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Minnesota Posts Strong and Steady Reading Scores on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Roseville – Overall reading achievement levels for Minnesota’s fourth and eighth graders remained near the top in the nation, with only three states posting better scores in eighth grade and only six states posting better scores in fourth grade according to the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released today by the National Center for Education Statistics.

"These results mirror our success in math last fall and once again confirm we have some of the best students and schools in the country," said Education Commissioner Alice Seagren. "For the past few years, we focused on math and science with our STEM initiatives and we've seen improvement in our math scores for all student groups. We need to add a similar focus in reading and I've instructed staff to use our federal School Improvement Grant to work with schools on reading improvement in addition to continuing our efforts in math."

Minnesota recently received a \$34 million federal School Improvement Grant to improve achievement at Minnesota’s persistently lowest performing schools.

In the reading assessment, fourth grade scores remained steady at 223, three points above the national average of 220. Only six states posted results that were statistically higher than Minnesota in fourth-grade reading. Eighth grade reading scores remained steady at 270, eight points above the national average of 262. Only three states posted results that were statistically higher than Minnesota in eighth grade reading.

In October of 2009, NAEP reported that Minnesota at 249 had one of the highest scale scores for fourth grade math behind Massachusetts at 252 and New Hampshire at 251. In eighth-grade, Minnesota at 294 was second in the nation in math exceeded only by Massachusetts at 299.

Known as the "nation's report card," the NAEP is a federally mandated project administered by the National Center for Education Statistics to continuously monitor the knowledge, skills and performance of the nation's students. Since 1969, NAEP has measured and reported on the knowledge and abilities of America's fourth, eighth and twelfth grade students, providing data about student performance in a variety of subject areas at national, regional and state levels.

For more information regarding Minnesota's performance on the 2009 NAEP Reading and Mathematics, visit <http://nationsreportcard.gov/>.

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