



**National Science Assessment Data Underscores Need for Education Reforms in New Jersey
Achievement Gap between Low-income and Wealthier Students More Than 30 Percent**

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Data released today confirms the need for education reform in New Jersey. Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for New Jersey in science education indicate a 32-point achievement gap between low-income and wealthier grade four students and a 31 point achievement gap between low-income and wealthier eighth grade students.

"The latest NAEP data confirms the need for Governor Chris Christie's reforms so that all children, regardless of where they live and regardless of their economic background, can have access to an excellent education," said NJDOE Acting Commissioner Christopher D. Cerf. "We need to increase the number of effective teachers through improved teacher evaluation and accountability."

The science scores released today are similar to other NAEP scores released earlier this year, showing a large achievement gap between low-income and more advantaged students. New Jersey is among the 46 states that volunteered to participate in the 2009 science assessment. In New Jersey, approximately 2,800 students were assessed per grade level.

The 2009 NAEP science assessment was guided by a new NAEP framework that was updated to keep the content current with key developments in science, curriculum standards, assessment, and research. Because of the recent changes to the assessment, the 2009 NAEP results cannot be compared to those from previous years. Since there is no trend data, the current results may be used as a current snapshot of what the New Jersey fourth- and eighth-grade students know and can do in science.

Today's NAEP science data can be accessed here: http://nationsreportcard.gov/science_2009/

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