



State Test Score Trends Through 2008-09, Part 1: Rising Scores on State Tests and NAEP

CALIFORNIA

- Between 2005 and 2009, the percentages of students reaching the proficient level on the state test and the basic level on NAEP increased in grades 4 and 8 in both reading and math.¹
- Average annual gains were larger on the state test than on NAEP in both reading and math at grades 4 and 8.
- Trends in average (mean) test scores moved in the same direction (up) as trends in percentages proficient/basic.

California — Gains and declines on the state test and NAEP, 2005 through 2009						
	State proficient			NAEP basic		
	2005	2009	Average annual gain	2005	2009	Average annual gain
Grade 4 reading	47%	61%	3.5	50%	54%	1.0
Grade 8 reading	39%	48%	2.3	60%	64%	1.0
Grade 4 math	50%	66%	4.0	71%	72%	0.3
Grade 8 math	34%	44%	2.5	57%	59%	0.5

Note: The numbers in the average annual gain column represent the percentage point difference between 2005 and 2009 divided by four (the number of year-to-year changes between 2005 and 2009). A positive number represents a gain and a negative number represents a decline. In states that reported percentages proficient to one or more decimal points, the percentages in the 2005 and 2009 columns have been rounded to whole numbers. However, the average annual gains have been calculated to one decimal point based on the unrounded 2005 and 2009 numbers, which explains any slight discrepancies.

¹State tests and NAEP differ in many key respects, such as the universe of students tested (all students vs. a sample of students); the knowledge and skills assessed and their alignment with what students are actually taught; the definitions of proficient or basic performance; the test format and testing environment; and the seriousness of the stakes attached to the results. See pps. 2-7 of the full report for a more detailed explanation of how state tests and NAEP differ and why the CEP study compared trends in the percentages of students reaching the proficient level on state tests with trends in the percentages reaching the basic level on NAEP.