	FRL qualified, ELL, mobile secondary students
<b>Virginia</b>	Free-lunch qualified only (excludes reduced-price)
<b>Vermont</b>	FRL qualified, ELL
<b>Indiana</b>	FRL qualified or direct certification
<b>Connecticut</b>	FRL qualified or qualified for free milk under the Special Milk Program

<sup>21</sup> Comparison of DESE’s de-identified individual student test score data with the FY 2020-21 Enhanced Student Achievement Funding based on Certified Cn – Restricted document.

<sup>22</sup> Arkansas School Finance Study, Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, December 2020.

<sup>23</sup> FundEd: State Policy Analysis, A Detailed Look at each State’s Funding Policies retrieved at <http://funded.edbuild.org/state>.

Top NAEP States	Basis for Funding for Poverty
Utah	FRL qualified
Top SREB States	Funding Mechanism
Virginia	Free-lunch qualified only (excludes reduced-price)
Florida	NA
Maryland	FRL qualified
North Carolina	FRL qualified
Kentucky	Free-lunch qualified only
Georgia	NA
Tennessee	Direct certification, homeless, migrant, foster care
Texas	FRL qualified, homeless
Arkansas & Contiguous States	Funding Mechanism
Missouri	FRL
Tennessee	Direct certification, homeless, migrant, foster care
Texas	FRL qualified, homeless
Oklahoma	FRL qualified
Arkansas	FRL qualified or direct certification
Mississippi	Free-lunch qualified only (excludes reduced-price)
Louisiana	FRL qualified, direct certification, homeless, involved with juvenile justice or in custody of the state

## Funding ESA Students

Enhanced Student Achievement funding is distributed on a per-student basis for students who qualify for the national free and reduced-price lunch program.<sup>24</sup> Three per-pupil amounts are awarded based on the concentration of poverty students in the school population, as shown in the chart to the side. Because funding cliffs occur at the 70% and 90% thresholds, transitional ESA funding is distributed based on enrollment changes to smooth funding changes over a three-year period.

	2021 / 2022/2023 Per ESA Student Amount	2021 Total Amount
<70%:	\$526 / \$532 / \$538	\$236,505,233
70%-90%:	\$1,051 / \$1,063 / \$1,076	
>90%:	\$1,576 / \$1,594 / \$1,613	

### ENHANCED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS

In 2018, the General Assembly began providing an additional source of funds to supplement spending to improve achievement levels of low-income students. School districts and charter schools are reimbursed for the previous years' expenditures on three evidence-based uses: tutors; before- and after-school programs; and

<b>2021 Total Amount</b>
<b>\$5.3 million</b>

<sup>24</sup> For those schools and districts that participate in federal lunch programs (Provision 2 and Community Eligibility Program) that do not require annual documentation of qualifying students, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education provides guidance for estimating the number of children for which funding is provided in the Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding.

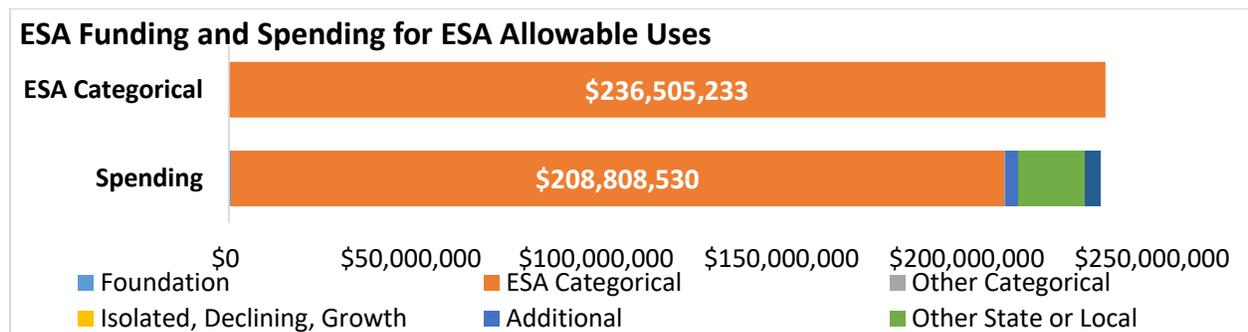
prekindergarten programs. Funding was distributed in November 2020 to 192 school districts and charter school systems on a prorated basis of 25.3%.<sup>25</sup> Distribution amounts ranged from \$61.50 (West Memphis School District) to \$976,688 (Little Rock School District). The funds are restricted to expenses “allowed under this program and are meant to supplement, not replace, the districts ESA spending.”<sup>26</sup>

**APA RECOMMENDATION**

In its report provided to the Education Committees in December 2020, APA recommended that Arkansas adopt a per-ESA student weighting system. APA also recommended funding students the same weighted amount regardless of the concentration of poverty within a school to help smooth funding cliffs. While APA did not recommend specific weights, the per-ESA pupil amounts provided in the 2021 year translate to the following weights:

$$\$526 = 1.07 \quad / \quad \$1,051 = 1.15 \quad / \quad \$1,576 = 1.22$$

**ESA SPENDING**



<sup>25</sup> Email from Tracy Webb, Coordinator of Fiscal Services and Support, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, dated Oct. 19, 2021.

<sup>26</sup> DESE Commissioner’s Memos FIN-21-013 and FIN-21-018.

### *ALLOWABLE USES FOR ESA FUNDS IN ARKANSAS*

The list of allowable uses for ESA funds has grown from tutoring, preschool and before/after/summer educational programs, the three research-based uses originally recommended by the consultants (Odden and Picus) who helped Arkansas reform its funding methodology in 2003, to 36. (Three of these are transfers into other categorical funds)

The allowable uses for which there were financial codes in the 2021 school year are ranked by the total expenditures for each in a table found in Appendix A. The approved uses in this table apply through the 2022 school year. (See box for future allowable ESA funding uses.)

The following tables show the allowable ESA uses for which schools spent funds to support both regular FRL and special education FRL students. For these analyses, expenditures also include those made at the seven free-standing preschools in the state because preschool is considered an allowable expense for ESA funds. The first columns show those expenditures using all funds, while the second columns show the expenditures using only ESA or ESA Matching Grant funds. The tables have grouped allowable expenditures into larger categories for easier comparison (expenditures by each allowable use are listed in Appendix A):

**More Intensive Staffing:** This includes funds spent on literacy, math, and science specialists/coaches; highly qualified classroom teachers; teachers' aides; certified counselors, licensed social workers, nurses; curriculum specialists, college/career coaches; coordinated school health coordinators; and funds spent on recruiting and retaining effective teachers, if the school district meets the minimum teacher salary schedule without using ESA funds.

**More Time on Task for Students:** This includes funds spent on before- and after-school academic programs, summer programs, early intervention programs, expenses related to a longer school day or year, and remediation activities for college preparation.

#### **ESA Funding Uses After 2022**

Effective July 2022, Arkansas school districts and charter systems will be required to prepare plans for spending their ESA funds within six broad categories as defined in Act 322 of 2021 (described in more detail at the end of this report). DESE is to monitor to assure that spending aligns with the plans. DESE's rule (pending legislative approval as of April 29, 2022) for this legislation states in section 6.05 that spending of ESA funds shall be for evidence-based programs or purposes for students at risk. New language adds in 6.07: "Enhanced student achievement funding shall be expended for eligible program(s) that are aligned to the needs of the students in the district based on evidence from the district's needs assessment. Eligible expenditures must include strategies to increase student achievement, reduce gaps in achievement among subgroups, or create conditions that support student learning with a direct tie to improved student outcomes."

The six categories listed in Act 322 are:

- If already meeting the state's minimum salary schedule, pay for additional teachers or higher compensation for several specific purposes (leadership roles, additional duties)
- Academic supports and interventions
- Social emotional and behavioral supports
- Physical and mental health resources
- Early intervention resources
- Access to post-secondary opportunities

**Pre-Kindergarten:** This is a single code for pre-kindergarten expenditures.

**Tutors:** This is a single code for tutor expenditures.

**All Other Expenditures:** This includes expenditures for professional development, specifically for literacy, math and science or as identified in a district’s support plan; school improvement plans; parent education; other activities approved by DESE; ACT fees for 11<sup>th</sup> graders; district-required meal programs; Teach for America professional development; implementing the Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science; district reduced co-pay meals; materials, supplies and equipment for State Board approved programs and purposes; program using art-infused curriculum; school resource officers; experience-based field trips; building-level interim assessments to monitor student progress; and dyslexia programs.

While the More Intense Staffing category accounts for the largest percentage of expenditures both from all fund sources and only from ESA or ESA Matching Grant funds, about 20% of those expenditures in both cases are for instructional aides. All other allowable uses for ESA expenditures make up the next largest category, and about two-fifths of that total is made up of items coded under “other activities” approved by DESE.

Category	Expenditures for ESA Purposes from All Fund Sources		Expenditures for ESA Purposes from ESA and ESA Matching Grants Funds	
	Total Expenditures	Percent of Total	Total Expenditures	Percent of Total
<b>More Intense Staffing</b>	\$ 97.3 million	45%	\$ 93 million	44%
<b>More Time on Task</b>	\$ 21 million	10%	\$ 20.2 million	10%
<b>Pre-Kindergarten</b>	\$ 13.2 million	6%	\$ 10.4 million	5%
<b>Tutors</b>	\$ 10.1 million	4%	\$ 8.4 million	4%
<b>Other ESA Uses</b>	\$ 96.6 million	41%	\$ 79.4 million	38%

## Achievement of ESA Students

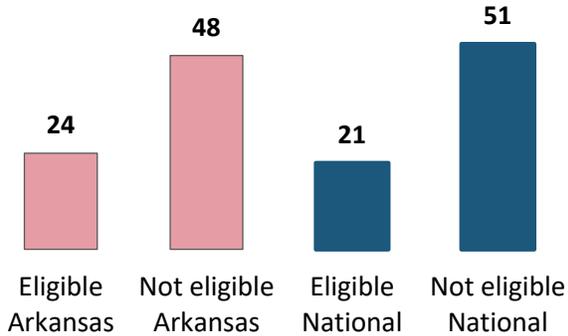
As noted in the literature review section of this report, students in poverty often face learning challenges that more affluent students do not, and this phenomenon is evident when comparing achievement scores. These comparisons can be made with two sets of tests – the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as “The Nation’s Report Card,” and the state’s ACT Aspire.

### *NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS*

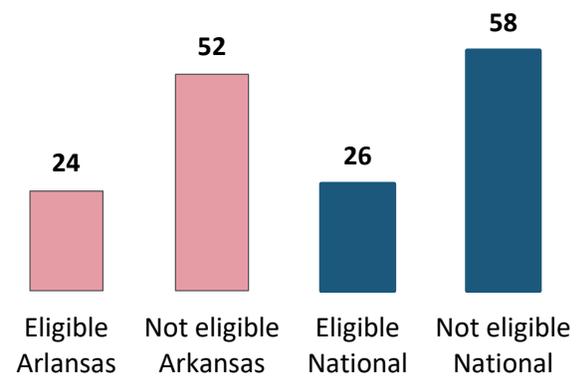
The test called The Nation’s Report Card – NAEP – earns that title because it is the only assessment administered nationwide. The exam is taken by a representative sample of students in each state on a cyclical basis. Mathematics and Reading assessments are administered every two years, and the results from 2019 are the most recent available.

The following charts show the differences in the percentages scoring proficient or above between FRL students (eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program, which is the identifier for Arkansas’s ESA students), and students who are not FRL eligible. The patterns for Arkansas and the nation as a whole are very similar, though Arkansas percentages are lower than the national percentages, except for within the FRL-eligible groups for the 4<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade reading exams.

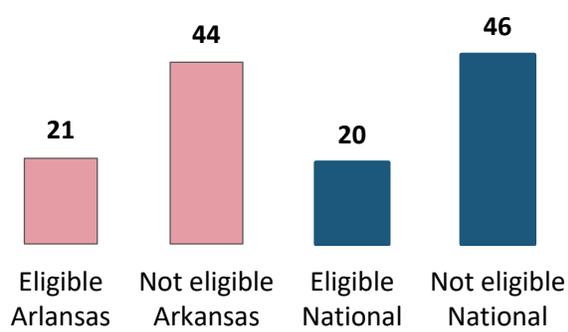
**4th Grade Reading,  
% at or above Proficient**



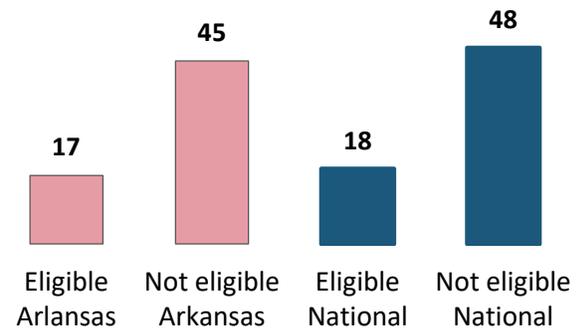
**4th Grade Math,  
% at or above Proficient**



**8th Grade Reading,  
% at or above Proficient**

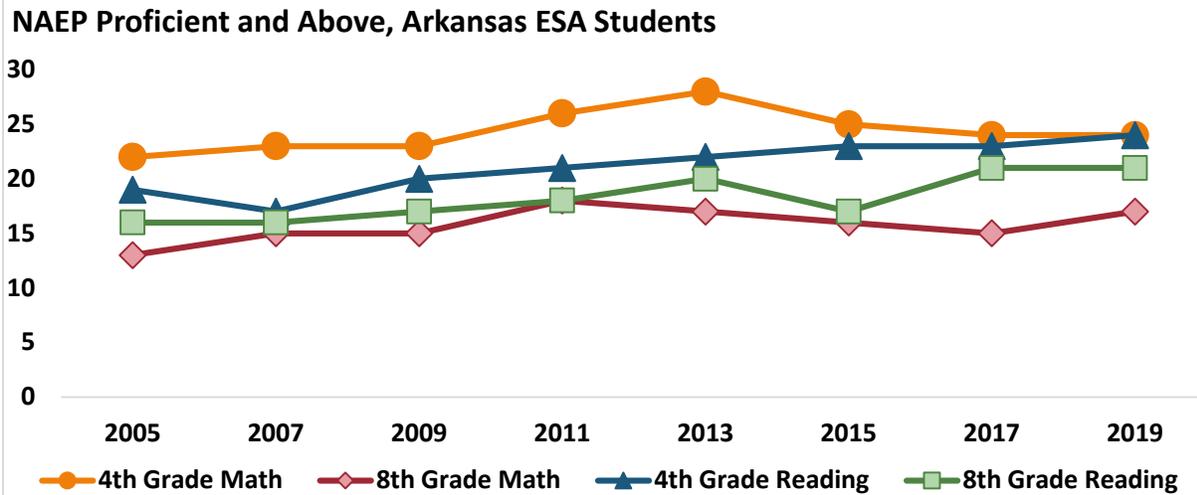


**8th Grade Math,  
% at or above Proficient**



Comparisons of performance of FRL students among top performing NAEP states nationally and among SREB states as well as Arkansas’s contiguous states can be found in Appendix B.

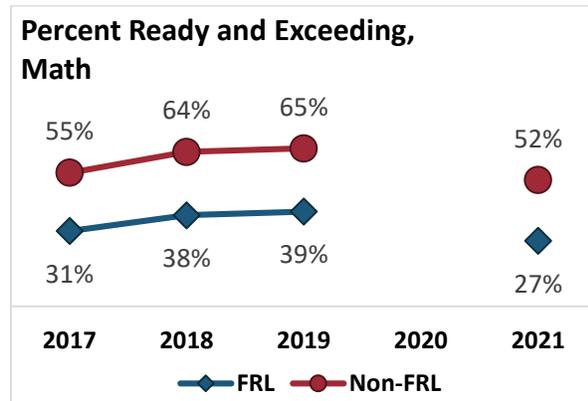
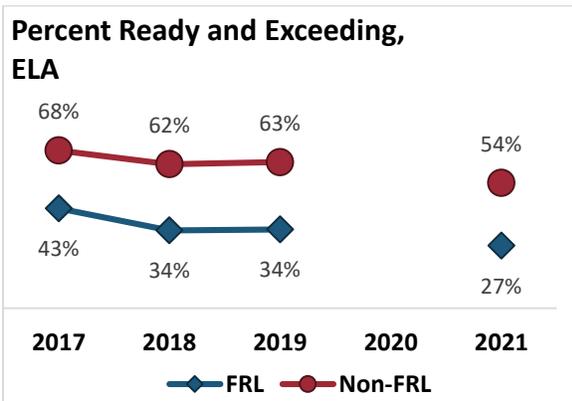
The following chart shows the percentages of Arkansas students eligible for the National School Lunch program that scored proficient or above on the NAEP math and reading tests since 2005.



### ACT ASPIRE

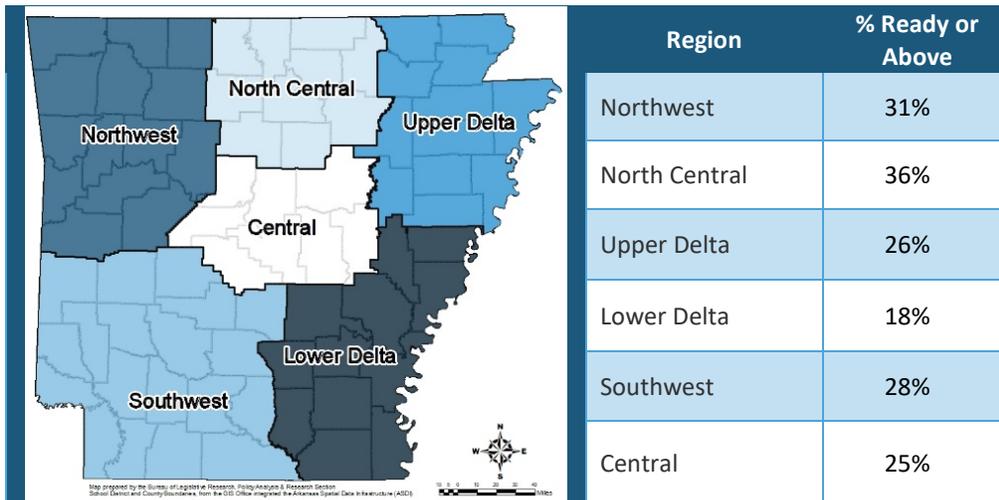
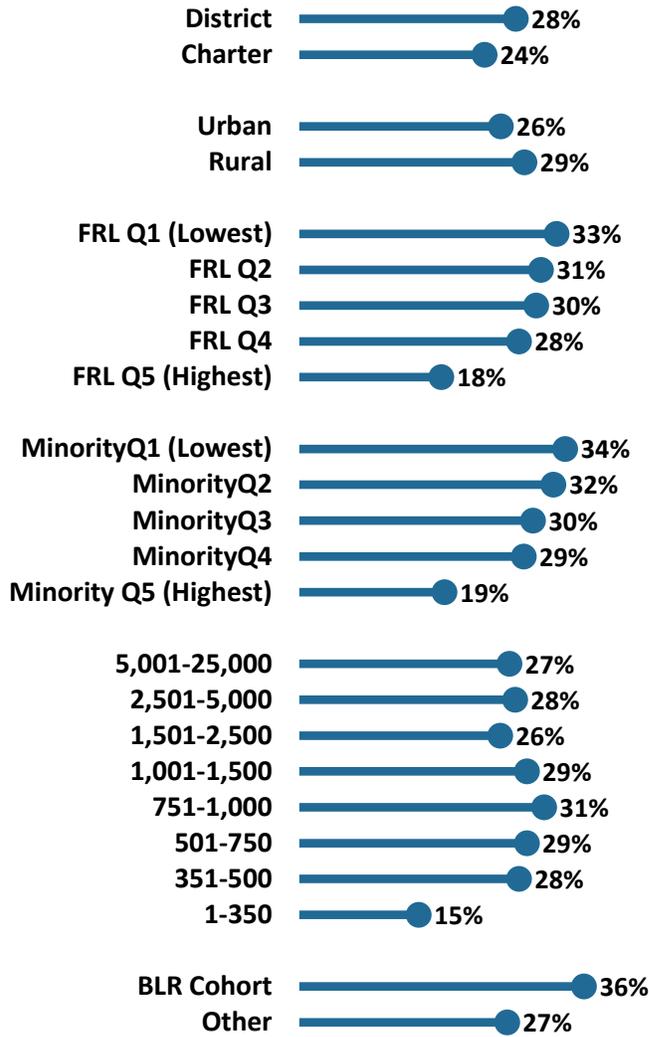
Arkansas Code § 6-15-2907, which is codified under the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act, requires DESE to "implement a statewide student assessment system to be administered by Arkansas public schools"; in the 2015-2016 school year, the ACT Aspire summative assessment was adopted in response to this statutory requirement. It is a criterion-referenced exam, meaning that students are scored based on how they answered the questions on the test only. Scores are not determined by ranking one student's performance against all others, as is the case with norm-referenced exams. The ACT Aspire has been the statewide test for Arkansas public school students since 2016, but it will expire after the 2023 school year. (DESE is working with a testing company to design a new exam that will be aligned with the state's curriculum and the learning standards for those subjects.)

The four score levels for the ACT Aspire are In Need of Support, Close, Ready, and Exceeding. The goal is for students to score ready and above. The following table compares the percent of FRL students scoring Ready or Exceeding with the percent of non-FRL students on the math and English language arts (ELA) exams for the last five years. (A change in cut scores on the ELA portion of the ACT Aspire resulted in lower scores for the 2018 school year, and no tests were administered in the 2020 school year due to COVID-19.)

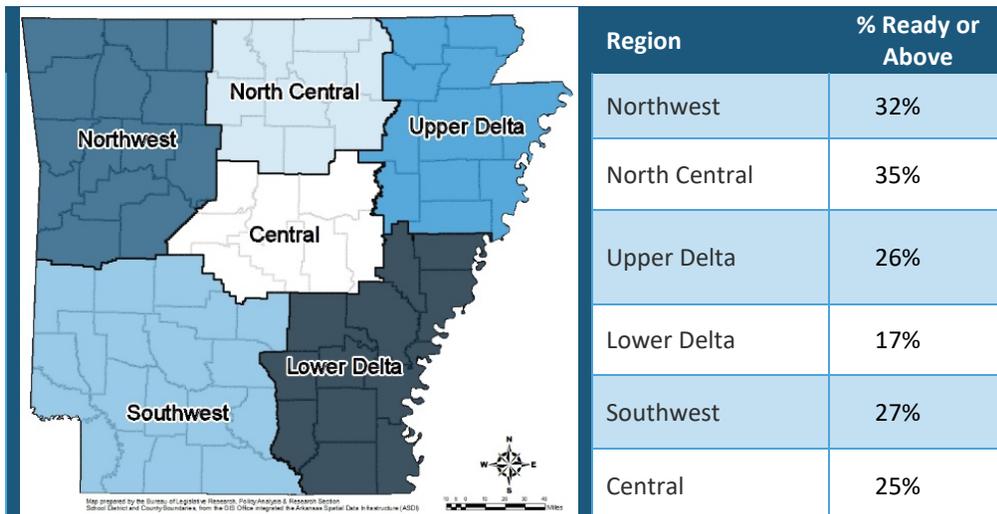
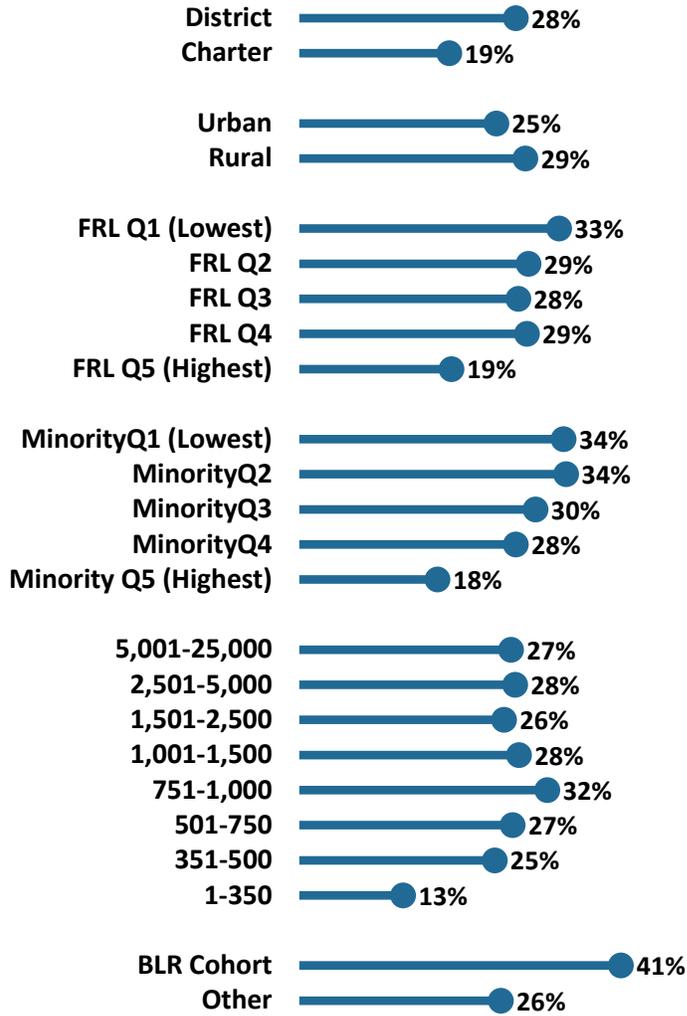


The graphs on the following pages compare the percentage of ESA students scoring Ready or Exceeding on the ACT Aspire ELA and math exams in 2021 by school categories:

### % ESA Students Scoring Ready or Above, ELA



### % ESA Students Scoring Ready or Above, Math



## 2021 Legislation

*ACT 322* (SB101) specifies when school districts are permitted to expend Enhanced Student Achievement Funding to provide supports and resources. The act requires each public school district to submit, by July 1, 2022, a three-year enhanced student achievement plan to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education describing the school district's intended and implemented strategies to enhance student achievement and how enhanced student achievement funds will be used to support the strategies of the school district as permitted by the law and rules promulgated by the State Board of Education. The act also addresses the review and update of enhanced student achievement plans.

## Appendix A: Allowable Uses for ESA Expenditures

The following table shows expenditures on allowable uses for ESA programs from all fund sources.

Code #	Description	Total (Regular and SPED Students)
<b>014</b>	Other activities approved by the ADE that will further the purposes of this Section 6.07. Such activities include, but are not limited to, research-based activities and activities directed at chronically underperforming schools.	\$ 33,995,415
<b>001</b>	Literacy, Math, Science Specialists/Coaches	\$ 30,513,048
<b>008</b>	Cert. Counselors, Licensed Social Workers, Nurses	\$ 26,219,384
<b>013</b>	School Improvement Plan	\$ 22,311,544
<b>002</b>	PD Literacy, Math/Science	\$ 20,239,206
<b>007</b>	Teacher's Aides	\$ 18,425,495
<b>012</b>	Early Intervention Program	\$ 15,920,495
<b>005</b>	Pre-Kindergarten	\$ 13,243,367
<b>003</b>	High-Qualified Classroom Teachers	\$ 10,270,197
<b>006</b>	Tutors	\$ 10,141,870
<b>009</b>	Curriculum Specialist	\$ 9,392,354
<b>035</b>	Dyslexia programs and interventions	\$ 7,831,523
<b>029</b>	Materials, supplies and equipment, including technology, used for State Board approved programs and purposes	\$ 6,595,152
<b>031</b>	School Resource Officers whose job duties include research-based methods tied to improving achievement of students at risk	\$ 3,002,784
<b>004</b>	Before and After School Programs	\$ 2,985,151
<b>036</b>	Recruiting and retaining effective teachers, if the school district meets the minimum teachers salary schedule without using NSL funds	\$ 1,730,762
<b>011</b>	Summer Programs	\$ 1,649,004
<b>010</b>	Parent Education	\$ 1,131,896
<b>022</b>	District required meal program	\$ 981,914
<b>027</b>	Hiring College and Career Coaches as administered by Division of Career & Technical Education	\$ 641,230
<b>024</b>	Remediation activities for college preparation. Partnering with higher education institutions and technical institutes to provide concurrent courses or technical education.	\$ 496,798
<b>034</b>	Developing and implementing interim building-level assessments to monitor student progress toward proficiency on state assessments	\$ 214,339
<b>037</b>	Professional Development as identified in the school district's support plan under 6-15-2914	\$ 180,486
<b>033</b>	Coordinated school health coordinator	\$ 113,400
<b>028</b>	District Reduced CoPay Meals	\$ 57,836
<b>016</b>	ACT fees for 11th graders (Taking ACT for first time per Act 881 or 2007) and operating or supporting a postsecondary preparatory program authorized under A.C.A. 6-16-601.	\$ 47,455
<b>032</b>	Experience-based field trips	\$ 10,922
<b>030</b>	Program using arts-infused curriculum	\$ 8,684
<b>023</b>	Expenses related to funding a longer school day or school year.	\$ 8,479
<b>026</b>	Implementing Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science	\$ 7,500
<b>025</b>	Teach for America Professional Development	\$ 5,000

The following table shows expenditures on allowable uses for ESA programs from ESA Categorical and ESA Matching Grant fund sources only.

Code #	Description	Total (Regular and SPED Students)
<b>014</b>	Other activities approved by the ADE that will further the purposes of this Section 6.07. Such activities include, but are not limited to, research-based activities and activities directed at chronically underperforming schools.	\$ 33,856,116
<b>001</b>	Literacy, Math, Science Specialists/Coaches	\$ 26,999,742
<b>008</b>	Cert. Counselors, Licensed Social Workers, Nurses	\$ 25,692,240
<b>013</b>	School Improvement Plan	\$ 22,096,169
<b>007</b>	Teacher's Aides	\$ 18,357,644
<b>012</b>	Early Intervention Program	\$ 15,714,665
<b>005</b>	Pre-Kindergarten	\$ 10,428,736
<b>003</b>	High-Qualified Classroom Teachers	\$ 10,153,279
<b>009</b>	Curriculum Specialist	\$ 9,295,103
<b>006</b>	Tutors	\$ 8,373,416
<b>035</b>	Dyslexia programs and interventions	\$ 7,772,200
<b>029</b>	Materials, supplies and equipment, including technology, used for State Board approved programs and purposes	\$ 6,557,757
<b>002</b>	PD Literacy, Math/Science	\$ 3,434,724
<b>031</b>	School Resource Officers whose job duties include research-based methods tied to improving achievement of students at risk	\$ 2,999,984
<b>004</b>	Before and After School Programs	\$ 2,312,415
<b>036</b>	Recruiting and retaining effective teachers, if the school district meets the minimum teacher salary schedule without using NSL funds	\$ 1,730,762
<b>011</b>	Summer Programs	\$ 1,649,401
<b>010</b>	Parent Education	\$ 1,125,468
<b>022</b>	District required meal program	\$ 981,914
<b>027</b>	Hiring College and Career Coaches as administered by Division of Career & Technical Education	\$ 639,651
<b>024</b>	Remediation activities for college preparation. Partnering with higher education institutions and technical institutes to provide concurrent courses or technical education.	\$ 490,690
<b>034</b>	Developing and implementing interim building-level assessments to monitor student progress toward proficiency on state assessments	\$ 214,339
<b>037</b>	Professional Development as identified in the school district's support plan under 6-15-2914	\$ 180,486
<b>033</b>	Coordinated school health coordinator	\$ 113,400
<b>028</b>	District Reduced CoPay Meals	\$ 57,836
<b>016</b>	ACT fees for 11th graders (Taking ACT for first time per Act 881 or 2007) and operating or supporting a postsecondary preparatory program authorized under A.C.A. 6-16-601.	\$ 47,455
<b>032</b>	Experience-based field trips	\$ 10,922
<b>030</b>	Program using arts-infused curriculum	\$ 8,684
<b>023</b>	Expenses related to funding a longer school day or school year.	\$ 8,479
<b>026</b>	Implementing Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science	\$ 7,500
<b>025</b>	Teach for America Professional Development	\$ 5,000

## Appendix B: Other States' ESA NAEP Scores

The following tables show the range of scores for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunches at the 4<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade levels on the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress in math and reading.

### 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

NAEP State	% At or Above Proficient
Massachusetts	26
New Jersey	22
New Hampshire	21
Minnesota	21
<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>20</b>
Vermont	21
Indiana	24
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>20</b>
Utah	22

SREB State	% At or Above Proficient
Virginia	20
<b>Florida</b>	<b>28</b>
Maryland	19
No. Carolina	21
Kentucky	25
Georgia	20
<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>18</b>
Texas	19

Contiguous	% At or Above Proficient
Missouri	23
<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>18</b>
Texas	19
Oklahoma	20
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>18</b>

### 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

NAEP State	% At or Above Proficient
Massachusetts	28
New Jersey	26
New Hampshire	28
Minnesota	31
<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>33</b>
Virginia	30
Vermont	27
<b>Indiana</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>23</b>
Utah	32

SREB State	% At or Above Proficient
Virginia	30
<b>Florida</b>	<b>38</b>
Maryland	21
No. Carolina	26
Kentucky	29
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>22</b>
Texas	32

Contiguous	% At or Above Proficient
Missouri	28
Tennessee	22
<b>Texas</b>	<b>32</b>
Oklahoma	24
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>24</b>
Mississippi	31
<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>20</b>

*8TH GRADE READING*

NAEP State	% At or Above Proficient
Massachusetts	24
New Jersey	23
New Hampshire	20
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>18</b>
Wyoming	21
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Vermont</b>	<b>28</b>
Indiana	25
Connecticut	23
Utah	25

SREB State	% At or Above Proficient
Virginia	18
<b>Florida</b>	<b>25</b>
Maryland	18
No. Carolina	20
Kentucky	23
Georgia	21
Tennessee	17
<b>Texas</b>	<b>15</b>

Contiguous	% At or Above Proficient
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>21</b>
Tennessee	17
<b>Texas</b>	<b>15</b>
Oklahoma	17
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>21</b>
Mississippi	19
Louisiana	19

*8TH GRADE MATH*

NAEP State	% At or Above Proficient
<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>25</b>
New Jersey	22
New Hampshire	19
Minnesota	22
Wyoming	24
Virginia	19
Vermont	23
Indiana	23
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>18</b>
Utah	19

SREB State	% At or Above Proficient
Virginia	19
Florida	19
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>No. Carolina</b>	<b>20</b>
Kentucky	18
Georgia	17
Tennessee	15
Texas	19

Contiguous	% At or Above Proficient
Missouri	18
Tennessee	15
<b>Texas</b>	<b>19</b>
Oklahoma	16
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>17</b>
Mississippi	17
<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>14</b>